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Poems

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Abstract

COME DANCING, SHE GOT US TO DANCE ON HER ASHES

Harjit Kaur Khaira

COME DANCING

The skin on the side of her thumb
Revealing the terracotta openings
Caused by printed words on paper
Paper cut infected that won't heal
And still the world won't take her dancing.

She stuck sunflower petals on her lashes
That lit highbone cheeks with shadows
The pollen drew wet from her eyeducts
Caused channels of crusted smeary tattoos
And still the world won't take her dancing.

She smelt the passion on people's bodies
Gave blessings before they went on cliffhangers
Left business cards in red phone boxes
While smelling the stale piss of strangers
And still the world won't take her dancing.

They said she was and still is quietly pliable
Taking blue pills of crimes and punishment
Supplemented with the occasional glass of Aqua Vitae
Wearing velvet bowties for ornamental purposes
And still the world won't take her dancing.

She sings mysteries to people who are longing
Has power marks on her chest in circles
The time for hearing confessions gets shorter
The queues' increasing highlight her attachments
And still the world won't take her dancing.

One, two, three, one, two, three
The swirling mass of people swaying
For Cinderella who doesn't quite make it
Showing her ankles to too many audiences
And still the world won't take her dancing.

SHE GOT US TO DANCE ON HER ASHES

Her last request
For the celebration
Play Paganini
And defy the devil.
Bring women with
Turmeric coloured fingers,
To conduct the finale
in
sin
copation.

Look to the sky demand a tempest,
Ask language to give her a name.
A poet to give garlands of images,
Invite an adventurer to give her a world.

She tried to see through her monocle,
But the world put her in manacles.
She stamped her feet in defiance,
We broke heart strings with violence.

Play her the concerto, over the ashes,
Read her the books you kept locked away.
Give back her feather quill,
The fire is still burning.

Look to the sky,
Demand a thunder.
Ask language to give her a new mirror,
A poet to give garlands of colours.
Invite an alchemist
To turn her to gold.