

**MAE YWAY****Poems****27 (She's stuck on a Ferris wheel and will never be able to get off again)**

I deny reality  
I deny the principle of cosmic order  
These are absolutely tedious

I don't want to show my rational side to people anymore  
I don't want to put on faces  
And no more blathering about how things should have been  
And no more grumbling about human existence or the universe  
After all, love, like everything, comes to be and then disintegrates  
I don't want to keep on living by banking on a hope  
Don't want to run back and forth between the real life and dreams  
And no more blaming the city  
Besides, I haven't learnt the names of the presidents yet

I'll stop wishing well on the younger generation  
Don't ask me what's up with me  
I'll stop memorizing theories  
I'll stop documenting my everyday life  
And no more debating with people about whether suicide is right

The line between two friends has been crossed  
How was it breached? Where did it start?  
I'll stop answering the phone  
You like to finish yourself off with your hand, I get it  
And I'll stop thinking about my old lovers

I won't bad-mouth my relatives anymore  
Believe me you won't ever hear me say again  
What an absolutely useless thing social dignity is  
I won't hurt you anymore, I'll be careful  
No promises we make follow us to the grave, I think

The first rains of May shake Cassia flowers off their trees  
The whole street burning bright in yellow  
You wouldn't know all this if I didn't tell you

I'll stop wasting my time  
On my-heart-is-with-you-but-I-can't-be-there type of relationship  
I don't enjoy sleeping anymore  
I'll never have children  
I'll never stop smoking  
I no more want to see myself in Kyi Aye's woman characters

No more sitting in a chair in a Murakami novel  
No more cameos in the Wong Kar-wai films  
No more bumping into Meursault on the beach on a sunny day

If I'm getting so drunk and jump into the pool, stop me

So  
Where do we go from here? Which pub?  
Just tell me  
Tell me  
Tell me now

*Translated from the Burmese by Maung Day*

**In the ballpark**

you get girly-jealous/ you are a blabbermouth/ your shyness shuts your cute eyelashes/ to become a couple, you have the right to say "yes"/ you are an erratic driver/ everyone is born free and equal except when you are born short of decent karma/ you say your son is your Lord, your God your husband/ you have womanly tricks up your sleeve/ you cheat/ you slut/ all your life you are kept unmolested under the heavy *thanaka* grinding stone/ you deserve a bride price/ you are wed-&-fed to him/ you walk three steps down your house & you don't manage to get back home/ you are a single-mother-to-be/ your given name follows your family name/ you are just a slave on his path to the Buddhahood/ your whole life is cooking in the kitchen/ you are busy fancying a reliable man/ a man shouldn't grimace like a woman/ a wife has to dog her husband/ you are always at the lower end of the seesaw so the other end could stay high/ you are thin with intellect/ you act second sex/ to protect your pussy is always your first priority/ don't rape me, please/ I am just an entertainment/ just a dependent/ I have no right to lead this household/ this poem writes this poet/.

*Translated from the Burmese by Ko Ko Thett*

**It's Like You Avoid Eating Chicken When You Get a New Tattoo**

It's like you avoid eating chicken when you get a new tattoo  
The map of excitement is underarm sweat  
The two of us burn to ashes while screaming "peaceful love"  
When I cry, you tear tissues from your body and give them to me  
But we have to look up the word 'body' in the dictionary first  
So that we spell it right  
It just so happens that we have omitted some realities  
From our memories of coincidences, for instance, our ex-lovers

In reality, nothing could finish me off  
And in the end we went different ways  
I go shopping and cook something  
When the kitchen knife decides to attack, I get cut into pieces  
Then there are wounds that heal in fire  
When scabs peel off, the tattoo comes into view as a new scent of hunger

One's ultimate right is the midnight, making love  
In the kitchen or in the living room or on the verandah

Shortcomings are so tedious  
Light rises from the mountains  
Light looks down at me  
Vines attempt to seduce me with their grapes

"How should we carry on?" I shout and shout  
My voice doesn't come forward, but goes backward and crawls on the ground  
You messed me up and now I am little pieces scattered and destroyed  
My hands go under the bed, but the feet don't know what to do  
The brain rolls and bumps into the dustbin standing in a corner  
The scalp glows in the dark  
A new door has found me at the age of twenty-five

This is the color blue going to the sea  
Or the yellow of afternoon that constricts pupils  
Or traffic lights in Yangon, that shows red light and green light simultaneously

Otherwise bullet-riddled bodies will come floating from the border  
Otherwise Nwe and I will just be playing checkers  
Or it may just be Ponyo swimming among whales in the city flooded at the doors  
Or the year 2016, which I lived through by curling up in a luggage  
Or please just take our watches and give time in return  
Or I may just be sitting on two stools at the same time, sweetheart  
Or Mae Yway may just be mumbling “nothing’s important in life” in her sleep

When did the sense of self-importance enter my body and from where?  
Zeyar Lynn wrote a phrase “a fire engine catching fire” in one of his poems  
Well I am that fire engine  
It just so happens that I go into that poem and catch fire  
It just so happens that you won’t sing a loud siren like that fire engine

*Translated from the Burmese by Maung Day*

**We Are an Unmistakable Fusion**

You and I are an unmistakable fusion  
It's like I crawled under your fence and entered you  
At first I only wanted a small piece of your territory  
Then my desire to make you my colony grew

A rose that blooms with childhood traumas  
Drying leaves and smoldering pleasure  
A happy family only in the frozen moment of a photograph

Problems, they found me and she did too  
I put a wall between them  
Then I don't hear any more noise

Problems, they start to learn to talk  
The child living in blood may stutter but his words have meanings  
Sunglasses that I ordered came on the first day of rain

The numbers at the traffic lights go backward  
The bridges crack on the day of their opening  
A cracking relationship and I became twenty-five  
They snipped my hemorrhoid with scissors

You may say she's a stain that can't be removed  
Crazy, crazy rainbows  
Their differences are colorful  
Sex treats me like a sick patient

The needle penetrates my bone  
It started with a skin-deep and now the length of the whole finger  
They were still going on about other people even after you left  
'That's the daughter-in-law of...' 'She's the mother of...' they say

My relationship with them is like a surface with curves  
The kind of relationship that can dive underwater till it touches the bottom  
Or it is a sea that ends at the arc of the horizon

I know I haven't told you about the clouds pressing down

*Translated from the Burmese by Maung Day*