

POEM



From 'As I Sat Alone'

Faysal Mikdadi

As I sat alone, warm but weary,
I wondered where time had gone.
Ageing irrevocably and imperceptibly,
I suddenly felt the years heavy upon me.
"Where?" I asked. "Where?"
Has each year gone and what in each?"
I looked back at the highway of life.
Tree lined with life's stories
Colourful and broadly good, I thought.
Good learning and more teaching,
Professorial endeavours to help others
Happily concluded and well ended.
Children kind and relationships contented.
Occasionally, the highway was desolate
And its trees denuded of green leaves
"These were the winter times."
Yes, they must have been.
Loves aplenty but each still alone
Want of something – something missing;
Not knowing what and always seeking.
Resolved often with empty encounters,
Trying to look in a face for returned solace,
Mutual understanding – some recognition.
Head tilted, as if in pain, moaning
And gently whimpering love out –
And feeling relieved but unfulfilled.

The highway had many turns,
With no returns – just straight ahead;
Awaiting the next ordeal – welcoming crises,
For they evoked care and love
Out of emptiness before recovery
Caused us to sink back into an ordinary
Walk down the famous highway.

Aged but not daunted, old but not crushed,
I walked on trying not to shuffle
"Dad is getting old ..." I heard her whisper
"I hate it when he looks so hurt."
I so wanted to say that all was well
And that the hurt face was set through life
In search of the unattainable
And undeliverable – apart from my books.
Ah! There is salvation in a happy hour
Spent leafing through a life
And listening to ancient lore
Filling me with warmth and security;
Head tilted again, wanting to make love
To my books because they love me back.