

KHET THI

The Grand Gorges of Yangon

There are black holes in space.
Into the bargain
We have Grand Gorges in Yangon.
The Bargaya Gorge has sunk Yangon
Along with her history.
Us & hip-hop kids are still buried in the Bargaya Gorge.
When propane springs forth from the Rakhine littoral towards China
We mine the Gorge for cooking gas.
There wasn't enough gas that would have killed Sylvia Plath.
Incredibly deep are the Grand Gorges of Yangon.
Incredibly thick is the darkness trapped inside the Grand Gorges.
Bread is in the Grand Gorge of Evil.
It is baked in the Inferno.
Once, a girl who wanted to go abroad to become a housemaid
Was sucked up into the Grand Gorge of Evil.
There are several Grand Gorges like that in Yangon.
The Grand Gorges whistle; they wait for you.
The Grand Gorges wear Darling's Grace headdress; they wait for you.
A Grand Gorge, in flare jeans, leans against a power pole.
Hanging a cigarette at the corner of his mouth in the style of
A classic gangster, he waits for you.
A Grand Gorge will gorge another Grand Gorge that will gorge yet
another one.
They smile & wait to see if one will buy another's snare.
The Grand Gorges of Yangon are
Made in China. They don't last long.
They tend to disappear, only
To pop up in another place.

The number of people who have fallen into the Grand Gorges of Yangon
Are ten times that of Beijing's population.
Yangon has turned into a restless &
Sleepless conurbation.
Sports cars no longer race in Yangon nights.
Yangonites must now pay attention to the noises coming out of the
Grand Gorges.
What do they hear?
They hear snakes hiss.
They hear bones crow.
They hear a singalong out of the Grand Gorges.
The residents of the Grand Gorges are singing together.
Their anthem gets livelier and livelier.
Peoples of the Grand Gorges step on each other's
Shoulders to climb up to the surface.
With their voices in unison
They boom "L'Internationale",
Raising their fists towards heavens.

*Khet Thi (1976-2021), poet and activist, was arrested on 8 May 2021
in Shwebo and tortured to death by 9 am 9 May.*