

THE Rat

Companion, nightfarer, sneaking
around,
endlessly scavenging for scraps and
crumbs;
a life in which the search for sustenance
becomes a long sequence of snarled
anguish.

The humility you show is an empty
husk.

A soul's essence is in its cutting edge—
something you have lost, since when?

Who knows.

Darkness stunts the soul, blocking its
growth.

Viciously the gloom devours, absorbs,
sucks in

Perception's geography, the personal
atlas.

It is a flow which follows only one
direction.

If the cold, unseeing mirror of
indigence

could let the lacerated face be seen but
once

the soul's cutting edge its quintessence,
might at last surge through the flesh
and blood

like an irresistible lightning flash,
shattering restrictions, downing
obstacles.

You are synonymous with the gloom of
holes and burrows,
a stern, perpetual incarceration in the
dark.

An entire geography of poverty and
contretemps,
hunched up, as if snuggling in the
throes of death;
muffled altogether in a self-seeded
despair.

—*Translated by Muhammad Salim-ur-Rahman*