For J.: An Elegy

You’re gone,
leaving behind just me, your daughter, and a son.
A whole month has passed since,
still I find it hard to convince
myself that you’re no more—
the very core
of my small universe.
A curse
life now seems to be.
What was the hurry?
I don’t know
why you had to go
all of a sudden,
while I see every now and then
people twice as old as you,
who seem to have few
desires and even fewer dreams,
frolicking in the streams
of life, unmindful of the passage of time;
but you chose to go in your prime!

Days pass by somehow,
blurring the difference between then and now;
but the nights seem to drag on and on,
stirring memories of times long-gone.
I toss and turn in my bed, unable to sleep;
deep, deep
within
a small boat gives in
to a nameless storm;
an invisible worm
eats away at its planks:
I greet the dawn with thanks.

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1 The poem is dedicated to the memory of my brother-in-law, Masud Ahmed, who passed away in a road accident in July 2011.

Md. Rezaul Haque. 'For J.: An Elegy'.
Transnational Literature Vol. 4 no. 1, November 2011.
At long last I hear the birds singing
and close my eyes to catch the familiar ring
of your voice in those happy notes;
the empty boats,
lying at anchor,
remind me you’re no more.

It’ll take me ages to learn
you’re not going to return
to our familiar shore;
perhaps the sore
will heal in time;
the old tunes will perhaps chime
again in a new pattern;
only you’ll never return,
only you’ll never be there
for me to call, ‘Abbu! I’m h-e-r-e.’

_md. rezaul haque_

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2 The English equivalent of ‘abbu’ is ‘daddy.’