Vignettes of the Bhopal Disaster

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Vignettes of the Bhopal Disaster

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Abstract

Dr. Dhara is a former member of the International Medical Commission on Bhopal. This poem is about his experiences interacting with victims of the disaster.

KEY WORDS: Bhopal, gas cloud, toxicity, victims, disaster
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Tainted by the cloud

Bhopal awakens

The sound of bicycle bells

the early bus.

A roar of black fumes for breakfast.

Years ago the gas cloud,

(atom of the green revolution)

hugged the city.

Its poisonous affection

A night avatar of annihilation

Misery in the morning mist

Women sweep the atom

in the never-ending dust.

Their children cough

a cohort of cripples.

A street hawker

lungs scarred

A traveler for trade

His daily labor interrupted
by atomic bouts of breathlessness.

The college professor, perplexed
by his new handicap in teaching
an old molecular structure.

His class chuckles.

Aphasic! Atomized!!

Young woman in her prime
spinster-in-the-making
by the hand of the invisible atom.

Veil lifted, complaining,

'I was touched by the cloud'

'Yes, we are all tainted by the cloud'