

RUBY RAHMAN

DAMAGES

*Translated from the Bengali by Carolyn Wright with Syed Manzoorul
Islam and the author*

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There are some sorrows, some damages, for which
 there is no compensation;
you are that irreparable loss of mine.
Where you cast your glance
light of the conjoining stars dances
 along the great longitude;
the courage to dream blooms in the blood
and the difficult habit of staying alive,
nurtured from the moment of birth,
crumbles like conch-shell dust.
You are that inconsolable sorrow of mine
that tears apart this neat and tidy day-to-day existence.

Someday this present time
will slip out of my grasp
like a fisherman missing on the high seas.
The still lighthouse's flickering beam of light
will tremble only on the vast deep,
dark waters of the sea—a wounded wind;
and there will go on lying my boundless time—
my destiny!

There are some sorrows, some calamities—
that can never, from any quarter, be compensated for.

THE IOWA REVIEW