The Tea Ceremony

In the room of her memory where tea was always, but it was ALWAYS, taken, a fuse blows. Her long-dead father looks startled. Cups rattle, and his face leaves. In her ears, years of rumours from villages dismantle down to their smallest components, no more audible than the siftings of sugar in her slightly dented silver sugar bowl. Voices unscrew into slender peepings of frogs. They hop gently away, beyond the last windows. Her fingers slowly slough off the soft skin of sensations, as patiently as a snake. The feel of her feathery nightdress comes away in her hand like a brass doorknob. Her echoes fall asleep in the wall. Bricks age, and crumble awake to the peepings of frogs, who demand new swamps in the villages, since tea must, but it MUST, be taken, in rooms where fathers still try to fix the dampened fuses, and someone else’s cup of memories begins to fill, with its three sugars or two rumours again.

ROGER NASH