

# Seizing moments

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### 🔊 Audio

Listen to Mr. Das read this poem.

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We were playing hide-and-seek underneath  
a leafy frock of almond trees when suddenly

my sister froze, robbed of motion temporarily  
until, beneath a scarf of autumn breeze,

she fell onto a strip of road, paved in  
stone, her bony arms arched upwards,

while restless quivers turned into fired shots  
of *squeeze, squeeze, squeeze*, clenched fists, rocky

lips, eyes behind the cup of lids, muscles  
below her wrap of skin, tightening spasmodically.

Her C-shaped spine rocked back and forth,  
while shock-like jerks gripped furiously

her crowded map of nerves. Balls of froth  
spewed soundless screams, in between

convulsions. I yelled for help  
but there was not a soul nearby, not a bird in the sky,

the first responders far away. Moments passed by  
as I watched her body squirm and writhe, tense

up, contort into a cold apostrophe, breaths  
growing thick over purple lips—until about a minute passed

the spasms died, the clench subsided, the slur  
of words resolved, her vacant eyes filled up with light,

and she jolted awake in disbelief. This was many years ago,  
when she was 12 and I was 4; yet, it remains

so vivid in my mind: that cloudless sky, Nature's course,  
an empty road, and her body's overshot circuitry.

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