

DWELLING WITH DENIAL AND OTHER POEMS

By Rajiv Khandelwal

Generations have carried
In supervised submissive silence

The burden of economic considerations
Taken in lieu
Of our social obligations
Generated for occasions
Like weddings

Births

Medical bills

Deaths

Religious meals

For three generations
The unwritten accumulated outstanding loans
Parent-pledged
Has been handed down to us by succession

Irregular and unpredictable incomes
Have ensured
That
Captive frustration, distress and misery
Either shelters with us under open skies
Or stays in rat-infested small shacks
Or with some of us lucky ones
It shares space with cattle in their sheds

Sans sanitary conditions
Hungry stomachs
Live a life worse than animals
For in our world, only animals
Are free to hunt around
For eatables when ravenous

Discrimination and social exclusion
Have corroborated
To assure, we
The doubly disadvantaged
Be destined to dwell with denial

THE DEBT

We the poorest of the poor
With chronic and dire economic needs
Are the debt-bonded-laborers
Living with insecurity and incomes crunched

We are trapped to do donkey-work
With or without pay
 Or just, for some unwholesome food
To pay interest on debts
Taken ages ago
Or For credit taken now for daily family needs

Vulnerable

Voiceless

Denied of human rights

We live a life of callous bondage

Without pipe dreams of deliverance

We, the indebted

Together with our wives and children

Are coerced

Violated

Intimidated

On a day to day basis

My left hand wrist was axed

My wife ritually raped

Due our failed attempt to flee

Yet we, under-violence-threat- kept-docile

Are still expected to be perpetually indebted

For the left-over food

Discarded clothes

And next to nothing pay

That our creditors

Fling towards us

Yet

No one is anguished by our plight

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

My mobile

Lately

Is out of character

Today

When I tapped the dial pad

To connect

With my occupational connections

To settle disputed marketing affairs

The Android dialed you

As if knowing

Like the imperfect murky business of Indo-Pak truncation

We too have some unsettled matters

Whose answers

Lie

Blocked

Buried

Unmined

Bio

Born, 1957, at Kanpur, Primary education in convent schools at Kanpur and Agra, obtained his bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering from Birla Institute of Technology and Sciences (BITS), Mesra, Ranchi. He is now a business man by profession

Rajv Khandelwal has published 4 volumes of Poetry – “Conch Shells and Cowries” – published in 1998, “Love is a Lot of Work” and “A Monument to Pigeons” both published in 2013. 4th poetry volume titled "A Time To Forget" -published 2017

3 books of Critical Analysis of his poetic works have been published

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Rajiv has been awarded "Literary Creative Award" by Naji Naaman's Foundation for Gratis Culture, of Lebanon

National and International Critics have written 17 favorable Review/Critical paper on his works, till date .

His poems are being translated into Hindi and the Hindi version is slated to be published in 2019

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