

INSTRUMENT AND OTHER POEMS

By Santosh Alex

He got an instrument
with which
he could measure
the distance between hearts
He measured
the distance between the lover's hearts
and found it
to be miles apart.
When the church bell rang
she left
When the Ajan sounded
he left
Knowing about the instrument
both the group of people
attacked him
Today he is a statute
at the junction
with lifted hand,
one finger pointing at the church
and another towards the mosque.

MUMBAI

Its five' o clock in the morning
Husband and wife
are busy doing their work.
Their conversation

can be heard in the dreams
of those who are asleep.

Friend

Where do you find solace?

In prayer

In giving alms

In poetry

Look at the happiness of
the husband and wife.

They have left the house
to catch the local train.

In Mumbai at dawn

there are only man and woman.

THE BANKS OF THE GANGES IN BENARES

At dawn

the boats were tied
at the ghats.

There were neither the passengers
nor the boatman.

There was little sunlight
visible enough
to see the boat.

I was trying

to listen to the Ganges.

She is not energetic

as before.

She told me

to pray from far

and leave.

However

I sat there

for some time.

As I was about to leave

Saw this written on the wall opposite

Holy Ganges, Holy Kashi

THE PERSON WHO LOVED FLOWERS

When he came to know

that the flowers were going to commit suicide

He shared the news

with the pedestrian

the traffic police

the street vendor

the school kids

the college students

the couple who parked the car

and were heading towards the shopping mall

None reciprocated

Don't commit suicide

Until I come back

Saying this to the flowers
he went away.

The next day
the flowers joined the crowd
moving to his house.

MODERN FAMILY

$$(a+b)^2 = a^2 + b^2 + 2ab$$

$(a+b)^2$ means combined family

$a+b$

a = Grandfather

b = Grandmother

Under one roof

One family, one kitchen

a^2 = Son's family

One family, one kitchen

b^2 = Daughter's family

One family, one kitchen

$2ab$

Where 2 stands for live-in relationship

a = woman

b = man

In this family

Man and woman share the same status

What about the kitchen?

FAMILY

It's attractive
and hard glass
if you don't clean it carefully
it would break

Years have passed
there are scratches at some places
At some places it's bleak
At other places there are stains.

Happy to note that
the glass is still hard;
not broken yet.

DWARF

Sipping a cup of coffee
in the balcony
I saw a bonsai.
It's dwarf in size
yet attractive.

From the tenth floor of my apartment
the houses below appear dwarf.
Dwarf is our caretaker
his wife, children and wishes.

Giving a boon to Mahabali

Vaman too became dwarf.
The man living
in the four walls of the room
with his ego is no more a man
but has become a bonsai.

DEPTH

I was bathing in the sea
dived twice
After the third dive
as I rose
Husain appeared all of a sudden.

How is it that you are here
I asked
With a smile he answered
You dive nicely
I want to dive deep
Said I with a smile

Depth is dangerous, said he
There's depth in your painting.
Said I
What do you do?
He asked
I am a poet
There is depth in poetry too
Yes, Said I

Depth wouldn't give you peace
I want to go deep
do something different, said I
You will be attacked, beguiled
I don't care, said I

Suddenly he vanished
I left the shore
in thoughts deeper.

THE WASHER- WOMAN AT THE GODHAVARI GHAT

Since many years
she comes to the ghat
with bundles of sin
on her head.

She tosses the clothes
dipped in water
the same way
as her husband tosses her,
after he comes home drunk.

While she puts
the colourful clothes on the clotheslines
her eyes become wet.
In the evening
her son helps her to
carry the clean clothes.

On the way back,
first the dog,
then the boy.
Years have gone by;
the ghat is the same
the situation is the same.

The difference,
her hair has become grey
Godavari has become slim.
On the way back
first the grandchild
then the dog
and then she.

MOTHER – 1

Mother had studied
Up to tenth standard.
Yet, was cleverer
than the educated.

It's not sad
that Mother is no more.
The sad part is that
she never lived for herself.

She was present everywhere
in the courtyard , in the kitchen
She kept us bound

in summer, in winter
in happiness, in agony .

It's happy to note that
she still lives
among the family members
in their thoughts, in their breath.

Bio

Dr Santosh Alex is the Author of 23 books and is a Trilingual poet, widely published translator and a poetry curator. He is the founder of India's first e-journal devoted exclusively for poetry - Rithupoetry. He has two poetry collections Dooram (2008) and Njanninakku oru ghazal (2013) in Malayalam and one poetry collection in Hindi, Panv Tale ki mitti (2013). His poems have been widely translated into Malayalam, English, Telugu, Odiya, Bengali, Konkani, Kannada, Tamil, Asamese, Nepali, Serbian, Kurdish, Turkish, Arab, Spanish, German and Vietnamese Language. His poems have been published in International Poetry Anthologies Viz Sunrise from the Blue Thunder, Hudson View, Indo Australian Poetry Anthology, Poems for Hazara, XXIst Century Literature and other Indian journals of repute. Dr.Santosh translates Post-Colonial literature in English, Hindi, Telugu, Tamil and Malayalam and has translated almost 100 writers from India and abroad in different languages. He is on the editorial board of many peer reviewed journals and the poetry editor of Asian Signature. Dr Santosh is enriching Indian Literature by means of translation and creative writing for the past 24 years. He was awarded Dwivageesh Puraskaar by Bhartiya Anuvad Parishad, one of the Oldest and prestigious Pan Indian council, Thalashery Raghavan Memorial Poetry Award and the inaugural Srijanlok Samman and Sahitya Ratna Puraskaar. He can be reached at drsantoshalex@gmail.com