

BOOK REVIEW

SUNNY RAIN-N-SNOW (AN OLIO OF POETRY FOR PLEASURE)

BY U ATREYA SARMA, PARTIAGE INDIA, 2016

Reviewed By R. B. Singh

U Atreya Sarma is an accomplished prolific poet. His prolificity manifests itself in his choice of subject matter and formal diversification. His debut joy ride in poetry is titled *Sunny Rain-n-Snow: An olio of poetry for pleasure*. By proclaiming the collection as poetry for pleasure, the poet seems to lure the reader into sharing in his pleasurable compositions. Poetry may not matter much today, but pleasure certainly does. And cerebral pleasure is uncommon, rather ethereal. However, the poems in this collection cater to everyone's palate.

The poems in this book are divided into several cute boxes like Femina, Facets of Nature , Epiphanes, America, Musings on Poesy, Relations and Equations, Romantic Peeps, Reflectively yours, social bristles, Tongue-in-check, Occasional Voices and Metrical forays, a full dozen. They are preceded with a Foreword by Dr. Sunil Sharma who likens Sarma's poems to a spectacular scene of nature, the stunning view of changing colours and the woodlands lending a new perspective on life and its meaning. I am happy to endorse this view.

Sunny Rain-n-Snow encompasses all the facets of life sweet and sour, funny and meditative, stale and sizzling and makes equally intimate rapport with the reader. Whereas his Femina poems are a tribute to feminine sensibility, his nature poems appreciate the elements and aspects of nature with human warmth and delicacy. While talking of pain the poet becomes a stoic philosopher and says,

You can't wish away pain, a part of life

So why not better learn to grin and bear?

The poet's idea of poetry is a hilarious composition. To quote,

When flight of fancy
And a worthy wreath of words
Cohabit on a bed of aesthetics,
The labours of their union
Conceive the baby of poesy..... (55)

But in the next poem he argues against all possible charges against poetry and rationalizes the matter of poetic composition.

By its very nature poetry is a multi-layered cake, multi-coloured and multi-flavoured, even tasty in tastelessness. Talking of friendship he declares with a tongue-in-check,

Giving is your nature, taking is mine.

Isn't then our friendship mutually fine? (65)

The 'Romantic Peeps' presents a stealthy peep into his dream girl's ajar chamber just to admire her and assure himself but not to tell her, nor to let her know. A good lover-in waiting of the yester years! He will feel pampered with:

What you and I want is not

The candy Kiss or Scotch Kiss

But the deep Kiss, the soul kiss, the French Kiss. (70)

However, the poet's passion is only dormant now, when a roused, "only that voluptuous strapping wench can my (his) fires of passion temper and quench." (71)

Among his reflective poems 'A Riot of Colours!' is the most remarkable for its imagery. Assigning leaves, flowers and fruits human attributes, by implication the poet digs at human

weakness. Thus, 'greenleaves/gazing at red flowers/ Turn green with envy' and 'Red flowers/ eyeing yellow fruits/ turn red with anger.' (77)

Poet Sarma has a sensitive heart which bleeds for the poor and underdog. He sheds tears for them from his pen because he is heartless. The rich girl has stolen it. Without making bones he accuses the rich who account for the underdog. Almost in the same vein he finds the sun tired of man's sins. And so unable to bear 'the sun slipped behind a veil of clouds'. (85) No wonder, the poet calls truth a casualty'.

And lastly, the poet's sense of humour can be shared in his verbal cartoons. 'Rakhi broodband' is a classic example. Getting a rakhi is not an unmixed pleasure. Absence of rakhi is as worrisome as an overflow of it. That makes the collection both thought provoking and entertainer.

I have enjoyed reading U. Atreya Sarma's poems and I congratulate him on his poetic produce so light, bright and sparkling.

Bio

Dr. Ram Bhagwan Singh, a retired Professor of English from Ranchi University, Ranchi, is a critic, scholar of SAARC literature, translator. He is well known for his satiric essays in Hindi and English. He is now settled in Patna.