Poetry Series

R.K. Singh

- poems -

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R.K. Singh (31 December 1950)

Brought up and educated in Varanasi, India I am a university professor teaching English language skills to students of earth and mineral sciences. I have authored over 150 research articles and 160 book reviews in journals in all over the world.
I have been writing poems in English for over three decades now and am widely anthologised and published in various journals and ezines.
A book on my poetry, NEW INDIAN ENGLISH POETRY: AN ALTERNATIVE VOICE: R.K.SINGH (ed: I.K.Sharma) appeared in 2004.
My latest book, VOICES OF THE PRESENT (2006) is a collection of critical essays on some Indian English poets, while THE RIVER RETURNS (2006) is a collection of my tanka and haiku. SEXLESS SOLITUDE AND OTHER POEMS(2009) is my newest poetry collection.
I am married and have two children, one son and one daughter.
I am at present Professor & Head, Dept of Humanities & Social Sciences, Indian School of Mines, Dhanbad-826004 India

Works:

Have published 30 books, including Savitri: A Spiritual Epic (1984) , Sound and Silence (1986) , Indian English Writing: 1981-1985: Experiments with Expression (1987, rept 1991) , Using English in Science and Technology (1988, rept 2000) , Recent Indian English Poets: Expressions and Beliefs (1992) , Anger in Action: Explorations of Anger in Indian Writing in English (1997) , My Silence and Other Selected Poems: 1974-1994 (1996) , Above the Earth's Green (1997) , Psychic Knot: Search for Tolerance in Indian English Fiction (1998) , New Zealand Literature: Some Recent Trends (1998) , Every Stone Drop Pebble (jointly with Catherine Mair and Patricia Prime,1999) , Cover to Cover (jointly with U.S. Bahri,2002) , Pacem in Terris (jointly with Myriam Pierri and Giovanni Campisi,2003) , Communication in English: Grammar and Composition (2004) , Sri Aurobindo's Savitri: Essays in Love, Life and Death (2005) , Teaching English for Specific Purposes: An Evolving Experience (2005) , The River Returns (2006) , Voices of the Present: Critical Essays on Some Indian English Poets (2006) , English as a Second Language: Experience into Essays (2007) , English Language Teaching: Some Aspects Recollected (2008) , and Sexless Solitude and Other Poems (2009) .

A SEASONAL GRACE

Amidst trees without fruits
and the rising jungle
flowers a seasonal grace
in colours coexist
with disfiguring autumn

R.K. Singh

ABOVE THE EARTH'S GREEN

He is a solo drum
trying to get his rhythm
against the sputtering rains

the mud sticks on trousers
wet and cool it can't sleep
in the thorns of our yard

I seek my balance in
yog-nidra in the closed
room think his thoughts and lies

we weave to ensnare spirit
that pricks the balloon we pump
to rise above the earth's green

R.K. Singh

AGAIN AND AGAIN

Again and again
I find myself on bed
my sacred space
but I can't relax
meditate or dream

now fail to have
what I always had
her naked company
with tingling laugh
slurred with passion

can't celebrate yoni
deep into silence
renewed, released, returning
without finality
again and again

R.K. Singh

ARTHRITIS

My legs
heavy with pain
don't move:
sit still, await
someone to lift

R.K. Singh

AT HIS BED'S FOOT

Seeks music in
love's masturbating keys
at his bed's foot
the breath of god lay forked
like a tongue of briars

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

AUTUMN IN THE RAIN

The faces appearing
and receding in
dark of closed eyes

don't answer why
they aren't winged souls
fading in the sun

I emptied before it set
in the gowns of girls
stopped from dancing barefoot:

they shake autumn in the rain
mist blurs the image
water spills in shady pool

R.K. Singh

BANARAS

1
The river flows through the woods
grown in Banares in centuries
down this terrace they say
washes ills and hides sins
inher graceful ripples reflects
the depths of eternity they love
the myth like heaven and slavation
each morning my father repeats
the celestial history while his son
breaks off the golden bough
and acts rex nemorensis
without fighting the priest
and the polemic continues over politics

2
Young girls and women move up and down
in the large boat standing on the Gange's bank
the sun smoulders the sand they carry over head
and fling down the basket that is their bread

they sit on the terrace and smoke hashish at noon
throw jokes on the privates or watch their sullen grace
poverty scythes their sweating skin, they fall
and the drowsy river flows with the city's garbage

3
Silent flows the Ganges in Banares
the muddy water and mud accumulates on roads
each house harnesses the taints
no matter, how many sacrifices of blood
each temple shelters satan's friends
even after centuries the muck stinks
on both sides convenience of culture
cuddles the self-turned waves
speaking of our pride, my obsession
straight through the bones of the living
their crooked simplicity and polished innocence
treachery, vanity, ranting
always washed in the fast current?
or the rod of time is impotent?
like the river I see untiringly
it's unsleeping eyes looking upward

R.K. Singh

BATHING WOMEN

Wet bodies
of bathing women-
full moon night

R.K. Singh

BENDS AND TWISTS

Swirling spiral
of her skirt spills tides of dream
and memory:
I breathe fire in the dance
forgetting bends and twists

R.K. Singh

BLIND

Blind
with their own sight

don't see the wonders
round them but kneel

and ask why
only me

too painful to see

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

BODY: A BLISS

'To see you naked
is to recall the Earth'
says Garcia Lorca

it's no sin to love
strip naked in bed, kitchen
or prayer room

the bodies don't shine
all the time nor passion
wildly overflows

but when we have time
we must remember the parts
arouse the dead flesh

rub raw with desire
peeling wet layers through light
sound, senses and taste

play the seasons:
the thirst is ever new
and blissful too

to recreate
the body, a temple
and a prayer

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

BORN, MARRIED AND DEAD?

What is this life
like the sun rising and dying
someone beginning and someone stopping
without presence being felt
without effect, striking, ending
long rituals of waste?

nothing saved except
years squandered in bed
feigning and unfeigning
the blood flows but doesn't complain:
time seals the strife
born, married and dead?

R.K. Singh

BROKEN LIVES

A crow
picking sperms from his mouth
to feed anger
of an unwed mother
gang raped in temple
dumb deity couldn't father
the borken lives

R.K. Singh

BURIAL

Frazzled at the day's end
when I smell her flesh
she curses my knots

and the two decades
of living the same routine
in kitchen and bed

and nowhere else to go
in shameless convenience
I look for the blankness

she kicks my image
in the little pool of blood
and buries my sex

R.K. Singh

CONCLUSION OF A TRAGIC POEM

I wish I could clean the cobweb of legends
that veil the vision, moralising future
with doubtful glories urge us to move backward:

echoes of the dead reverberate; no use
setting the alarm to go off 2010

stashed away in empty slogans life's seconds
periodically exhumed is a travesty
of obsolescence of the sun ever clouded

Gateway of India or Delhi's Circus
suffer midnight lust with rites of consummation
like the conclusion of a tragic poem

R.K. Singh

CREATION

To create is to die:
die to love, to time
to memory, to god
to everything we know
do or experience

it is stillness, to cease
in passive awareness-
no movement but new mind
new energy, new sense
of innocence, freshness

not talked about before
new love rising with
thinking without thought
new sensation, beauty
and bliss of harmony

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

DEATH OF A SONG

In the stillness of morning
hangs fog like smoke veils
her waiting in street

I watch my window
wavering shadow
announcing death of a song

R.K. Singh

DONS IN FOUR WALLS

The house may collapse any day
the walls are cracked
the chinks gape at the base
but none care

they maintain dignity
with consmetic protection
demand patience and practise
duplicity till their own end

in meanness evoke mystery
to quell good sense and concerns
for the future buy silence
of the dons in four walls

R.K. Singh

DON'T CONDEMN ME

DON’T CONDEMN ME

It’s still linked but I don’t understand
or don’t want to understand

I am too much with me and worry
about her dying libido and my

own shrinking sex amidst salsa chill
Bihu fever, Vishu rituals

ringing emptiness day and night shake
the age-wrapped youth for single-edge play

in forked flame carve image of heaven
to challenge the jealous God undo

sins of races flowing in my blood:
I love Him through the bodies He made

but they don’t understand redemption
in churning and parting of the sea

they don’t rejoice the flames of henna
on her palms nor let the lily bloom

in the valleys use the clefts and cliffs
to deface beauty and spike voices

don’t condemn me if I am not white
the water still flows in my river

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

EMPTY SHELLS

EMPTY SHELLS

Walking along the beach
they collect empty shells
that fascinate senses
in the salty air

feel the life now no more
but argue about the sex
of a conch ignoring
the fishermen's song

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

EROTIC SCARS

Sleeps the night with
desires wrapped in blanket-
spring in the eyes
gods couldn't change the rhythm
of the body and its needs

R.K. Singh

EROTICS OF BYGONES

I hate kneaded flour
it reminds of semen
in the dark of my palms

it puts me off to smell
sweat oozing from the armpits
the thighs moist with urine

in bed the body is
its own antidote if itched
for love the wasted sex

I hate to meditate
the erotics of bygones
growling with unzipped night

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

EYELESS JAGANNATH

I can't understand
their mystic heaven or thrills
housed in awareness

time's intricacies
or sources of plastic mist
through mythical depths

the wings of my thought
are too short to climb God's height
or blue deeps of peace

I stand on the edge
of earth's physicality
waiting on the brink

with shadowy lines
and curves to image march of
eyeless Jagannath

if nobody sees
the collapse of procession
and dark precinct

don't blame the poets:
there is too much emptiness
and gloom to ignore

R.K. Singh

FEAT

He thinks he has achieved a feat
seeking security through division
but the fear haunts and thought multiplies
the problem: the gap between

what is and what may be
the itch inside the skin
the memories of love-making
and routine pleasures now nightmare

with chemical change in blood and nerves
licks the tulip in drawing room
and thinks thoughtlessly mindlessly
inflicts more pain to himself

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

FOG: SOME HAIKU

FOG

His presence
among the known faces—
evening fog

A thin fog
hides the wintry moon
rising slowly

Slowly clears
the morning fog
end of the year

Hides the sun
a dense fog in the morning:
waning winter

Stench of burning leaves
mounts with fog in the evening
asthmatic breathing

East faced
yoga in the fog
breathlessness

shrouded in fog
the lone pomegranate
in the backyard

Wrapped in fog
the flying plane
seen by sound

Feels the shadow
with wet fingers on the beach:
sound through the fog

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

FOUR HAIKU

1. Full of silt
the river overflows:
snakes under the waves

2. Streetlights die
with the onrush of rain-
walking to silence

3. Greets no known faces
at the street-corner kiosk-
only folds of night

4. Her fingers
I taste in the orange
she peels

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

FREEDOM

It is merely the color they replace
not the content, and make distance
with rickety slogans engulf the waves
that trap tears before dreams revolt

what use is lamenting the shipwreck in a void
or braving the mortal remains
or the day's frail fabric in a dead world:
no good as a gauze for the sick

or shroud for the dyong; their flags deceive all
in the name of independence
they mock the millions with substanceless noise
while funeral dreams haunt my sleep

I hang nobody's picture in my chamber
but see their shadows masturbate
in damp corners or seduce in poppy light
the crooks and righteous alike

R.K. Singh

FROM A VINEYARD

Frosted faces dissolve in
stale rain clutching
female body and

poached contexts dizzyingly slip
from a vineyard
who'll treat them angels?

R.K. Singh

FROM THE WINDOW

Tall houses appear
to grow like trees from the plane
slowly rising high

people turn tiny
with cars, water, birds and beasts
in the summer flame

nervously worried
watch the moving mass of clouds
from the window

eternal patterns
nature's wonder on the edge
a streak of orange

and thousands of lights
twinkle in colours like stars
seat belt fastened

R.K. Singh

GAZING WHITE SILENCE

Last night I woke up
to respond to the door bell
murmuring God's name

when I unbolted
found none but a passing soul
stopped for a moment

on its knees, peeking
into its own clasped hands
gazing white silence

R.K. Singh

GOD

The word is not God
but the mind creates it
after its own image

the memories of patterns
the illusions and longings
the desires that become truth-

gods gurus and books
overload and hold freedom
to face fear and find

the real reality
untainted by magical
moments that self limit

within deeper recesses
undo psychic structures
the lusts of ages

and be completely quiet:
grow outside the known, without
thought, without withdrawing

when seeking nothing
experiencing nothing-
stillness becomes divine

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

GRADUAL DEATH

The thoughts generated
on the toilet seat
couldn't become poetry

even after prayers
the intensity
couldn't become imagery

through long shadows
in the morning remembering
gradual death

R.K. Singh

GROWING CONSCIOUSNESS

An undressed woman
is a form to lay bare
the vulnerable
in myriad colours:
live, sensuous, delicious
like true sex exposing
naked truths through body
peep into ever
growing consciousness

R.K. Singh

GUAVA

Rising on her toes
to reach the half-eaten
guava on the tree

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

HAIKU

1. Meditating
in the morning sun-
his long shadow

2. A bubble flying
from over the shaving brush
bursts on the mirror

3. Surviving
in the crevices
cockroaches

4. The village pond
waiting for her arrival
with baited hook

5. Awaking
before the climax
the other woman

6. Autumn's mellow mists:
none available to clean
the carpet of leaves

7. Fresh mushrooms
hidden in decaying leaves
missing the season

8. Days after the quake
staring at the rubble-
a homeless widow

9. From wheel chair
unseeable
distances

10. A kidnapper stands
behind the statue of Gandhi
to escape bullet

11. This festival too
couldn't change the cracked glass
now pen and pencil stand

12. Smoking cannabis
at the Sabarmati-
2 0ctober

R.K. Singh

HAIKU-II

1. Measures loneliness
   sip by sip
   at dining table

2. In the well
   studying her image
   a woman

3. A star shines bright
   beside the crescent moon
   she fakes a smile

4. The sky couldn't retain
   all of the moon now entering
   my house through windows

5. Shaking her hand-
   couldn't part with the henna
   on her palms

6. My son's voice
   not relayed by wire:
   tense borders

7. Awaiting their turn
   to feast on a dead dog
   crows in a circle

8. Seeking smell
   in cactus flowers:
   late monsoon

9. Wet bodies
   of bathing women:
   full moon night

10. Setting sun
    leaves behind sparkle
    on the waves

11. Two butteflies
    racing with each other
    perch on the wire

12. All night rain
    the gaping roof
    her shelter

13. Hibiscus
    over the mossy roof
    her shelter

14. Too heavy
these man-made machines
choing weight

15. Students murmurring
over the class-test results:
the teacher's curved lips

16. Alone
in her bed
the cell phone rings

17. Standing behind
the windows bars observe
darkness in shapes

18. Awaits a rickshaw
under the gulmohar tree
a girl with lilac

19. Suspended
on the spider's web
a white flower

20. In the flower pot
scattered petals of roses-
summer's first shower

21. A bubble flying
from over the shaving brush
bursts on the mirror

22. The village pond-
waiting for her arrival with
a baited hook

23. Meditating
in the morning sun-
his long shadow

24. In their web
spiders racing to spin
their meatless prey

25. A bubul
watching from the snapped twig-
empty street

R.K. Singh

HAZY SUN

Sweating desire
inhales new sketches
with mind's pen

on the pillow
image by image
night passes

not knwoing
how a hazy sun
rose from the sea

R.K. Singh

HELPLESSNESS

I have no magical power
to change my restlessness
into glory radiating
peace or purpose in living:

they give me no room to better
men or myself but condemn
as one hanged for nothing:
poets are no living lessons

I stand aside ruminating
what I couldn't do or be
or await miracles through
circles and zigzags of the mind

even corrupt faith and curse
destiny for the maze
of my own making and yet say
I know the spirit's upward fire

R.K. Singh

I AM NO MOSES

I am no Moses receiving
God's message in lightning or thunder

none recognise me in the dark
nor can I see any without light

the cyst on my neck constantly
reminds me of my ugliness

the whitening chest and pubic hair
tell of the death of my potential

the earth needs timely spells of rain
and elements saved from human fears

I must redraw my dreams and visions
to brave life and the intriguing future

R.K. Singh

I CAN'T REMEDY

I CAN’T REMEDY

Life lost in petty worries
is the core worry: I’m diseased
in soul before the devil
reappears I must commit
the act or suffer the bull
for castrating in the dried canal
where some fishy cousins waylay
cowmen with their upthrust bosoms
and make noise too in the half dark
seizing and unseizing slowly
all dreams get buried in sand and grass
now I don’t bother the sweetness
of papaya growing taller
between the fence and the drain
or the urchins stealing the fruit
there’s no fun in romance with the moon
or flowers at night smells and sounds
of the weather smack of allergies
that cripple the andropausal day
and ice all the gelled machismo
too many are the grudges
and I can’t remedy my mind
or body with mystical bids:
it’s loaded with emptiness

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

I CAN'T SING AND PRAISE

I couldn't make my bedroom church
reading psalms and Lord's prayer

the light of my lamp and
the portion of my cup couldn't

lift my soul mired in passions
and silence of the morning

the confessions couldn't remove
my anguish of ages

nor the tears and cries strengthen
faith, hope, and love- the rock

slips the grip for enemies
within don't halt my body

glues to the ground seeking
darkness of the womb and joys

ever restless the child doesn't
grow and the father fails

in verses I can't hide fears
my face I despise, can't find

freedom from the chemicals
sprayed in the air and the smog

oppressing my breath, the sun
fails to keep the covenant

the terrors of death are real
the traps overwhelm, I can't

escape my own creations
the bed, the flesh, and serpents

that seize the house of God
I can't redeem, can't save

the soul in battle with me
in bed I can't sing and praise

R.K. Singh

I DON'T KNOW...

I don't know how to negotiate the long steep trail
with hidden scorpions under loose rocks
at home with human muck in a valley existence
strolling upward through a thicket of TV images
politics of glory, garbage and gods
the odd arts of money, hierarchy and control
nobody knows who unmakes whom

I don't know how to follow the ridges
back to the trail and the dead river
but stand for a moment to rub the sand from my feet
before worrying about the lost vitality and fear
of the approaching night and rising smoke
dissolving in the sky or conspiring with elements
hardly in balance but contorting the psyche

I don't know what is there for me to hope
when the rains rejuvenate and flood both
the repulsive stench and the loss of pathways
linger longer than the flavour of the first drops
under the tree the puddle feeds no sparrows
but algae that couldn't dry now trap tiny souls
that fail to swell with heaven's breath

R.K. Singh

I HEAR SOUNDS

How many defy
the space between
sleep and the leap

I hear sounds
of cracked mirrors
and torn veils

R.K. Singh

I'M NO MOSES

I'm no Moses receiving
God's message in lightning or thunder

none recognise me in the dark
nor can I see any without light

the cyst on my neck constantly
reminds me of my ugliness

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I must redraw my dreams and visions
to brave life and the intriguing future

R.K. Singh

IMAGES

Images converge
on the mirage of body
moulded yoni

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

IN DIM LIGHT

Memory fades
like her body
in dim light

I bury my head
in open hands
to escape noises

R.K. Singh

IN HER PRESENCE

Dancing shades devour
waking tensions for a moment
closed eyes dissolve
years of clog
within the four walls
the flame is freed
from cloying dalliance
for a moment
it's all calm
in her presence

R.K. Singh

INDIAN ENGLISH

Harmony in duality
is unity of tongues
to sculpt new dreams

made of living rock
we aren't different
in our same land:

our poems are woven
from the same skein of language
weathered by time and nature

R.K. Singh

INVITATION

While we were talking about
love, marriage and migraine
she kept fiddling with

her reticule- opening
putting her pen in and out
and shutting again

R.K. Singh

KAMAKHYA

Nothing turns me on
in aloneness self-rape
is no eros:
the blue hill hides the seed
in the sex of goddess

I can't awaken
nor can I rise from the ash
to be my real self
I am still lost in meanness
no third eye could locate

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

KHADDAR ARMS

Man is an animal
with a peculiar smell
says Bertolt Brecht:

he smells a rotten rat
as he waves his khaddar arms
with fake smile

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

LEECHES

At the end of the day
when I look back and see
my knowledge and insight
rusting with ageing colleagues
I pity my age and wish
to give up; I can't change
the means and ends frustrate
the will to work any more

I want to rest now burying
ambitions and achievements
that ache the soul and make
empty sounds in the hollow
of a hallowed pond long doomed
for marrying self-indulgent
elites and idiots
sucking generations

R.K. Singh

LEMONS IN COURTYARD

She props the stooping lemons
with stake but avoids
bending close to me:

I die to draw the blossom
in my twining arms
but she likes the other scent

R.K. Singh

LETTER

Her letter smells
the lotus she wore each time
meeting in the dark:
I touch her fingers again
with all the hopes and passion

R.K. Singh

LIBERATION

Desert storm
by night
turns lusty:
close combats
canons, rockets
inflatable
tanks and dollies
mobile launchers
phallic missiles
go off

boys jog
in women's tents
ejaculate
continue sorties
commanders promise
no penalties

R.K. Singh

LOVE LYRICS

She hears the voice
of unrealised bliss in
the coos of koel
at the window sill this evening
rains love and delight

His message to meet
at moonrise among flowers
sparkles a secret
on her smiling face passion
glows with charming fervour

She is no moon yet
she drifts like the moon, takes care
of him from the sky-
meets him for a short, waxing
leaves him for a long, waning

Before going to bed
she looks too sad to have
any sweet dream:
the only lamp glints no love
and no star peeps through the curtains

Yearning to meet him
she turns a silk-worm spinning
love-silk in cold night-
stands in a shade melting tears
like a candle, dropp by drop

Time stands still
in December chill
she fills emptiness
with words paints season
on his face

Stains of dried dewy
tears on the eyelids tell of
the load on her mind:
clothed in spring the willow twigs
reveal the changed relation

R.K. Singh

LOVEMAKING

After hurried
lovemaking we drift to sleep:
our back to each other

R.K. Singh

LUST IN DUST

A woman should complement
not complicate wanting love
and freedom both with sweetness

of bone in the mouth or
frenzied riding high or
grinding pubic regions

giving more and getting more
she must sound like a cologne
not sin or magic bullet

R.K. Singh

LYING IN SUN

The maid fans
burnt coal and dried twigs fire
to make tea
for her lazy hubby
lying in sun and shouting

R.K. Singh

MAKE A CHOICE

Brooding, condemning
things not done and unable
to undo he prays
ceaselessly fails to stop
now compelled to make a choice

R.K. Singh

MEDITATION

Unable to see
beyond his nose he says
he meditates
and sees visions of Buddha
weeping for us

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

MID-AUTUMN

On the roof top
she waits for her man with
moon cake and lantern:
a flash of silver showers
on the mist-shrouded figure

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

MISTAKE

Don't defile
my goddess. you smell
private parts

with sexy
hibiscus don't crack
the centre

take bath first
and then touch Kali
with clean mind

I can't let
your wandering hands
make mistake

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

NAKED CHILDREN

Naked children crowd
as I pass through the alleys
between smelly slums:
dogs bark to alert them to
the presence of a stranger

R.K. Singh

NIGHTLY ACT

Sees in light
the smuts of the nightly act
on the underwear

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

NO MEMORY

Waking with her
after tasting heaven
no memory

R.K. Singh

OILY SMELL

After cleaning
the maid leaves behind
an oily smell

R.K. Singh

ON HER BIRTH DAY

For Winny

I want the best of life for you
but you too must understand
what I can do

you must be patient and do
what you can-
I can't create the fruits

I may create space
for you to stand but I can't
become the legs

you must run the race
on your own and be
what you dream

the redness of mars
and the whiteness of moon
merge in you

you have worlds to conquer
and miles to go, my dear

you must rear the goose
and have the gold each day

R.K. Singh

PEACE MISSION

He is amazed to see
so much corruption
in the system
of world peace

his colleagues envious
of his foreign jaunt
with the UN
and earnings

in dollars, rise so soon
in career and
have the best
of life and style

while I worry about
freedom in Congo
untamed humans
safe sojourn

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

PEDDLING DREAMS

On a cycle
he sells bouquets and roses
peddling dreams

R.K. Singh

POLITICS OF CONTROL

What is this world
with PCs, internet, e-com
robots and cloning

the moon and mars
remain lifeless as here without
roads, power and house

they dream I T
satellites, aerospace and
silence cries for water

honest bread and peace
the hungry billions seek
no hi-tech slavery

the global cheats promote
liberal economy
stealthily purvey

rights and environment
with politics of control
doom the future

R.K. Singh

REALISATION

Men or women
no living gods:

the soul has no sex

the form, the body
and the name unreal

the climax of eternity
denudes the mind

R.K. Singh

RETURNING CART

After the sunset
wheels of a returning cart
along the paddy

R.K. Singh

RISING THRILL

A chocolate box
and a pile of condoms
beside the phone:
I smell the rising thrill
the body swirls, the bones breathe

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

SELF-DEFEAT

Crushed between the heart and head
I fail to get along with
my own creation

sinister and righteous
that challenges my being
for not meeting her hopes

I did what I could
but how to produce a mate
for her peace and bliss

she raises her eyebrows
and isolates herself as if
I authored all her griefs

now stripped and alone
with hands over my chest
I stand in the street

await the coffin
to reconcile the truths
I could not conceive

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

SHIVA'S THIRD EYE

gods sin against God
betray creation
break covenant

Shiva's third eye opened
fire burnt out by Fire

Agni defiled sexact
outraged love in action
sacrileged union

they still peep in privacy
fear fire, question freedom
dictate codes for Love

worship lingam
forget Shiva

R.K. Singh

SINKING IN GLORY

The moon rises with
million stars in sky
but none worship

the dying sun says
how alone one is
sinking in glory

R.K. Singh

SNAKE

Swiftly passes by
a yellow snake on the grass-
moistened trail of love

R.K. Singh

SNAKES: A HAIKU SEQUENCE

SNAKES

Sunny morning:
a snake slides through the fence
looking for a prey

Full of silt
the Ganga overflows:
snakes under the waves

Raises its hood
a cobra in water:
algae criss-cross

Searching reason
in the labyrinthine pattern:
snakes in courtyard

Avoids searching
mushroom in the crowded green-
snake on the fence

Searches thorn apples
to propitiate lingam:
snake in sanctum

A snake's tail
coils round a sweet
in the box

Smells a snake
in the wet grass-
her smile

Rises with tickles
between the thighs
the dream-serpent

A yellow snake
slithers on the grass-
dewy trail of love

Climbing high through
rough pathway and stony cold
a green snake

A snake's dead skin
near the fence:
she stands unmoving

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

SOLAR ECLIPSE

Cloaked in chill
gracious corona
winked at earth:

I saw a spark on
my finger she turned
diamond ring

R.K. Singh

SOME SENRYU

SENRYU

Unclothing
the white night-
lips meeting lips

Their first dating:
with inverted reflection
walk out of the bar

Moving between
the fingers of a toddler
the first winter rain

With his crying baby
he moves in the train's passage:
marital tension

Smoking woman
under a naked tree:
moon garden

Night's passage
on the beach with her:
silky sting

White stubble
round his august chin-
saturday

Sitting cross-legged
the Hutch receptionist
behind the glass

Awaiting
before the climax
the other woman

The village pond-
waiting for her arrival with
a baited hook

The young maid
giving her nightie
another spin

The wind lifts
her curved nudity hidden
in the water curtain

Tastier my tea
with her one sip-
I keep the cup

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

SONG OF SONGS

I'm true in my element
begotten of earth
hungry to mate with sky:

seek me in song of songs
in kisses that he and she
rehearse on way to bed

the voluptuous squeezes
fulfilment of godly
and bodily promises

R.K. Singh

SPACE IN THE EYES

I don't know the constitution that happens
but the make up matters: they see her novelty
or measure her from the bra over the top

I see the rain take off her underwear outside
the trousers that challenge liberty and pride:
she curls around to hide what she wears inside

and reveals much more, her flame and fragmented being,
the day's fabric in frail linen, dying night and
an absence: I see the colour change to cover;

to make distances from the moral remains
and shadows of lowing cows in a dried pasture
mate with throbbing dreams that look for space in the eyes

R.K. Singh

STAINS STAY LIKE SIN

Layers of dust thicken
on the mirror water makes
the smuts prominent:
I wipe and wipe and yet
the stains stay like sin

R.K. Singh

SWEAT

The beads of sweat
on her breasts do not touch
her years or face
in candle light her shadow
is more restrained than my thought

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

SWEET BOX

Sitting with its tail
coiled round sweets in the box
a lizard

R.K. Singh

SWEET SAVOUR

Strayed far from the nest
I'm fed up living with dust
for years fleeting shade

bereft
of melody
of spirit I sink to
the hades of utter loss
I can't

reckon hidden mysteries
I have lost the sea
for a mere cupful

void of patience and
peace now as I touch the breasts
of the field I crave

for a pure breath
native to
my being I search
sweet savours

of love

R.K. Singh

THE HELL INCITES

Discourse on heaven
and after-life pleasures
is bumptious bullying
to live without meaning
midst searches for the lost

so inciting is
the hell of cyber world
they forget to pray
and multiply their pain
corroding consciousness

but it doesn't matter-
whining in sleep or whinging
is part of crazy
nature in race with itself
and god a convenience

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

THE PROMISED NEW AGE

The dawn is still asleep in the east.
Don't dupe us we are marching
toward the promised new age.

We can't cross the summit in one go.
The hollow bamboos and dry blades conspire
to drug us in our own name.

The summer loo batters the parched land.
The yellowed fields in May and June
will not green. It's never vernal here.

The palm-leaf fan can't quench the flame.
The vultures of the pre-liberation decades
are picking potatoes from a rotten heap.

The city is cowered dog dazzling in neon.
The fight against evils and rots
with the anarchy of flags and slogans.

The flood in the Brahmaputra will turn men into fish.
They are not aware though I dream of the vast
land of lotus shining with young morning sun.

(Composed on 31 May 1980.)

R.K. Singh

THE RIVER LEAKS

The river between
the thighs leaks from the palms
fails to cup the fire
melting furiously
through the red heart to the cave

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

THE RIVER WALKS WITHOUT SHOES

The river walks without shoes
unsinging the night's hooligans
that scamper across the city

unbreasted years ago for
hawks of peace now midgeted
to amuse mornings that gaol

all fire and thoughts smitted by stones
of figures-to-be hewing
new melodies by black grass

past my shadow overarching
all listening and light and cliff
that hang the tale or pain the legs

no matter I walk without
the rest of the ground I tead
like river droning day's ashes

R.K. Singh

THEY TALK ABOUT...

They talk about customs traditions rituals and religion
and question me for marrying my daughter to a half
Muslim half Hindu down south in an unknown family
as if in desperation for failure to find a match in own caste
community religion or region and curse for compromising
family interests. They forget the cruel joke of marriage
of our son in Rishikesh and how they discarded traditions
and their own daughter to have a dip at Hardwar leaving us all
hungry. They didn't show the courtesly of seeing us off or the guests.
we swallowed their muck then as we suffer their painted love for daughter
that keeps her from accepting us as parents or husband and child
as her own family even after three years the gamble
continues. I live my faith awaiting the change in consciousness
while destiny drives the wheel through generations beguiled with
ego-fested myths, manicured mind and vested imagination

-R.K.SINGH

R.K. Singh

TO FEED NIGHT

Their hands are sulphur
with butcher strength
above the pit they drift
like shadow against dying sun
longer than themselves
against the flood light from dome
they create new 'glyph
to feed night to sunken world

R.K. Singh

TRANSITION

Coming out of the room
they smile to think they're not
what they were before
nor would they ever be
the same again even if
they wanted to be

R.K. Singh

Vision

Vision
to understand
the final whole of un-
discovered specifics before
making

shaping
true reality
hidden in outer world
intricately patterned like our
body

R.K. Singh

WATER TURNS WHITER

They take off again
their unthrown nets frighten fish
water turns whiter

R.K. Singh

WAVING DOWN

Waving down
a leaf settles between
her breasts

R.K. Singh

WHEN LOVE IS NEGOTIATED

They may be arbiters of good taste
and denounce my aesthesis or ignore
what I created all these years:

there's poetry in failed ejaculations
or cowardice in a woman's company
not all will dare to talk about

it's weakness which stares in the face
when truth is wrapped in silence and love
is negoitated in a perfumed bar

R.K. Singh

WILL THEY LET ME?

Everything is falling apart
every wall is cracking
I too am breaking

to be someone and to belong
drink in love like many
secured, sure, happy

I too want to live and be loved
not piece by poece, friends
but, will they let me?

R.K. Singh

WISDOM

I always dreamt the world
as one and thought I belonged
but none let me live

my simple soul at home
with differences
they kicked me into exile

for their prejudices
forced me seek my nest
in myself

I share the wisdom
of peace and life in tune
with nature

R.K. Singh

WON'T YOU ONCE KISS?

I leave my memories
in prayerful trance
float above my body

till rapping her fingers
at my soul she breaks
the silence: 'I've come

with my dreams promised
years ago. Won't you
once kiss and melt in me? '

R.K. Singh