

Poetry Series

Rajendra Nagdev

- poems -

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Rajendra Nagdev()

Darkness

Dying memories
shattered dreams
sinking desires
held for decades
seep thru porosity
and vanish in nothingness.

A shrunken scull bowl
struggles to hold
memories, dreams and desires
on a bench
in forlorn corner of the park.

Anchored to a web of shrinking bones
still throbbing with
few feeble breaths,
the scull bowl
singly battles the impending doom.

A journey born in the darkness of womb
slowing down to end
in the darkness of tomb.

* * *

Rajendra Nagdev

Death Wish

I wish death for earth.

Mother earth I immensely love you.

A white pigeon flock
is hiding
somewhere
in the densest darkness
of my heart's den.

The flock is frightened to flutter
the flock is frightened to peep out
the flock is frightened to fly
in the ghastliness
of
savage sky.

The sky is
crimson with blood
the sky is black with malice
the sky stinks of wars
someone
has emptied
an ocean of hatred in it.

I wish rebirth of earth.

An earth
brimming with
love, compassion
brotherhood, humanity
kindliness, warmth.

An earth
far beyond territories of war,
an earth
wrapped in
the infinite blue sky,
white wings must fly.

I long intensely
for earth's rebirth
as innocent infant.

I
therefore
wish
instant death
to my dear earth.

* * *

Rajendra Nagdev

Gone Forever

Vacant chair
desolate lawn
air
pregnant with words
still floating around
We had spent silver hours chatting here.

Doleful day dips into darkness
crimson sky declares
sun is dead.

In lonely twilight
I am denying
an undeniable truth-
he has gone forever,
I know
battle
yet fighting.

it is lost

He flew away to
unexplored galaxies probably,
leaving behind a mountain load of pain.

I wish to get unloaded
and
to get unloaded too.

don't wish

I am gyrating
in the whirlpool of time spent together
I wish to wriggle out of it
and
don't wish to wriggle out too.

A captive in his cage
must liberate myself
and drift into amnesia
but, how do I erase his memory
scribbled in indelible ink
somewhere in a deep cave of my heart?

I don't know.

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Rajendra Nagdev

Song Of Slave

Break me
I am already broken

if you can,

Kill me
if you can,
I am already killed

Burn me
if you can,
I am already burnt

Listen!
I am phoenix
will resurrect million times
from my own ashes

No more
will I build pyramid for you,
drag your own stones
if you can.

* * * *

Rajendra Nagdev

Guilt Of Silence

A man is moving
as much as his waning spirit
and his dwindling courage allow
as much as his jammed joints permit,
his past obscure, future predictable.

Half a dozen dogs lurking around
off and on biting and pulling arms, legs
and long dirty hair,
half naked lunatic
or a penniless patient
lying on the pathway,
a pathetic sight outside a hospital.

Scores of eyes gazing
no action in the bodies they are tucked on.

In virtually lost last battle
sure to culminate
in the stillness of breath
the man is wearing out
with each passing moment.

The pitiless crowd
willingly slipped in amnesia
is waiting perhaps, for Mother Terressa
forgetting she is beyond
pains and pleasures of
terrestrial life now.

The flesh is torn
the body dragged
they must act, act fast
lest will carry lifelong
the burden of futile act of repentance,
may never absolve themselves
of the guilt of silence.

* * * *

Bhopal(India)
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Rajendra Nagdev

Mirror

Leave me alone
mirror cries, I am tired
what I display
men dislike.

Clothed, they turn naked
when they enter me
I, an honest soul
reflect the nakedness
and face fury.

Truthful to me, to them as well
I don't lie.

Men, blend of black and white
wish to find them milk white
I am sorry,
I have no mechanism in me
to convert black to white
I therefore, am never a preferred friend.

They disown nakedness
they fling me
break me in bits and pieces
then see themselves
hundred times naked.

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Rajendra Nagdev

Orchestra

They sing song of sadness
they sing song of pain
they sing song of wingless bird
they sing tattered lyrics in broken rhythm
never heard by celestial gods

They burn skeletal existence
burn their modest longings
in eight feet by eight cramped shanty

Lash in despair empty tummy kids
wailing for food,
they drink...drink...and drink
to forget for few hours
their life sentence
for uncommitted crime
pronounced at their conception
in mother's womb,
their duties-serve all
status-born slave
rights-don't deserve
masters-all but themselves
race-non human

Town cleaners
condemned to drag life
in uncleanest hamlets
beyond periphery of town
what an irony!
no, not for great civilisation of pious beings

They sit around fireless hearth
gaze with blank eyes
dropletless dried pitchers
too impious to plunge in village well,
a vast burning desert spread in their eyes

Tears don't trickle
they know it is futile

Lost in vast ocean of helplessness
they sang songs of sadness
with lowered heads thru centuries,
they are untangling now
strains of tangled existence,
have founded their own orchestra,
will sing their own songs-
song of rising sun
song of winged bird
song of real freedom,
beat their own drums

Will invoke volcano
with million serpentine flames
invoke magma to spring
flow in village alleys
flow in temples
flow in town streets
flow on highways
flow everywhere
deconstructing bondages thrust on their innocence
thru black centuries of dead times

Stream of molten lead will flow
they had plenty poured in their ears,
a reverse flow will strike
diaphragms of oppressive ears
make them listen stories of their black deeds

A dream?
yes, stepping into territory of reality.

Rajendra Nagdev

Dusk

A red sphere is sliding down
birds chirp to say goodbye
and retire to nest,
misty air over river
grows mistier and mystique
and the jungle owls
rise to leave for prey
I, thru' my window am watching
a world sinking into ocean of darkness.

I light up lamp
to drive away that bit of darkness
entering me slowly noiselessly
a sad bird in me still sings a sad song
drawn from stale past,
and alas! the lamp throws
frightful shadows of beasts
hidden in the dark caves of gone days
somewhere inside me.

* * ** *

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Resurrection

Who is lying there silently
in the darkest nook of a soul?
A desolate entity in tatters
brooding over a time
swept in the torrent of life,
a witness to the sunny days
drowning in the blackest of ocean,
a witness to the fishes of mute longings
dying in closed fishpond
and a witness too
to the feathers
drifting away from
the lifeless seagulls of dreams unrealized,
holding in bony fingers
a candle of flickering flame just kindled
while life is silently strolling to grave.

It is me within me; a phoenix
resurrecting too late.

* *** *

Rajendra Nagdev

Hiroshima

One morning million suns rained from sky
enormous glow
then deepest darkness

A mangled clock in a barber's shop got stuck in time
a time no one would ever dream
of returning in the planet's life'
the clock escaped evaporation
to narrate the tale of human blunder
hovered on that fateful moment over a city.

A blackened lunch box of a child,
a pair of labor's shoes
a bunch of keys in metal chain
a flower pot void of scent and the day break delight.

In this show eyes are blind
heart turns into eyes.

A frightening drama was played on the stage of devastation,
I see an invisible baby
I hear her cries lost in oblivion decades ago
I watch grandpas and grandmas
drowned in the turbulent sea of helplessness,
youths lying in lifeless bodies.

The dead are burned
the dead are maimed
the dead are... alive
their voices resound
listen to them, the speak.

Gloves of twelve summer old boy
labor at a building site
lie forlorn,
the boy was awake through the night
on the wall of a bridge
lest volunteers would dump him
in the dead men's wagon and drive away

his wisdom lasted a few hours
the soul departed with sunrise.

A small lunch box of a KG child
its lid blown off
is waiting for ever untraced master,
uneaten rice and pulse
burnt and mingled with metal,
her name scratched on it still readable.

A woman carrying kettle in hand
an infant in her lap,
a frightening sculpture in charcoal.

Shoes worn sometime by teenage master
forcefully separated from the swollen feet
harbour futile hope of his return
from unidirectional voyage to eternity.

Look those shiny motionless marbles on the floor
they used to play with their companion- a second grade learner
the still retain shine
- a scant hope in hopelessness.

A shadow on steps
an evaporated man's departing gift.

Objects silently wait for masters,
a long wait till another dooms day
when the too will evaporate
and dissolve in nothingness.

I'm burning in a distant segment of the planet
countless miles away from Hiroshima
I'm burning decades away
from that still moment in the barber's clock.

In my town
I am burning in Hiroshima,
in the show
I stand face to face of salvaged remnants
I read a long poem of extreme sadness.

I am in search of you Lord Buddha!
you had smiled in *Pokharan
can you smile
over a tiny lunch box
a pair of shoes
a dented tea pot
a girl's purple frock
a denture fell out of a wrinkled face
and can you smile Buddha!
over charred twisted limbs
of the dead and waiting-to-die humans? I wonder!

Buddha! I see you weeping silently
I see tears rolling down your cheeks
I pray the tears wipe off fire of war
from my lovely planet forever, forever.

.....

*A place where India's first Nuclear Bomb Test was conducted. The code word of its success was 'Buddha Has Smiled'

Rajendra Nagdev

Birds In Flight

Look at the beauty in the sky!
a wide arrow-head piercing wind slowly silently,
flock of birds sailing through space.

It flies...flies...flies
shrinks...shrinks...shrinks
longs to merge into goal
dissolving duality.

Birds in flight
day or night
don't ever halt
don't look back,
a cursory glance
and flight goes on.

History; a garbage dump of time
a heap of withered flowers
embers embedded within,
a deceptive ember will burn beak and wings
and flight to ashes.

Birds never falter in past
birds fly in future.

* * *

Rajendra Nagdev

Name

They assigned a name
without concurrence

My friend often forgets
because, he never wished
not to forget it.
He may one day tear it to shreds
and consign to flames

He was born minus name
they tagged it on him
then threw his body and soul
in the geography
and sociology of planet
where fixed he was forever

Name has a meaning
many meanings within meaning
but he knows
the one he craves for
is absent

Who says
there is nothing in the name?
it's a mountain of seeds,
seeds of
fragmentation
yearning to germinate,
oppression, suppression, wars, riots
massacre, what not!
a mould
transforming human into beast

My friend is human
let him just be a human

* * * *

where fixed he was forever

Hospital Bed

Drop-by-drop
life trickles into veins
breaths multiply.

An iron stand
a white bottle
a long tube,
my friend battling with death.

White coats and long aprons
and anxiety around.

A bright screen
with brighter lines running restlessly on uneven paths
their destination unknown.

Fierce battle
between God Of Death hovering around
and masked skeleton lying on the bed
no one knows who will triumph?

A desperate woman
a puzzled kid
on the other side of misty glass screen
clouds in eyes
long for a touch and feel
to yet un-dead skeleton,
slits between eyelids open wider
- futile search of skeleton for someone around.

Unbearable battle,
I slowly and silently slip out
life bells ringing in ears
- an imagination,
God Of Death retreating
- my wish,
I know well
wishes and imaginations
can not dictate.

Ruins

A water body
round and deep and olive green
in the heart of stones
live with flutter of blind wings
gently breaking tranquility of past

Whenever around ruins
I'm sucked
in a black hole,
I lose my exhistance
dissolve in the humid ambience
merge with
broken walls, falling roofs, cracking arches
moss laden rocks
and the days bygone

I am there
with dreamy shadows of colossal dimensions
and sun rays and moonlight
flowing through mini holes
ever indomitable roots of peepal tree
in the crevices of cracking stone walls.

Light... shadow...light...shadow
long dark mysterious corridors
sounds of marching soldiers' boots,
silent tears and giggles of women folk
unheard cries of fettered slaves
unfettered spider constructing web
in the majestic bedroom of emperor,
immobile body in a royal grave
stares helplessly,
Time silently moulds everything
to its own fancies.
I converse with time,
time- the ever dominant monark
unfolds realities of creation and destruction
and recreation
unstoppable game

goes on and on and on.

I'm lost in past
my rebirth in present
will be an unending wait.

Rajendra Nagdev

Night Sky

Far above my head
a twinkling entity
slips from place
dips, disappears
in a timeless, limitless
ocean of cosmos.

A long faint streak is drawn
swiftly across blackboard
and swiftly wiped.

In pitch-dark moonless sky
trillions and trillions
glowing matchstick heads
woven together
in an unseen maze of webs
move slowly
burn silently.

They roll without murmur
they roll so slowly
my retina
fails to capture the motion.

The drama goes on and on and on
in a village night.

My megapolis, alas! swallows
entire enchanting cosmos in it's nightly glory
in blazing neon lights, dust and fumes.
It sucks
the entire nocturnal heavenly treasure
in its womb
like a blackhole.

Rajendra Nagdev

Deepest Desire

The tranquility of night
will melt gently,
gradually birds will chirp
on the branches of trees
the trees, only a few of which
are left in the city now.

In the ebony darkness of night
a dog barks furiously
a long overcoat moves in the street
with long shoes on
and a whistle blows,
the sound floats
on the air
and moves on and on and on
to the horizon
- a perfect setting to paint a picture.

I slide the curtain of my window
and peep out
it's pitch dark
the darkness can be sliced
with a knife.
A baby cries somewhere incessantly
the cries resonate
- a perfect soil to sow
the seed of a poem.

My deepest desire at the moment
is to slip in to coma
to freeze in my mind
the birds, the whistle, the watchman
the dog, the cries of the baby
the darkness of night
forever forever.

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