

Poetry Series

Rajnish Mishra
- poems -

Publication Date:
2017

Publisher:
Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

Rajnish Mishra()

Rajnish Mishra is a poet, writer and blogger. He writes because his very identity is based on his writing, and on the recurring themes he writes about.

By The River

The cold, damp evening breeze, and cottony clouds over the sky, and hidden sun somewhere behind; the feel on skin, the empty time: they all are old, none unmet, new. The solitude and semblant peace, neither new, old friends new met. New is the spot where sit I now, where evening breeze caresses cold and glad my skin with memories old. Of a river, its banks, another breeze, gigantic shapes looming ochre at back.

My house extended, home to peace, Of peace in melancholy dipped and coated twice, or once at least, with slight, thin layered solitude. A time all empty, ready for all sensations, thoughts: good, bad, new, old. A sleight of hand, a trick designed to please, surprise, shock, memory plays, and wisps of olden tinges float; heralded not yet come in sight, with them at heels comes happiness of emptiness and knowledge sad that unsubstantial things of old, with time they gain in size and force. Old slaves new tyrants, changed in shape. Cold damp evening breeze brings back.

Rajnish Mishra

Caesar Lives

The long unending chain of toadies all but goes on knees
To kiss the ground beneath the Caesar's feet divine,
And masses spineless fawn o'er him with lolling tongues canine,
While Caesar smugly smiles.
His laurels, rank, and destiny, his power, throne and crown,
Anoint him with, then gladly they press on him their leash.
Teeth glittering, widened lips, resounding, deafening claps,
At every single dropping word from Caesar's lips divine.
Then tail-like wag all tongues; sweeter than honey spread,
Cloying, unctuous, authentic, invented compliments.
They truly lie and truly please the head that wears the crown.
Their words and praise rise not from heart from lips downwards they drop.

Bravo! Stinging and biting, inverted compliments,
Impressive speech, well-worded, and what fine sentiments!
You think you know then all you need of countless regiments.
We live by knowing where to bow, and smile, fawn and kiss when,
The hallowed ground beneath his feet and selves how prostrate then,
While Caesar smugly smiles.
Our happy days and nights, we smiling live our lives, at Caesar's feet divine.
By God we truly look our part with lolling tongues canine.
O you tigers of wrath! Your wars for liberty, produce dictators worst,
Today you have your Julius, tomorrow Augustus.
And what indeed is truth if not calibration?
Timeless, endless, meaningless ratiocination?

Rajnish Mishra

Change

Wisdom they call it: that drying
Of fonts of feelings, and more,
That dying of heart, tender heart,
Of knowing but feeling no more.

My people left, left pangs behind,
Yet pangs of pain, no more for me.
That enemy mortal of tender heart,
Midas with stone touch, came to me.

□

Rajnish Mishra

Death Has Always Been Frightening

'Death has always been frightening ...'

With fingers he stretches the band of feelings, the poet poseur;
Bakes his poems, he says, on fire that blanches his heart:
Poseur on fire that blanches his heart, feeds his art,
Makes breathing hard.

'This time my friend, which store did he rob, taken what garb? '

Decades diseased then death of a dear, distant in hours,
Near by blood, he says, picked him, an infant, in arms:
Distant in hours on train, by air not far;
Nor cheap to go.

'She knew it then, death was expected, or suddenly grabbed? '

She waited for it every day, and slept every night aware half,
Half-wishing, he says, that next dawn be bright and dark.
Awaited she, one friend for another, for long gone far,
Return from realms afar.

'Then death brought her peace, and him a theme on lines to gaggle.'

News reached him in time, they thought, not he.

'What time's in time for death? For whom?

In time, they thought, to book the ticket and fly.
In time to reach before they took her away.
In time to show them that he stood with them.

'When all was in time then surely in time did he reach? '

In time thought they, not he.
Imagine, inviting a man employed at notice so short!
Notice so short, dry the heart and dead in parts.

'Now that settles it, no doubt! End of story? '

Scene, not play. Death its theme, plot same, comes next.
In time comes call another, and one death more.
And time he could not find to go once more.
And showed them again, he stood not with them.

'... frightening and interesting.'

Rajnish Mishra

Dog Monkey 2

Ah, death!
So interesting!
No.
Sad, quite tragic, in fact
Ironical, that dogs and monkeys
Can both die of rabies
And kill too.
But our dog-monkey is no mean species.
He sits on tree tops
And barks at the kitties
Who try even to scratch
The ground beneath his trees.
And they: flabbergasted
Their mouth wide open,
Open eyed devour this eighth wonder
This hero: dog-monkey,
A rare variety.
It's doubly revered
For its all-powers.

It entered the world
Through tunnels of dreams;
or, from world it tunneled
To the land of dreams,
That no one can tell.
One thing's quite sure:
It jumped onto life
From some place in hell.
How else one explains
The yellow-red stains
On golden-brown fur?
The infernal flames
Dance gaily on stains.
While he sits under sun
On burning stones.

No, he doesn't run
To seek the shade
Of walls, temples trees.

For him it's the sun
For him heat is fun.
As he has just come
From some freezing hell.

Rajnish Mishra

Dog Monkey 3

It's long past twelve,
A June afternoon,
No monkeys, nor dogs any
Dare roam around or walk,
Save one infernal being
Who everywhere is seen.
For none will roam around
On roof tops or ground
Unless they be
Our hero: dog-monkey.
Why he keeps doing so
Unnaturally,
Anti-intuitively?
What do his actions prove?
Where does his mind go?
Why does he not simply lie,
Quietly, and slowly die
Like his contemporaries:
Time and Eternity?
Yes our dog-monkey
Like time; eternity
Is pre-big-bang, it seems.
How else can one explain
His omnipresent name
Coming hidden, thinly veiled?
Was there not such a being
Form changer, strong, revealed
In myths of Egypt, Greece?
Metamorphosis, reincarnation,
Bodhisattva, life rotation
He could be any or all:
This so special being.

Rajnish Mishra

Dog Monkey 4

Stories all by compulsion,
Are set at some location.
So, ours in Kashi begins.
He was before too,
And afar.
In stories many more.
But ours is here and now.
It was a damp dark day
Of July, of August, nay,
When right from the sky he fell,
Coming, as we know, from hell,
Into river-mother Ganga.
She, the destroyer of sins,
She, the remover of stains,
Received her newest son,
While the sky wept some
Heavy droplets of acid rain.
Now you with raised eyebrows
Squirm due to element discordant.
How else does one reconcile
Myths of old with times modern?
This is not the only instance.
And after such knowledge
There's no ignorance.
So, acid rains taint the myth.
Yet, if you listen
It has some pith.
And beauty, rhythm, allegation
(No, allegory, or allusion?)
'Tis told in a terribly playful tone.
A worn out needle of gramophone
Very well will play,
In a hackneyed way,
As mode and manner will meet there.
So, she the destroyer of sins,
Received her son, returned from hell.
He could not hear
What waves then spoke,
As wind and rain

Were both intense.
He did not hear
What waves then said.
His eyes were set
On the many-templed Kasi.
Not many have seen
Such an evening scene
With the sun sinking
Right behind domes; pinnacles.
Like none has seen
The morning rising sun
Above the farther sand-spread bank.
Riveted he saw
With dropped lower jaw
The beauty and glory incarnate.

Rajnish Mishra

Dog-Monkey Episode 1

Myths of yester-years, epics of tomorrow;
With the day intervening,
The bridge that sings
Of past - days, places and people:
Today. Big names, places; events interesting,
Go in the making of tales of joy,
Stories of sorrow
Or joys and sorrows intertwined
As strands, or mixed as the salts
In that unlabeled packet small
Of newspaper: old and pale,
To be tested for identification.
So here's the story of a hero unheroic.
No Ulysses or Achilles, this our hero is.
His story features no gods or Mephistopheles.

Not so long ago, in the holy city of Kashi,
There lived a certain dog-monkey
In a lane quite traveled:
Narrow, slippery, dark and filthy,
That opened on to the Ganges,
One of many, like lane any.
At all times and every season
It was open to the general population
Of pilgrims floating, and cows,
Of dogs stray, and the bull,
And of course, a certain dog-monkey.

You must have heard of dogs, of monkeys
But myths set standards of gullibility:
The willing suspension of all suspicion
Is rewarded with the compensation
Of twists and turns of the plot,
Unimaginable. Of stories that seep in
And sub-plots innumerable.
So, this, our dog-monkey
Is just the right character
For his own story, of his days and nights.
Of his death and life.

Rajnish Mishra

Gone: Micropoem

Life fades, moment after moment.

Rajnish Mishra

Haiku: Corpse

Walls, white-washed, white floor
White ceiling: shroud. Corpse sits through
Days, life-long, alone.

Rajnish Mishra

Haiku: Sleep

Days are long, short nights.
Lights dim help slip down the slope-
Sleep. You wake to die.

Rajnish Mishra

I'm Not Bland

And when is it that you have found within no one?
Then again, tell me when, listens everyone?
You yourself (if atheist, if not, God) are always around.
Why then this duplicity?
Why so angry, and why no title?
I'm not bland, or I am?
What do you say?

Rajnish Mishra

Inspiration

No poet is poetic
Even half their life.
(Don't push me hard
For data verification) .
Sparks of inspiration
(That some call divine) ,
Stray moments of life
With the fire of creation.
Then, Darkness again. □

Rajnish Mishra

Inspired By Shakespeare's Sonnet#1

Let not life's love
Breathe its last -
Ever.
Keep our love's flame
Burning with increase.
Bring not droughts
Beside a running river,
Do not be,
Your enemy,
nor in your heart
sans pity.

You give life meaning, beauty
You cannot take away
With you
My celestial view
nor can I
let death take you away.

(Inspired by Shakespeare's Sonnet#1)

Rajnish Mishra

Life 1

Thoughts flow out from mind,
Make me breathless.
Torrent gushes out.
From the past come memories,
To visit me, to talk,
Remind me of life
That's lived in moments
Of ecstasy, of oblivion.

Rajnish Mishra

Life 2

Line stipulated for the poem of life
Pages strewn all around
Collect them but fail I
To collate. To a land unknown
Blows them the wind of time
Where lain they wait
To become avalanche
That buries me again
Down for eternity.

Rajnish Mishra

Life And Poetry

life is poetry; breathes
poetry in life put on page.
poetry lives life and breathes.

Rajnish Mishra

Life Is Lived

How we live, despite the ever-hovering death overhead?

Rajnish Mishra

My Anonymous Poems

My poems are signed anonymous,
For anonymous they are,
From somewhere they come,
Sometimes.

Who makes them?
What time?
Which place?
In what climes?
I think not I fathom it all.

I know it as true,
That there are those two
In presence of who
They come.

Catalysts of creation
Are pain and separation,
In them alone do I trust.
So, pain and separation:
Catalysts of creation,
Keep them alive I must.

Drop after drop
Of pain let drip and stain,
The sheets of life.
Drop after red drop,
From raw lacerations,
Drain and drip
From wounds of separation,
And word by word
Congeal on sheets.

Let poems come,
At least sometimes.

Rajnish Mishra

My Poem Read

Sun's burning holes through moon, no wind during typhoon,
The spinning earth to topple, old bones going supple,
May happen they all one day, but this you never must say
That lines of mine will be read, and not consigned to death.

Rajnish Mishra

My River

Soundless stays my river, still, calm, no wind blows.
Dark sky and horizon, and wave-twinkling bands,
A distant din, faint stars and a crescent that glows
With city lights orange over silver-black water, sands.
Black is the colour of darkness they say.
Black is the colour, at night and in day.
Black, it's black of many an un-fixed hue.
Some nights there are, when the silent river flows
Under the moonless sky: the black of tar.
Some are the nights when black goes with blue,
The colour of night while the young moon glows.
Some are the nights when lights near and far,
Spangle the river's black, red, yellow, blue,
Lights hurled into sky black; black river too.

Rajnish Mishra

My River Is Angry

Angry river rises rows of steps, breaks bounds.
Wild wind blows, slaps water, makes sounds:
Lapping, fluid, disturbing, disturbed sounds.
Silence then breaks. Whirling waves no more tame,
Eddy around bends concave. Sights no more serene,
Brown new river reminds of river old, blue and green,
Swollen now, broad and muddy; in no way the same.
Ganga it surely is, yet known by that name.
The course and colour and its summer flow,
All change, for a month or two on will it go.
Unbroken crescent of ghats where used to be
Now can't be walked, is now submerged.
One can walk the lane - a river one can see -
That crowded, parallel, sinuous runs un-merged
To go the same few miles, walk a month or two.

Rajnish Mishra

No, I'm Not A Poet

A poet I'm not, not always, not every day.
Reluctant and rare my poems come to me,
At times, not even welcome, to me.
One knock I hear, faint yet clear.
I have no mind nor time for it.
I'm a busy professional in a busy city, you see.
How can I be at ease, stand still, serene, calm,
And think? Mine is the lane, mine is the race,
And now is the time: get set go.
Carpe diem, gather your stocks, the sun is shining.
Why sit licking wounds, weeping and whining?

That night I just caught that train.
Did not return, did not stay
At home, just left and rushed to work.
What was it? Inertia, inaction,
Prophetic soul? My granny's eyes, the Prince and I,
Pathetic both, with self-inflicted wounds and pain,
Nostalgia: missing home.

They're wrong who say that home is
Where heart is. No, it's actually where stomach is,
And job is, and monthly paycheck is, and savings account.
Heart is gentle, what worst can it do?
Compare that to stomach's doings and see
who wins. Stomach, once aroused, rumbles and grumbles
And pushes the body it owns, our body, around.

So, a hundred less thousand kilometres away,
I've come to the city of routines, where I stay,
From the city of light where life lived, once -
Hated, and tried to flee from too -
But that's another story for some other day.
So, I could not stay, a moment more.
Decades it took for roots to grow,
Not hours to sever, pack and go.

Rajnish Mishra

Oasis

Crossing long deserts of pages, does one reach the oasis of poetry.
Rare, valuable thus it is.

Rajnish Mishra

One Fine Line

Mourn for the departed glory,
For poems that left earth
Unheard, unsung.

Poetry lives in a line, or two,
The rest is merely glue, it's true.

A bold lone stroke stands not for art,
Nor one fine phrase for a poem.

When I see now, what passes for it,
It saddens; emboldens me a bit.

For who now crafts their one fine line
At a time,
And then, one more?

Rajnish Mishra

Poems Today

Mourn for the departed glory.
For poems that left earth
Unheard, unsung.

Poetry lives in a line, or two,
The rest is merely glue, it's true.

A bold lone stroke stands not for art,
Nor one fine phrase for a poem.

When I see now, what passes for it,
It saddens; emboldens me a bit. Now I can craft
one fine line
At a time
And let it age, like fine vine.

Rajnish Mishra

Poetry Is Not Dead

They say that poets have no voice today.
They banish us from the Republic.
Still poets are born, again and again.
Why?

Rajnish Mishra

Snapshot

This, my short poem
Is a snapshot
Of this moment's thought.
The moment next
Will bring another:
Thought or poem,
Or thought not poem
But not poem sans thought.

Rajnish Mishra

Strip Of Life

I walk the slippery
strip of life blindfold, across
the tunnel of death.

Rajnish Mishra

The Air I Breathe In

The air I breathe in, and space in thirteen dimensions, you
Fill my waking thoughts and dreams, day and night.

That question resurfaced, the question of intense passions
That make it easier to die for a cause: you.

My life, my death, my nectar, my venom,
Killing me dead, yet not leaving my body.

Death, the recurring theme,
Now intertwined with You.

The air I breathe in, and space in thirteen dimensions, you
Fill my waking thoughts and dreams, days and nights.

Rajnish Mishra

The Man Behind The Wheel

Eyes, hands, gear stick and the steering wheel
And the man behind the steering wheel,
Know not the one who walks, breathes calmly thinks.
They're not one and the same. It's strange, but truth links
Things - many things. There are many things better far
Than spending life, one-twelfth of it, rolling tires on tar.
And he, the man who breathes, thinks, walks, knows not:
The man who pushes pedals, changes gears, vrooms,
Whizzes past people and places, stomach in a knot,
What that other man does to him, of all he has done,
After ignition. Fancy pants, faints painting even one
True likeness of him who-can't-be-named, or tamed.
Thrilled, blood on teeth, crouches the beast unnamed.
Hands on the wheel, eyes set straight, grunts and howls
The man-machine - primitive, state of the art - he prowls
Bare asphalt desert searing, half-molten, sticky, hot.

(Women and old men drive tamely, they're sane,
No testosterone, honking, adrenaline rush, or ego vain.)
He races against time, he wins. He presses pedals, rushes fast,
Drives - impatiently, angrily - plastic, glass, metal past
Many, clears, cuts through slow, slimy snails, driver's bane,
Switches lanes, swerves, then goes slow and blocks their lane
For revenge. He drives with geometric precision, goes through.
He drives with a drive to drive, eye of the tiger, half-a-smile.
Lingering fingers or eyes on screen, not his way, his style
Is simple, not a moment extra spent on road. Erupts rage
Sometimes while he outdrives, with a battle to wage
Every moment. How could they delay him, keep him away
From the man who thinks and force him to drive? He, she, they,
I, maybe We, are one and the same. Mon semblable, mon frère? And you?

Rajnish Mishra

Their Poems And Mine

Life-long have I envied others many a line,
Will someone ever envy me one of mine?
My verse born now, fresh, dead until read.
Someone, anyone, yes, you -
If only you read it!
Would you call it just fine?
Would it not be dead, not dead if read?
Not when, but if, nor good or bad just read?

I thought of writing lines for you,
Of beauty, of strength, of truth,
A song, just one; of hope, of inspiration.
Lines on those themes come rarely now,

To write that way in

these times is a sin,
These vacuous, vacant, little, listless times.
What use of such pursuits, in a world like ours,
What's false, what's true?
Hate, anger, frustration themes right for you.

My poems shallow, from heart's depths rise.
They lack in the mass of meaning not words,
Vision's breadth, not volume,
Not style but sense, nor craft but art.
Who wants to say just what they want to say, and stop,
When it's just begun, not half the distance run?
When how it's said, for how long heard, is half the fun?

And they call me passionless, half-alive half-dead.
I lack sorely, they say, inspiration:
Those drops of blood that the heart brings on page.
My poems are hard as stone, artificial.
I bring no flowers of hell with me,
No, that's not all, no fires of heaven bring I.
The visionary glance is not mine.
Love, longing, thorns of life, not mine,
Nor envy's green flush, shame's blush scarlet, fear's pallor:
They have almost been done to death.
Nor can I take a prophetic stance on Self, on Man,

Doubt or Faith, all inventoried subjects, Nature or Nation?
Crawling in mud, or flights sublime and steep?
No Sir! Not mine. Not for you. Not today.

Rajnish Mishra

Tunnel Of Life

In the tunnel of life,
I follow the promise faint
of light and I live.

Rajnish Mishra

What's Poetry?

What is poetry? Who defines it? Who makes decisions?

Rajnish Mishra