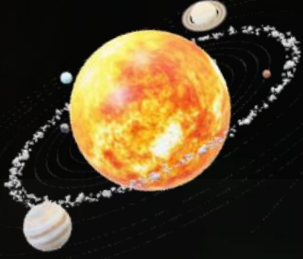


Brahmand *Voice of the Cosmos*

EMAGAZINE FOR CREATIVE WRITING
A Literary Warrior Group Initiative



WILD LIFE EDITION



Photograph by Brajesh Singh

SPRING EDITION 2022
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Wildlife Therapy

The Science of Cosmology describes the process of Creation. The Brahmand Purana elucidates the real state of affairs about the Universe. The Vishnu Purana elaborates on the relationship between Mother Earth and the Dashavatars. Centuries before Darwin's Theory of Evolution, Maharshi Ved Vyasa discussed the theory of Evolution in the Vishnu Purana. There are striking parallelisms between the Dashavatars and Darwin's theory.

Lord Vishnu is compelled to take the Matsya Avatar (Fish) to rescue the first man Manu from the great deluge. Matsya is a giant fish, golden in colour. It is symbolic of aquatic life. According to Charles Darwin, life first began in the ocean. The Naturalist felt that water was the most essential ingredient to sustain life. Vishnu's Koorma Avatar (Tortoise) is associated with the churning of ocean milk. The Gods and Demons participated in the churning activity to obtain elixir of immortality. The great serpent Vasuki offered himself as a rope and Mount Mandara was used as a churning stick. A firm foundation was required to steady the mountain, so Vishnu took the form of an amphibian, a tortoise and supported the churning stick on his back. Darwin hypothesized that amphibians were the next kind of animals to develop. As species evolved and explored the land, they developed bodily features to survive on land and water both, which was the biological nature of amphibians.

Vishnu took the third Avatar, Varaha (Wild boar) because a demon called Hiranyaksha tried to outrage the modesty of Mother Earth. The next logical step in evolution had to be the ability to travel on the land. Varaha was a terrestrial animal who rescued Mother Earth from the clutches of Hiranyaksha.

The next major milestone in evolution was the concept of homo sapiens. Narsimha, the fourth avatar of Lord Vishnu, was a half-man, half-lion, which indicates evolution slowly going towards human beings.

The fifth avatar, Vamana was a dwarfed human being, visually quite similar to the short ape species that humans evolved from. There is no exact form like a short homo sapiens in Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. But, if you look at the evolution charts, the earliest form of apes that human beings evolved from, were much shorter in height than present-day human beings. A news item appeared in the British newspapers saying that they had found a fossil of a 3 feet tall man. This justifies the Vamana (dwarf) Avatar. We are aware of pygmies dwelling in the Congo forests of Africa. The short ape-like species finally evolved into what we call the 'early man'. Vishnu's sixth avatar, Parshuram was quite similar to that. Parshuram lived in caves in forests and used primitive weapons made out of stone and wood (like an axe).

Wildlife Therapy

Now let us connect the story of Hiranyaksha to the environmental violations in Kali Yuga and man's multiple attempts to rape the planet. Through the Varaha Avatara, Vishnu tried to pass on a significant message to the people of the world. Before Hiranyaksha's rape attempt, Mother Earth was loved and respected the same way that women once were. Nature was seen as a sacred resource. There was a harmonious balance between the inhabitants of the planet and Mother earth's requirement. People in the modern era have lost their way like Hiranyaksha. The demonic Hiranyaksha is currently at play in our world today by disregarding the feminine earth entirely. Man's natural instinct to protect has become a need to control and give rise to disruption. Strength has turned into violence and this is what has led to the ravaged state of our sacred planet today. Unfortunately, many people are still living in a state of denial, ignorance and negligence. We put our needs and desires to grow and develop as a species, over the protection of Mother who sheltered us. Vishnu Purana's Varaha avatar episode teaches us that when the feminine quality in the people rises, the earth and its people could be restored back into harmony. Vishnu Purana does not address the earth as "Mother" in a symbolic sense, but in quite a literal sense too. We forget that the land we are inhabiting has been serving the living beings forever, while most of us have only been around for a handful of decades. Mother Earth remains humble but many of us walk around with an arrogant, egotistical mentality. What we witness happening to our Mother Earth is directly mirrored in what we witness happening to the feminine.

There is yet another incident in Vishnu Purana where Sahasrabahu Arjuna expresses a desire to own the Divine Cow for himself. For this, he offers his wealth to Jamadagni. The sage refuses the offer exasperatingly, as a cow is elevated to the status of a mother, who cannot be commodified. The unscrupulous king forcefully takes Kamdhenu with him, asking Jamadagni to take it back, if possible, but by means of war. He kills Jamadagni mercilessly. Knowing this fact, an enraged, Parashuram, the son of Jamadagni kills the king, and retrieves the Kamdhenu by killing the army of the despot.

Every part of Vishnu Purana is related to Mother Earth and Mother Nature; the spheres above it, the planets, sun and the moon. Lord Vishnu repeatedly emphasizes the importance of Nature to an individual's intellectual and spiritual development. A cordial relationship with nature helps individuals connect to both, spiritual and social worlds. People become selfish and immoral when they distance themselves from nature. Vishnu Purana describes how humanity's innate empathy and nobility of spirit becomes corrupted when humans become utterly selfish.

The ecological balance and ecosystem stability are duly maintained by the nature itself, but the emergence of modern industrial era has disturbed the ecological balance through heavy industrialization, technological revolution, rapacious exploitation of resources, unplanned urbanization etc. In other words, the anthropogenic activities of modern 'economic and technological' man have disturbed the harmonious relationships between the environment and human beings. The balance could be achieved through check on destructive activities of man, and focusing on conservation, protection, regulation and regeneration of nature.

Wildlife Therapy

Environmental management is related to the rational adjustment of man with nature, involving judicious exploitation and utilization of natural resources without disturbing the ecosystem balance and ecosystem equilibrium. If the natural resources are overexploited, it will affect socio-economic development.

Environmental psychology is rooted in the belief that nature has a significant role to play in human development and conduct. It believes that nature has a vital contribution to the way we think, feel, and behave with others. Environmental psychology promotes a healthy ecosystem and suggests how malfunctions in habitat have and will continue to affect human behaviour. In current times of progressing globalization, environmental pollution and degeneration of nature, we need to get deeply engaged in the bounty and splendour that nature offers. Humans are always capable of improving the environment they live in. There is a mutual consciousness between nature and man, a spiritual communion or a mystic intercourse.

There is another issue that needs attention. Today, we are trapped in the din of civilization, noise and cacophony. We need to go into silence, experience the sounds of nature and get divorced from the undisciplined, irritating and selfish extravaganza of noise. Our roads are a theatre of impatience and our lives are like sound producing factories. In this situation, we need to calm down, search for stillness and marvel at the beauty of nature, listen to the songs sung by birds and insects. We must listen to the rhythm of the falling rain, rustling of leaves, the lilt of the rills and the raga of waves.

We need to completely stop encroaching wildlife habitats. Humans need to take action against criminals who indulge in activities that are detrimental to wildlife. If we do not make a conscious effort to mitigate their impact, we would give rise to complete destruction. We need to establish a “New World” keeping the three tenets etched in mind: Patience, Resolution and Introspection.

If we fail to transform, we would have no choice but to bear the brunt of an apocalypse. Nature would retaliate like Karma, and so we better sit up and take notice; hit the pause button on all the craziness and selfishness of mankind, introspect and focus on what really matters. As the principal user of nature, humanity is totally responsible for ensuring that its environmental impacts are benign rather than catastrophic. We need to wake up to the fact that we will all return to dust one day.

If we defenestrate our environment, natural calamities will envelope Mother Earth. Tsunamis and Earthquakes will hit the planet and it won't take too long for the human species to be destroyed.

We observed World Wildlife Day on the 3rd of March and we will be observing World Environment Day on June 5. Let us pay a glowing tribute to Mother Earth by celebrating the Wildlife through Short Stories, Poems, Photographs and stunning Art Work presented by the Literary Warriors Group. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all the Editors of the Ezine, Brahmand: Voice of the Cosmos, who have been working indefatigably for its wider circulation and popularity.

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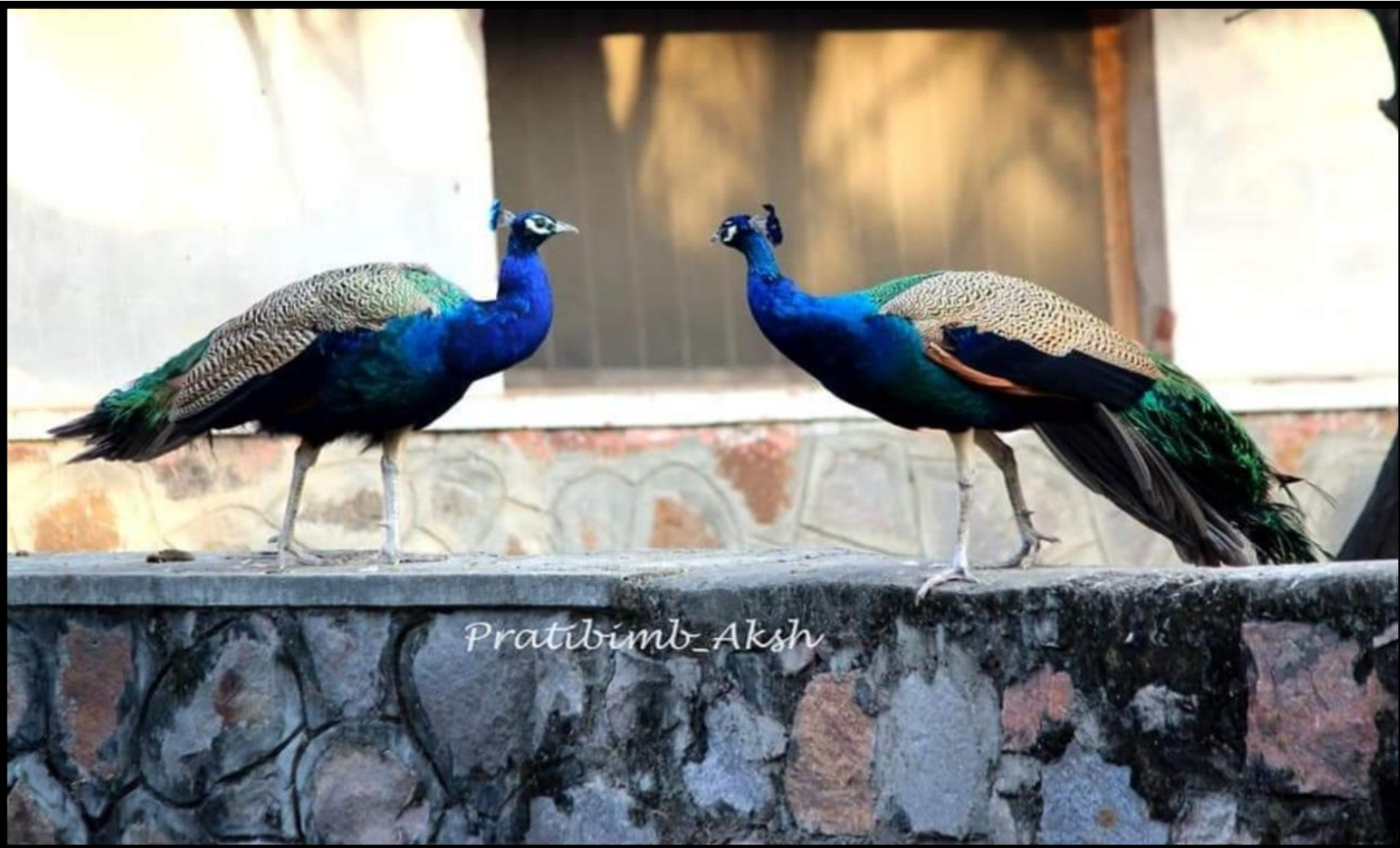
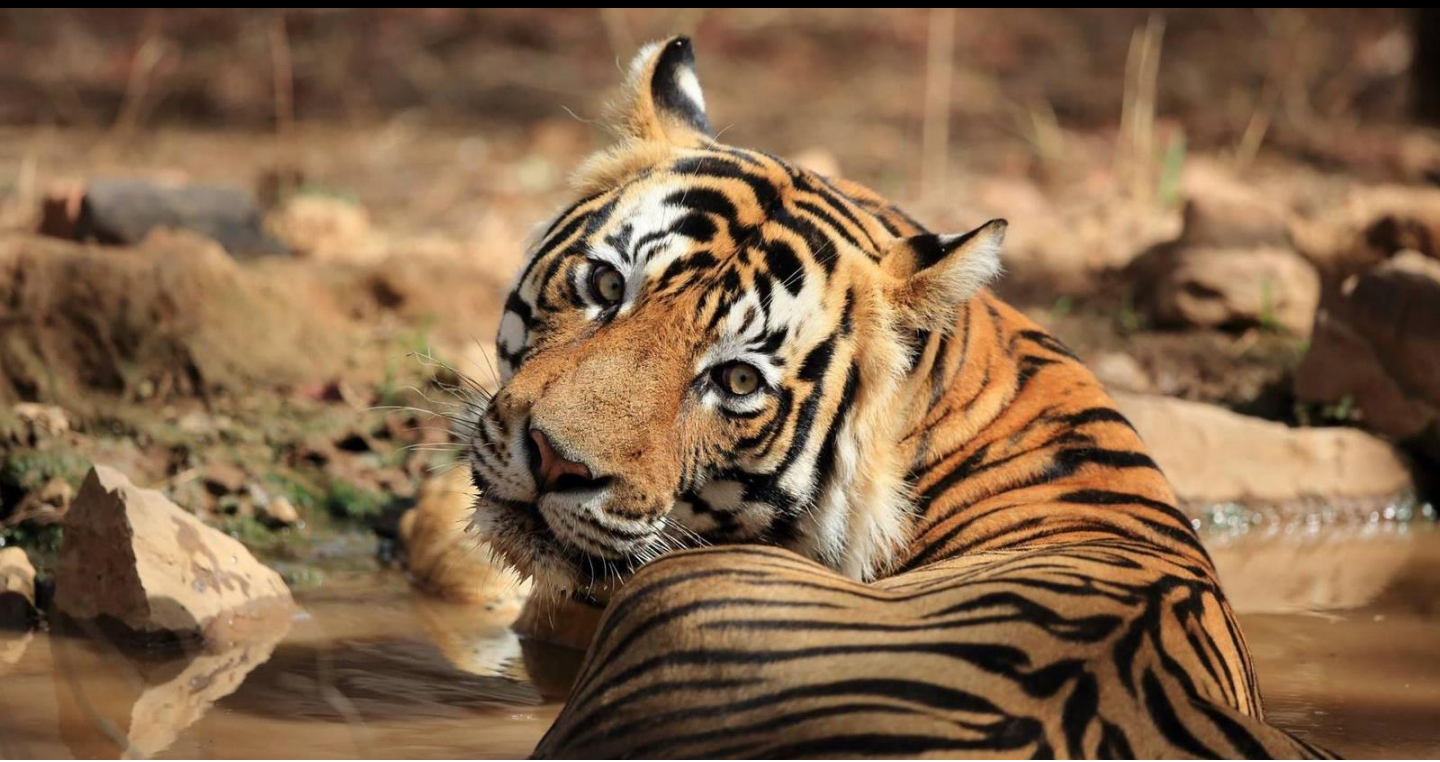


Photo by Kumar Akshat Saxena

RUNNING AGAINST TIME..



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Context

BAGHEERA, BALOO, AKELA, SHER KHAN.. I am sure most of you must have read Rudyard Kiplings's famous *Jungle Book* and might also have watched the cinematic depictions of an emotional saga of bonding between wild animals and Mowgli- the orphaned child. These stories carry hidden meanings, they resonate with our ethos and focus on Human-Animal relationship or perhaps if I may say, they highlight What is Right for Ecological balance. It is highly imperative to talk about ecology because in the last 200 years human population has grown exponentially and despite challenges of poverty, food rain-water shortage and unemployment, we are still growing and adding millions every year. This growth comes at a very hefty price and has recurring cost to pay as it impacts natural resources due to increased consumption, deforestation to meet the greed of growth, endangers the existing habitats and wildlife. If this continues at current rate, the world is going to face severe consequences and devastating natural phenomenon. While Governments, Authorities and various organizations have initiated conservation efforts, this is high time we pledge to play our part, contribute to best of our abilities, educate and involve the younger generation so that we can leave a better world behind.

RUNNING AGAINST TIME..

What is alarming

- **Forest cover is shrinking:** The world has lost more than one third of its forests. We can blame industrial growth and so-called civilization or development. But this is a matter of grave concern and must be addressed. Due to shortage of special shrubs, herbs and grass dependent species of herbivores, birds are doomed to extinction. Their extinction is leading to increase in insects causing pressing concerns to crops and fruits. Research signifies that planting Trees is the best way to bring back birds and this is one move that also balances the ecosystem.
- **Forest to Animal ratio is depleting:** Not only forest covers, but we have also killed approx. 1.5 million animals in the last 20 years at an average of 75,000 killings every year. This is the reported and recorded statistics of so-called developed nation as Canada, South Africa, New Zealand, USA and joined by Namibia, Zimbabwe, Mexico and many more.
- **Climate Change and Global Warming:** Reduction of green cover is exposing the earth to significant rise in temperature which is continuously impacting health, agriculture, ocean and other species.
- **Acidic oceans and floods:** Due to deforestation, excess of chemicals used in agriculture and other development works is mixing with river and ocean and contaminating water tables. Oceans provide way more oxygen than trees, knowing this, we are killing the source of our survival.

Importance of Wildlife in our life

I recall an incident when a seemingly matured person asked me, 'why do humans need Wildlife, when we only need cow, buffalo, pigs, goat, hen?' Therefore, it is imperative to mention and explain that point here again with an example. If you may recall incidents reported in news during COVID lockdown when deer were found roaming on the city streets; Blue Bulls grazing the crops; Elephants vandalizing villages down in south India; well imagine if there were no predators like Tiger, Leopard, Lion etc., then abundance of preys will keep destroying our crops. It is, therefore essential that a balance between preys and predators is maintained.

Not limiting to only ecological balance, wildlife directly affects and plays pivotal role in balancing environment as well as it gives stability to various other important processes that are economic, aids knowledge enhancement, research and development pertaining to health and habitat, pandemic prediction, and prevention. Every member of wildlife be it prey, predator, reptile, serpent, amphibians, birds (Ant to Elephant...) they all play some or the other important role and help humans live well. Indeed, Mother Nature has created a highly balanced system, which is self-regulated, self-sustained and is for each other's well-being unless it is disturbed due to human greed.

RUNNING AGAINST TIME..



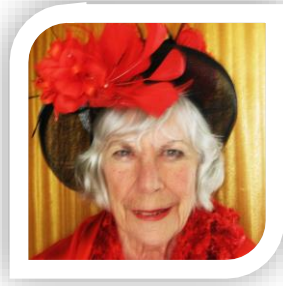
What Do we Do:

- Small change in our habits: Knowing is first step towards Right Action. It would be highly rewarding if we start making conscious choices on our purchase habits. We must discourage accessories and products that impacts wildlife and nature negatively. reduce plastic waste, plan for waste disposal, recycle, prohibit or reduce the use of chemicals/ soaps etc. and that will certainly bring a change. We must encourage natural living, plantation of tree to restore the imbalance.
- Spread Awareness: It would be highly imperative to make people aware of the consequences of imbalance in ecology. Conscious efforts should be made to share information about climate change, deforestation, changes in water table, and scarcity of natural resources. These topics should be discussed and acted upon. It would be more meaningful if we can motivate younger generation and children to spend time, understand and explore opportunities of working and restoring climate.

I leave you with aforesaid information and solicit you to ponder upon them.

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SIBLINGS??



Christine Larsen

"They really thought they were brother and sister."

"And they really thought you were their mother, just like all your pets and rescues."

'They' were our little dog Candy, barely out of puppyhood, but a born mother — and my latest rescue Ooroo, the baby kangaroo no one had expected to survive.

Can't help a sigh. A lifetime ago, but hubby, Kanute, and I share memories — as fresh as a new-laid egg — of these two, AND our wonderful farming 'apprenticeship', working for our friend on his newly inherited grandfather's farm . But all memories were not good ones, and one will live on forever — whenever I think of kangaroos... My first rescue, my darling little Snoopy who survived — against all odds — to grow up to be a 6' (or 1800cm) 'BIG Red Boomer', who still wore the heart of a marshmallow. But, that memory!

* * * * *

"I'll just put this little bugger out of his misery," he said, non-too-gently taking a firm grasp of the baby's tail as he spoke, turning toward a nearby tree. Horror filled my heart. I could see what he planned.

This baby was simply one more hapless and helpless victims experiencing the same rude interruption. Safe and warm in his mother's pouch one minute, then abruptly swung and jolted as she frantically sought freedom. Harsh hands searched his sanctuary, finding and pulling him from the familiar warmth into the horror of blinding light; into gruff and alien sounds. The smell of fear thickened the swirling dust as his captor triumphantly held him high.

My rage bubbled over as I burst from the ute. This one would NOT die!

* * * * *

"Bastards! Fair dinkum, they're eating us out of 'ere," Jack said, taking another gulp of his beer. "Should see my crop," he growled. "Whole mob of circles all laid down flat like a lizard drinkin'. Bastards turn around a few times, 'n' make 'emselves a bloody bed in the long stuff."

Frowns deepened as though to match the drought-ravaged country all around; voices became louder, more aggressive and aggrieved, as the farmers' anger grew. Each had a story of damage to crops they had nurtured and nursed, like their own precious children — more than enough to worry about with things they couldn't control -- like the weather. In this 'make or break' country, it didn't need extra hardships.

SIBLINGS??

A routine began after baby Ooroo's first feed. Candy enthusiastically washed his chin and mouth, then he took his turn, holding her face with delicate paws, licking off surplus droplets of milk clinging to her whiskers. They talked to each other constantly; Ooroo in clicks and Candy with gentle whines and soft 'woofs'.

As Ooroo grew in health, strength and courage, we would often hang his 'bedroom' on the back of a chair in the sun on the verandah. Soon he was ready for his next great adventure—coming out into the world. "Had to carry him at first, tiny paws clutching tightly to my arm, worried face peeking out at the alien world." But always totally trusting when Candy was by his side to encourage him.

Navigation of the verandah steps proved a major learning curve, until Candy taught him the questionable delights of visiting pigs, goats, lambs, and hens populating various areas of our house yard. Every time I went outside Candy and Ooroo (and the whole zoo) followed, close on my heels like a small dust cloud. Together we went to our outside loo (or toilet); the outside wash-house (alias a laundry); and the generator shed. Ooroo learned the ins-and-outs—plus the horrors—of the alarming noises of these.

Next, Candy decided it was time for Ooroo to discover the world of the paddock. She was adept at negotiating the ring-lock wire of the fences with a *nose forward, twist of the body, flip back legs through* action. Unfortunately, Ooroo's more complex body design meant poking his head and front legs through was the easy part. Not so the essential 'twist'.

"What a terrible tangle he'd get into." Kanute shakes his head. "He wasn't prepared to face it at all, really. Without Candy's woofing and wheedling, he'd never have risked it."

Their pantomime had me deeply moved. Candy performed her manoeuvre and woofed. Ooroo tried various twists of his body—failed—worried—withdrew and clicked—and worried some more. Candy patiently repeated the entire routine—again, and again. Her determination to introduce him to the joys of an adventure on the other side knew no boundaries.

Finally, Ooroo mastered the technique, to be greeted by exuberant barks and more vigorous face-licking. He clicked joyously and the pair took off to giving each and every explore the 200-acre (80 hectare) paddock. The opening lines of our favourite old song, Henry Mancini's 'Moon River' echo in my mind –

*'Two drifters, off to see the world.
There's such a lot of world to see'*

I had never forgotten my promise, giving every 'rescue its best chance to survive... against ANY odds.

By Christine Larsen

'Siblings?' was the last story written by a passionate writer, Christine Larsen, who left us for heavenly abode on 5th June 2022. She wrote this story for Brahmand while she was battling with cancer in the hospital. She endured pain for a long time with the spirit of a fighter. She will continue to inspire us. Her legacy will go on. Brahmand pays tribute to the beautiful departed soul of a strong woman.

COLLAPSING KISSES

Photograph by Nikita Saxena



The dark moth embraces the new pattern of the vermillion mark,
That creates a space out of the sadomasochistic system of blind rage !
Stars burst out in anger
As the mad beggar
portrays the half burnt comets,
In anguish, pain, fear -
The lamenting bride embraces the free flow of the shy breeze.
Intensity is no more the cause of Crisis !
Traumatized bats search for celestial light .
Liberated lizards still fight
In half dark, half lit rooms
Where fountain gushes out from heaven.
The witches unfold the tale of the bride's temptation !
Sindoor locates each and every bride in the web of history.
No story can break hearts,
When mouth collapses within mouth.
Promises empower
the Mad girl's stolen moments of furor, anger.
The call still rips apart
The bosom of the ancient city of Bidharbha -
Flickering sunrays cut through her blue, poisonous flesh.
Something suddenly roars within -
I do not know whether love ruined me or Time fell in love with the insane's heart.



Priyanka Banerjee
Academic, Poet

PHOTOGRAPHING BIRDS



Venu Jummalapalli
PHOTOGRAPHY



T Venu Gopal

Follow my journey on Instagram: [@venut_fotographie](https://www.instagram.com/venut_fotographie)

My website: <https://venutumalapalli.myportfolio.com>

Although I photograph a wide variety of subjects, birds have been most challenging, inspiring, and rewarding. It's a therapeutic activity for me. They are charismatic, vibrant, colorful, charming, dynamic and always "on-the road". They keep me on toes, quite literally. I am captivated how they adapt to cope with the vagaries of nature.

Birds are most vibrant at dawn and dusk, and it's extremely important to learn their behavior to photograph in their natural settings. It means long hours of on- and off- field work. It is also a test of extreme patience. There have been days when I have come back with no keepers after long hours in the field. Patience, Persistence and Consistency is the key. (Not that you have a lot of choice without it). But if you are pursuing them doggedly, being with the nature can be a very gratifying experience.

While it is exciting all-round the year there is a flurry of activity during the spring season when they are in their breeding plumage. It's quite a feat to watch those dynamos blending so vividly with the nature. My seasonal favorites are Warblers. They are tiny spring time visitors here in the northern hemisphere, extremely dynamic and rarely perched at the eye level.

PHOTOGRAPHING BIRDS



The funny thing though, it's that the hearing comes first, then the seeing. Most often, the birds are hidden out of sight at the first instance but are identified only through the calls they make. E-bird and Merlin apps are my favorites when it comes to understanding the birds in the neighborhood, their concentration and their calls. The more time I spend outdoors, the more I keep learning about them. Focus, composition, narrative all need to come together for creating that "aha" moment.

Photographing birds needs extreme mindfulness. All my senses need to be always present. It needs me to be constantly present in the surroundings, keep a watch on what's happening, be alert for the action, and press that shutter button at the right moment. The best part of shooting birds is that you can do right from backyard or chose to go to exotic locations. If there is curiosity and motivation, these birds don't disappoint one bit.

Unfortunately, we are so absorbed in our modern lives that even though the birds are ubiquitous but we are so absorbed in our daily lives amidst concrete jungles that we forget that they exist. Its like learning a foreign language that we learnt long ago but didn't hear in recent times.

I like to think that an hour or two spent with these fellow inhabitants is most rewarding than hours of Netflix binge watching. Every single time I hold my lens, focus and trigger it, I see, I hear, I learn something new. And I realize there is much more I need to learn to grow.

T Venu Gopal

Free Birds

Zoos remind me
how good we are at
caging everyone

Wildlife plucked out of the wilderness
forced prostitution of which
we are the pimps and also its slimy customers
yet there is a whole lot of free birds at Delhi Zoo

some refuse to be caged
some refuse to be on display
I mull over and over
the term “free birds”
redundant or repetitive words?!

I dream of utopian world
where just saying bird would be enough
there should never be a need to
add the word free to birds

open skies and birds
unadulterated air
unconditional love
what a utopian world

Reality though is a
murder of crows
no dead body found
no conviction
case adjourned



Poem & Photograph of Brahmini Kite by
Shyam Sunder Sharma
Army Veteran, Poet, Animal & Bird Lover

Save Habitat to Save Wildlife



Where will wildlife be
if there is no wilderness left?

Born free
please let us remain wild
and free
we just need some room
a wee bit of elbow space
while you encroach our habitat

forests, wetlands, grasslands shrink
for your agriculture and concrete jungles
spare our wild habitat
nature revives by itself
if you stop interfering and destruction

we are not asking for too much
are we ?



**Poem & Photograph by
Shyam Sunder Sharma
Army Veteran, Poet, Bird Lover,
Wildlife Enthusiast**

Bird Identification



Bird Identification experts carry weight
the most hilarious ones ask for more photos from any other
angle
birds feathered or otherwise don't pose in angles
my photography skills are worse than my identification skills
it's a double joy to correctly get a rare unexpected one

on seeing their profile pics of Tinder
I am often tempted to ask potential Girl friends
who are silly enough to match with mine ..
Hi! Any other angle?

I always keep my eyes and mind open
for birds that defy patterns
birds who rebel doing their stuff just for the heck of it

a bird that beats identification
a bird that does not fit
why should it?

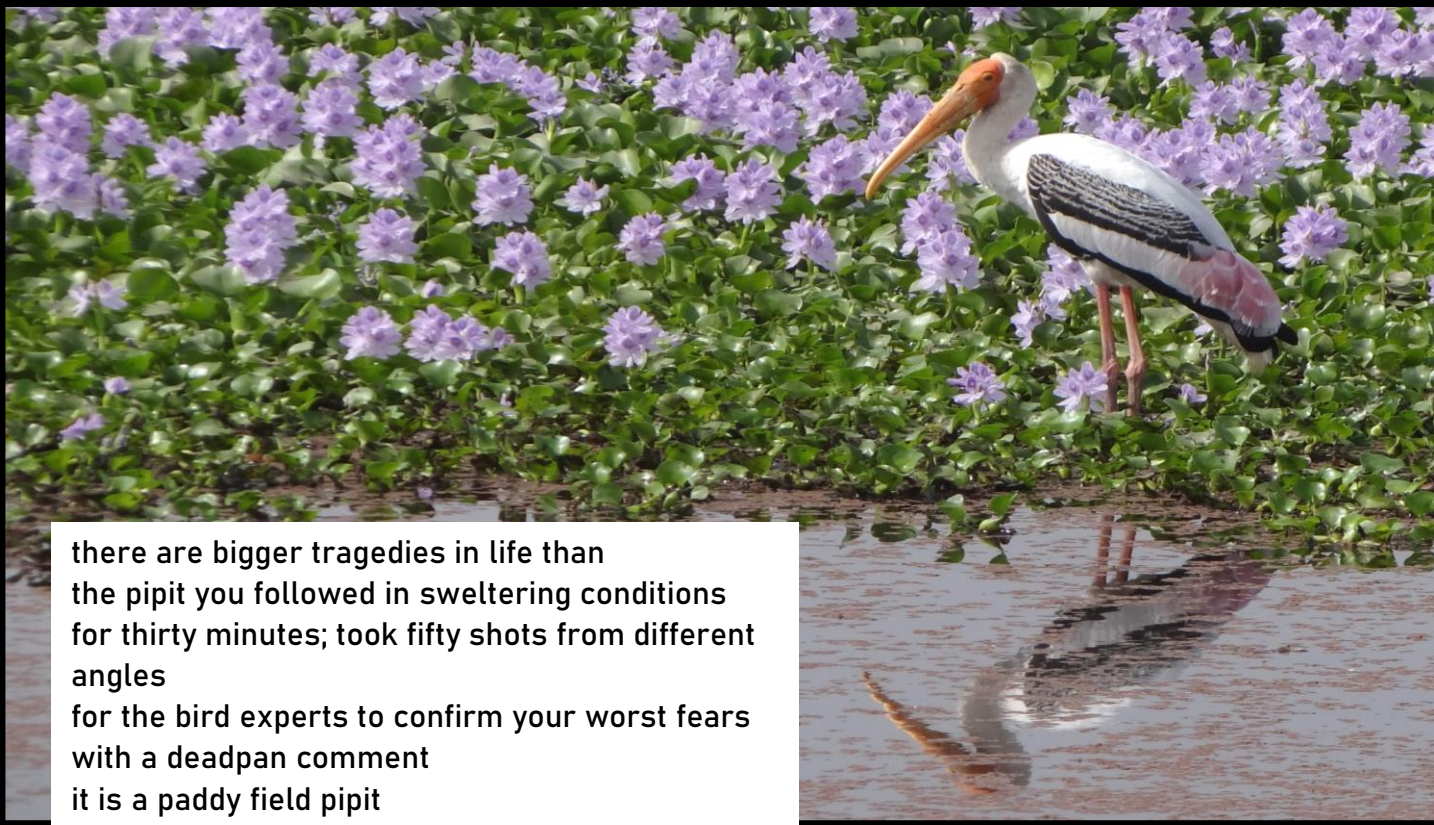
a bird out of place, out of season
a raptor behaving like a love bird
an owl beating the daylight
a bittern that is not shy
a non-resident, non-migrant
a nomad on sightseeing trip

why must wild birds conform
to our human logic driven norms
birds epitomize freedom
why shackle them to conform?



**Poem & Photograph by
Shyam Sunder Sharma
Army Veteran, Poet, Bird Lover,
Wildlife Enthusiast**

Bird Watching



there are bigger tragedies in life than
the pipit you followed in sweltering conditions
for thirty minutes; took fifty shots from different
angles

for the bird experts to confirm your worst fears
with a deadpan comment

it is a paddy field pipit

a pedestrian, un-exotic local rogue

just as ordinary as yourself

or the raptor you followed closely with

your binos up to the glaring skies

craning your neck at impossible angles

firing away with camera in burst mode

rapid fire comes to naught

turns out as a black kite

playing mischief by hiding its forked tail

and mimicking an eagle

or when you have woken up so early

on a weekend and trudged the distance

to difficult wetlands only to miss the skulking

bitterns

by a mile or by a micro second

a cinnamon one, a yellow one, a black one

in your photos, they all look like

fancy coloured ribbons fluttering in the skies

inwardly, you smile and kick yourself to go on

as you walk on by

a commoner just as yourself

piebush chat poses upfront

you smile and oblige the bird

and yourself.

Poem & Photograph by
Shyam Sunder Sharma
Army Veteran, Poet, Bird Lover,
Wildlife Enthusiast

THE ENDANGERED WILDLIFE

Climate change endangers wildlife; and wildlife must overcome climate change

On the American plains, there once roamed many buffaloes
Roamed many buffaloes was glory for Native Americans
Who used the buffaloes in many ways
For their hides and their meat
Alas, the buffaloes diminished in number
Leaving Native Americans joyless

Joyless are the lions in Africa so rare
Hope to keep their numbers up is diminishing
Through poaching and trophy hunting
Climate change too
The king of the jungle
Is diminishing in numbers

Numbers diminish also for the tiger
One of the largest cats left
They are 'oft found in sanctuaries
Or zoos on display for humans to observe
Not at home on the plains and jungles in Africa
The dread of climate change has affected the tigers.

Tigers are here but where are the pandas?
Once widespread throughout eastern and southern China
Pandas are now confined to
20 isolated patches of
bamboo forest In southern China
The dread of climate change affects the pandas.

Pandas are endangered along with the African elephants
Africa's elephants play a key role in
Ecosystems, economies, and our
collective imagination/
Like the lions, African elephants and forest elephants
have significantly declined again, poaching
and climate change ate contributing factors.

Factors like the wars in Rwanda and the Democratic
Republic of the Congo
Reduced the numbers of gorillas
When refugees fled these areas.
They are now considered endangered
Hunting, disease, poaching are contributing factors.

Climate change has changed the wildlife kingdom
It is a contributing factor to a
Joyless environment for humans and animals alike.



Concetta Pipia
Lawyer, Architect, Poet,
Editor of AWS, Writer

A SILENT GLORY

When the earth was numb in a slumbering stupor
a hush silence and a tranquil peace pervaded
The moon in all its splendour
stretched across the heavenly sky,
a lone boat, a witness to this silent glory
drowned in a meditative trance
The breeze softly danced on a symphonic note
Was it the songs of Vedas
that silently echoed through the cosmos
as the rustles of the waves sang
Om Shivoham, Shivoham, Shivoham
The world bowed in an unspoken
Naman
To the Celestial Majesty

(First Published in Setu Bilingual Journal December 2020)



Poem by Meenakshi Mohan
Educator, Writer, Artist, Poet



Painting by Staffy Bhateja

Journey Of Joy

The 'Flagship' sailed slowly on the Pacific
Moving like a seesaw
The breeze, the smell of ocean kept us glued to
the surround
And we sat back in awe!
People from all over the world
Were bonded for five hours
The man with a hat on top of the ship
Was the dashing Captain of ours!
Sea creatures were plenty
But for 'some unique', we felt keen
Fish aquatic were the usual
We aimed only for rare 'Dolphins'!
Symbol of hope and protection
And a sign of 'great-good luck'
These mammals were hard to spot
So we remained still and wonderstruck!
Scattered on the deck every side
Were anxious men, women and children
It appeared to be a prolonged wait,
To make our day brightened!
Blue water stretched till the horizon
Glittery, sparkly as the Sun rays fell
Lion fish, Sun fish floated up though
Unable to create that 'magic spell'!
Eyes were searching underneath
The 'joyful mammals' with long beaks
Hearts were pounding little louder
As the chances seemed too bleak.
Time flew past, and Sun was all set to say
Goodbye
A little sad, desperately we stared up at the sky.
Then.....Sudden shout out of a toddler
Made us jump with glee
As per saying - 'babies are angels'
"They predict things, which we cannot see!"
A fleet of beautiful DOLPHINS
Arose abruptly from the distance
It was the moment to freeze
As we stood in trance!
Flipping through the air, their moves were most
ecstatic
Tears of happiness rolled down our eyes, we got
stunned by the "magic "
'Joyous Marines' swam in groups
Showing their togetherness
As... 'Family'- where the life begins
And love never ends!
'Pod' of these 'bottle nose' whales
Taught us the greatest thing
When we have each other
We have 'Everything'



Tulika Niyogi

WHEN I SEE YOU DEER



Photograph by Praharsh Bajpai
Brahmand: Voice of the Cosmos, Vol 2, Issue 1

A deer rambling like a vagabond
roving and floating in the air
not in a hurry to see the life beyond
soaked in the melody of its own song

Foraging but alert to the dangers of civility
Watching for a moment
face to face with men
before jumping on conclusion

Taking every step carefully
with grace and dignity
hiding its timidity
with panache and perfection

When I see a deer in the wild
I stop by and stare
to enter inside
straight through the eyes
to read the lessons learnt from the predators
yet appreciate life
to look for the faith in universe despite
being hunted to the point of exhaustion
to look for the instincts to overcome hurdles
without preconceived notions
to find the sense of calm
the place where all that maturity resides

I find no traces of tough times
Only stages of becoming wise
when I see a deer in the wild



Dr. Pragya Bajpai
Nature Lover, Academic, Poet
Insta: pragyabajpai29

Lost Soul BY Alka Balain

I have been searching for my lost soul
Where did I lose it?
In the quagmire of worldly beliefs
Searching miserably externally
I realise my folly
it lay entrapped in the imprints within

I dig and dig inwardly, with all my might
the more I dug, the more lost I felt
Writhing in darkness, with no dawn in sight
my false perception
still, I refused to throw it away

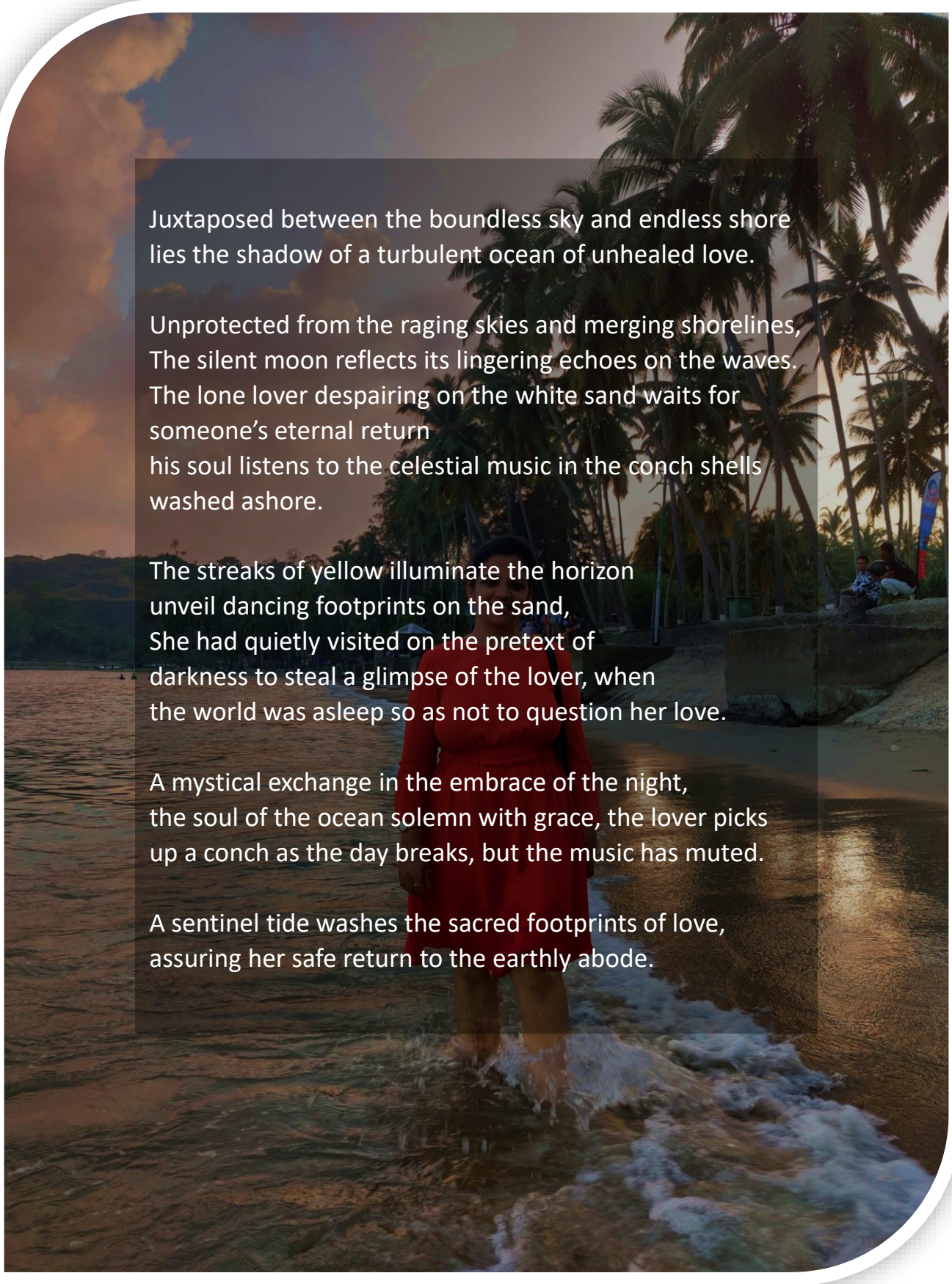
Divine was watching, smiling at its creation
I topple and rise from the bottomless abyss
Gradually, the darkness dissipates
morphs into a celestial circle of light
And ah! there it was
all along hidden within!



Photograph by Dipti Sharma
Instagram: dipti.sharma_

The Questionable Visit

By Alka Balain



Juxtaposed between the boundless sky and endless shore
lies the shadow of a turbulent ocean of unhealed love.

Unprotected from the raging skies and merging shorelines,
The silent moon reflects its lingering echoes on the waves.
The lone lover despairing on the white sand waits for
someone's eternal return
his soul listens to the celestial music in the conch shells
washed ashore.

The streaks of yellow illuminate the horizon
unveil dancing footprints on the sand,
She had quietly visited on the pretext of
darkness to steal a glimpse of the lover, when
the world was asleep so as not to question her love.

A mystical exchange in the embrace of the night,
the soul of the ocean solemn with grace, the lover picks
up a conch as the day breaks, but the music has muted.

A sentinel tide washes the sacred footprints of love,
assuring her safe return to the earthly abode.

Far swathes of timberlands;
Tiny nests in 'em all.
Squeaking souls of shades and brands,
A flock of diverse calls.

Perhaps for ages one 'o two,
They've been perching in peace.
Each branch that sways neath the blue,
Proffers 'em bliss.

As winters knock their elfin doors,
The leaves decay off on dust.
Their wings still sense a barren shore,
Around their tranquil crust.

One by one those little birds,
Off in the air they fly.
Off to the lands with crocs and pards,
They paint a cerulean sky.

Leaving homes of twigs and ferns,
To quiver in snowy winds.
They fly off to breathe and earn,
More hours to restore ruins.

Their barren nests white in snow,
Tremble o'er the trees.
They witness in hush the winter show,
Ruffled by the breeze.

And for months till the wider skies,
Gleam in a scarlet glimpse.
The broken nests keep open eyes,
For their birds of dreams.

And with summers they all return,
To mend their broken nests.
Their tender beaks fetch twigs and ferns,
To restore 'em in haste.

Novice dreams for days few more,
They weave in serene sunlight.
New lives squeak on springtime shore,
Oblivious of the night.

Snow Birds



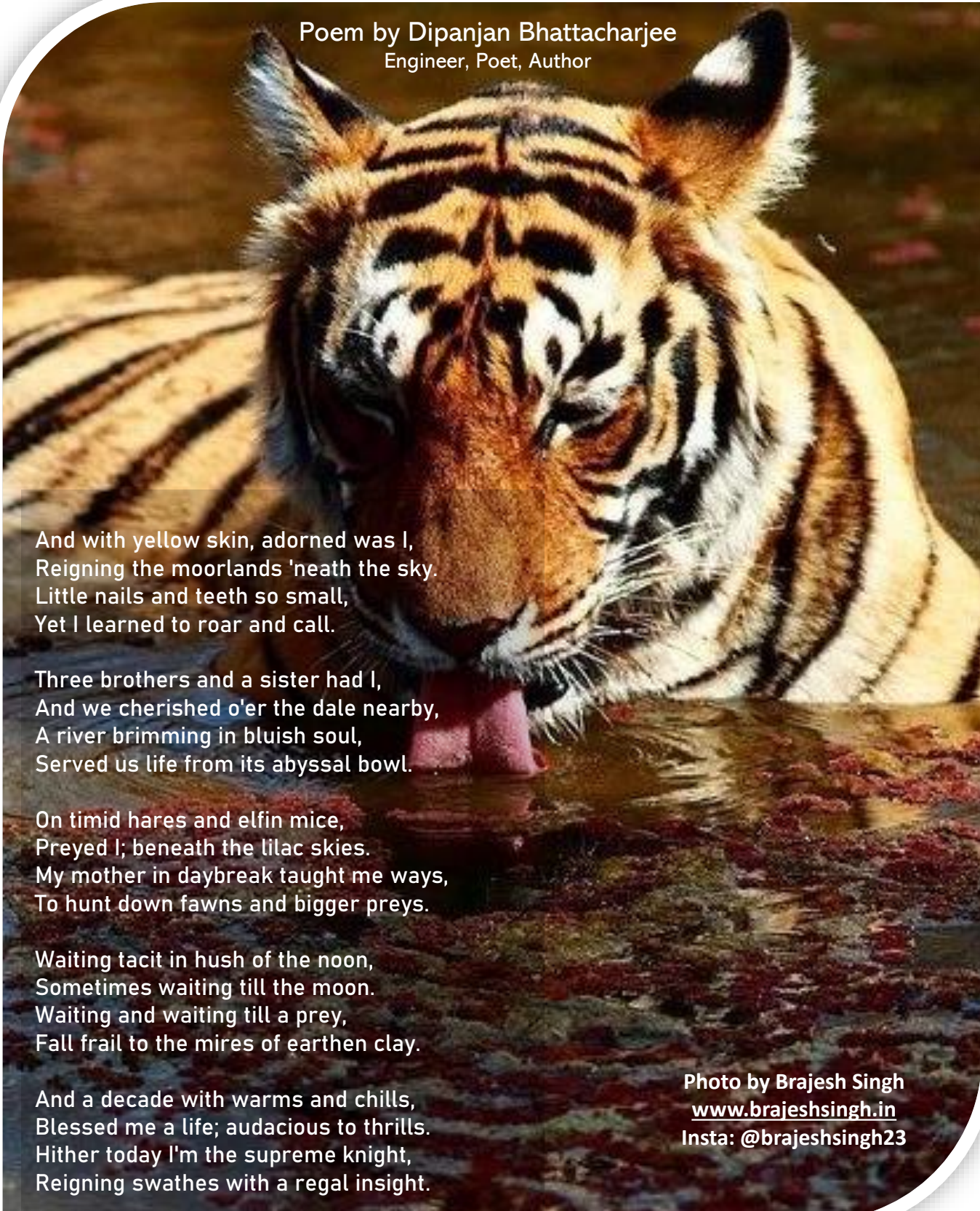
Dipanjan Bhattacharjee
Engineer, Poet, Author



Photograph by Dipti Sharma
Instagram: dipti.sharma_

A Tiger's Voyage

Poem by Dipanjan Bhattacharjee
Engineer, Poet, Author



And with yellow skin, adorned was I,
Reigning the moorlands 'neath the sky.
Little nails and teeth so small,
Yet I learned to roar and call.

Three brothers and a sister had I,
And we cherished o'er the dale nearby,
A river brimming in bluish soul,
Served us life from its abyssal bowl.

On timid hares and elfin mice,
Preyed I; beneath the lilac skies.
My mother in daybreak taught me ways,
To hunt down fawns and bigger preys.

Waiting tacit in hush of the noon,
Sometimes waiting till the moon.
Waiting and waiting till a prey,
Fall frail to the mires of earthen clay.

And a decade with warms and chills,
Blessed me a life; audacious to thrills.
Hither today I'm the supreme knight,
Reigning swathes with a regal insight.

Photo by Brajesh Singh
www.brajeshsingh.in
Insta: @brajeshsingh23



Photo by Amiya Chatterjee

Unheard stories thrive in hush beneath the wounded leaves,
Tinge of hazel hues from skies onto the floor they cleave.
A spectator in awe is what my identity speaks,
Beholding in silence; the pride that sniffs and peeks-
From behind the coast redwood or the smiling crowds of pine,
Just a meal is what they seek; a wholesome diet to dine.

Fawns in fear stumble past the trees with broken barks,
The early dawn with crimson streaks, kisses the hazel larks.
No fawning rules over the lives that breathe beneath the sky,
Hunger wins the only need to run in haste and fly.

Ivory rabbits dig a hole to hide themselves again,
Perhaps they sniffed a tiger sweat drenched in northern rains.
O'er the blue the falcon flies with hopes to trace a snake,
Obscured beneath the dried leaves to camouflage; a fake.

Howling wolves loiter by the falling water lake,
To hunt a life weaker though; yet with an affluent stake.
Perhaps a deer or bison black; anything serves their need,
Tis just a need unlike the breeds that long to win their greed.

The sinless woods breathe each day with innocent ways of life,
No grudge prevails for selfish needs; no avarice rules the strife.
Myriad desires for wealthy gleams have no pertinent share,
Pristine are the brooks around; pristine is the air.

Lives in Wilderness



Poem by Dipanjan Bhattacharjee
Engineer, Poet, Author

Photograph by Dipti Sharma

Instagram: dipti.sharma_



Looking Out of my Window

Poem by Dipanjan Bhattacharjee

Looking Out of my window; I see birds fluttering and flying in the breeze,
Squeaking and chirping o'er canopies to search seclusion for nesting in peace.
With the yawning cerulean; they flap the first stroke of their wings,
And into the abysmal blue; in merriment they fly amidst the cloudy rings.

The first grain of meal might tantalize them into the yards of chartreuse leas,
Swinging and fluttering; they wing through the unbounded breeze.
Hovering over the gangling pillars of utopia; they seek havens of amour,
To lay their fruits of love beneath the scarlet beams from the caramel core.

Ignorant of the selfish gestures wafting through the human lands,
They breathe solitude in the cradles of those pristine hands.
Osculating through the crimson skies of Zeus; they dance in sublime shades,
Oft singing aubades for their beloved ones; nescient of those number grades.

My window knows it all; conveying scenes of halcyon panorama to my eager eyes,
It smiles with covert emotions; concealed from the human spies.
I cherish the mornings draped in cerulean duvets of serendipity,
Treasuring the sublime beauty as a witness cloaked in attires of anonymity.

Empower Nature

By Ankita Baheti

Noble nature gives
Nourishment to its
Numerous children without discrimination
Naive humans destroy nature ignobly

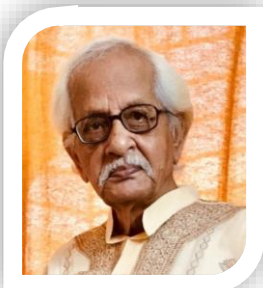
Angry ablaze nature
Anxiously replies back
Attains ferocious furious state
Avails calmness after destruction

Teaches traumatizing lessons
To ungrateful people
That they take responsibility
Towards negligence shown to nature

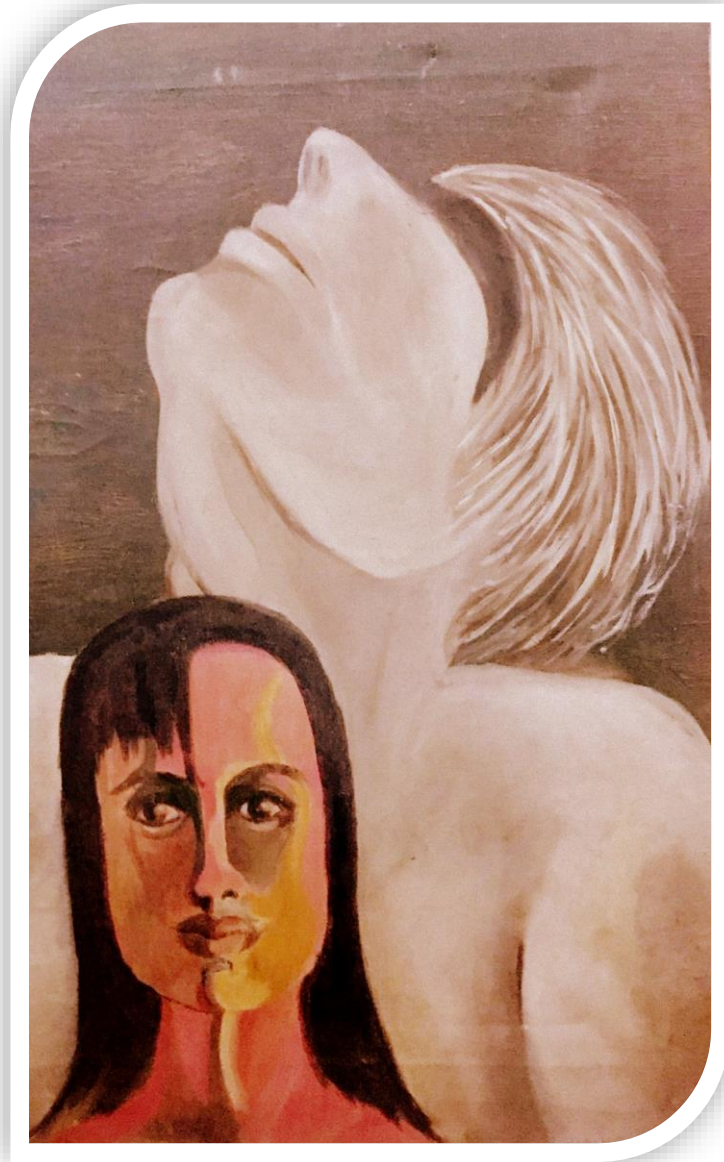
Ultimately upset nature
Unable to rewind
Unsubtle actions against mankind
Ugly fact, which never changes

Let us realize the truth
And rectify our mistakes
Recognize the power of nature
Reduce unwilling destruction of it

Everyone, embrace nature
Ensure its safety
Earn back it's love
Empower nature, nobody should harm it.



Painting by Amiya Chatterjee



Murder of Corvidae

By Janet Stoyel

The Farmer ploughed the field, seeded it with sunflowers
much to the congregated flocks of corvid bird delight.
No wooden scarecrows in the fields could frighten,
no matter how Famer Giles dressed and placed them
the flocks would have full stomachs that night.

Concealed beneath a canvas, weed disguised
in a corner of a field, a man lay with a pointing
shotgun, double-barrelled, deadly smoking,
one-by-one he pot-shot the corvid party: Crows,
Hooded Jackdaws, Rooks, Jays and Magpies; arrested
As they were feasting in frenetic joyful gorging,
pecking up rich nourishment sprinkled on the ground.



Corvid birdies are all monogamous - they choose
their mates with devoted attention, nest building homes
together in massive trees and chimneys ever so tall,
they raise their young with diligence, thereafter all
join the community family is important to them all.

Distress Farmer Giles annihilated a multitude parents,
leaving myriad corvid babies, orphaned, shrilly squalling,
victimised, juvenile sibling assembly mourning on my lawn.
Fledgling birdies have soft plumage, they truly cannot fly,
their wings undeveloped for flights of fancy, no tensile
strength to reach the sky. Alone and hungry in their nests,
birdies cascade from above, to flop beneath forget-me-nots.
Disconsolate, mournful, forlorn Crying Crying.

Four birdies I popped into a box, blanketed with a duvet,
sang to them on a journey because it made them quieten,
delivered to a vet - who promised he would help them.
Good deed done for a day. Time for some serious retribution.
Reported Farmer Giles to Audubon for cruelty unwarranted,
threaded corvid carcasses on barbed-wire - a ghastly mortuary
necklace ...declared this a deterrent, better than any scarecrow.

Without a peep, in a blackened sky a powerful beating of wings,
corvid's in the hundreds amassed, danced upon the power-lines,
tightly packed together, until a continuous string of darkness
surrounding the habitation of Farmer Giles -The Killer

Notes: Corvidae is a cosmopolitan family of oscine passerine birds that contains the crows, ravens, rooks, jackdaws, jays, magpies, treepies, choughs, and nutcrackers. In colloquial English, they are known as the crow family, or, in jargon, corvids. Currently 133 species are included in this family. ~ Wikipedia

Murder of Corvidae Conti...

Corvid birds are highly intelligent, able to recognise faces, have speech patterns producing birdy-quirky language, with memories lasting lifetimes, passed through generations. These birds on the line sought vengeance, cold, pure, simple, they watched, they waited for a coup d'oeil of Farmer Giles

He could not step beyond his door, the birds maintained a vigil, night, and day they roosted there no matter what the weather. If Old Giles tried disguised escape, his ruse it quickly floundered; Corvids dropped from above attacking in tight formation, they pecked his eyes out from his head, delicacies in the making, attacked at every opportunity. The malefic birds would not be satisfied, avenged until their adversary – Killer Farmer Giles dropped dead.

The juvenile corvid perched on the window-sill his nestling beady- eyes startling aquamarine blue, so, they would remain until maturity arrived when obsidian-black, with glassy sheen, would replace his baby-blues. Fluffy down would line lofty rookery nests as plumage was refashioning, oil spill sheen, shimmering dark blue, emerald, and purple,

A truly handsome Corvid – a King Jackdaw in the making.

Looking in as I looked out recognition flared between us this was one of the fledgling I had saved the day his parents they were murdered. I hummed the tune I sang on the way - he watched me with close attention. A cheeky chap he'd become, he pecked among my jewellery. Now as Dragons lust after golden rings, Jackdaws are drawn to shiny things, in front of my mirror he pranced and he fluttered, admiring himself as a young male will do, sifting through my glittering accessories he decide to select one, two or a few! I could not deny him the pleasure of possession I felt similar joy too.

Up his scaled leg he pushed one silvery, glittering ring, my eternity band studded with sapphires – shiny things. The considered look he gave me spoke of many things Thanks: trust, commitment, friendship were within his gaze he bent his head, round his ruffled neck a matching bracelet I did place. No longer wild, a friend to me, my avian confidante.



Janet Stoyel
Material Tech Specialist, Craftswoman,
Writes for pleasure

The Cannonball Tree



Photo and Poem by
Dr. Maitreyee Joshi
Ophthalmologist, Psychologist, Poet

On my morning walk,
Beholding the tender shoots of the cannonball tree
Like jets of a fountain of a new beginning, the chaitra pallavi
As she danced in the azure sky of infinite gaiety
I, with a spring in my stride, ventured to capture
Her delightful pose when raising her arms,
She arched her back and swayed to her side
But she stopped me short and with a pout on her lips
Said to me, " Don't take my pictures and post
I still have these dried leaves, limp flowers
And these half bird nibbled fruits
You will display all my ugly side, or
If you wish to post, erase all the unwanted bits
And enhance the colour of my shoots
I sighed ! She too wasn't after all immune
To the feigned social media fantasy
She had done away with taking pride
In her verdant beauty and had made
This spurious anxiety, her new found affinity..

2022/4/21

Gone Wild

"I love the wild, the wilderness
as nature is just being itself."

Has the world gone wild?
I wonder.
The Wild West
an enchanting obsession
long long ago...
today, playing wild,
letting senses run haywire
is the normal order of the day

Wild animals,
their beauty, their mannerisms
a charming conception of nature's nature
Man, a unique clever mimic,
owner of the sixth sense
permits passionate wild wilderness
to seep into his muddled mind
destroying all in his path

I love the wild, the wilderness
as nature is just being itself.
I love the wild streak
in people
who knows what it means to be human.
Wild is fine when it adds that dash of charm
to a persona precious, with pure perspective
who knows how to tame wild wishful vision!



Shail Raghuvanshi
Freelance Journalist, Editor, Poet

Painting by Madhavi

The Love Song

by Rimjhim Srivastava

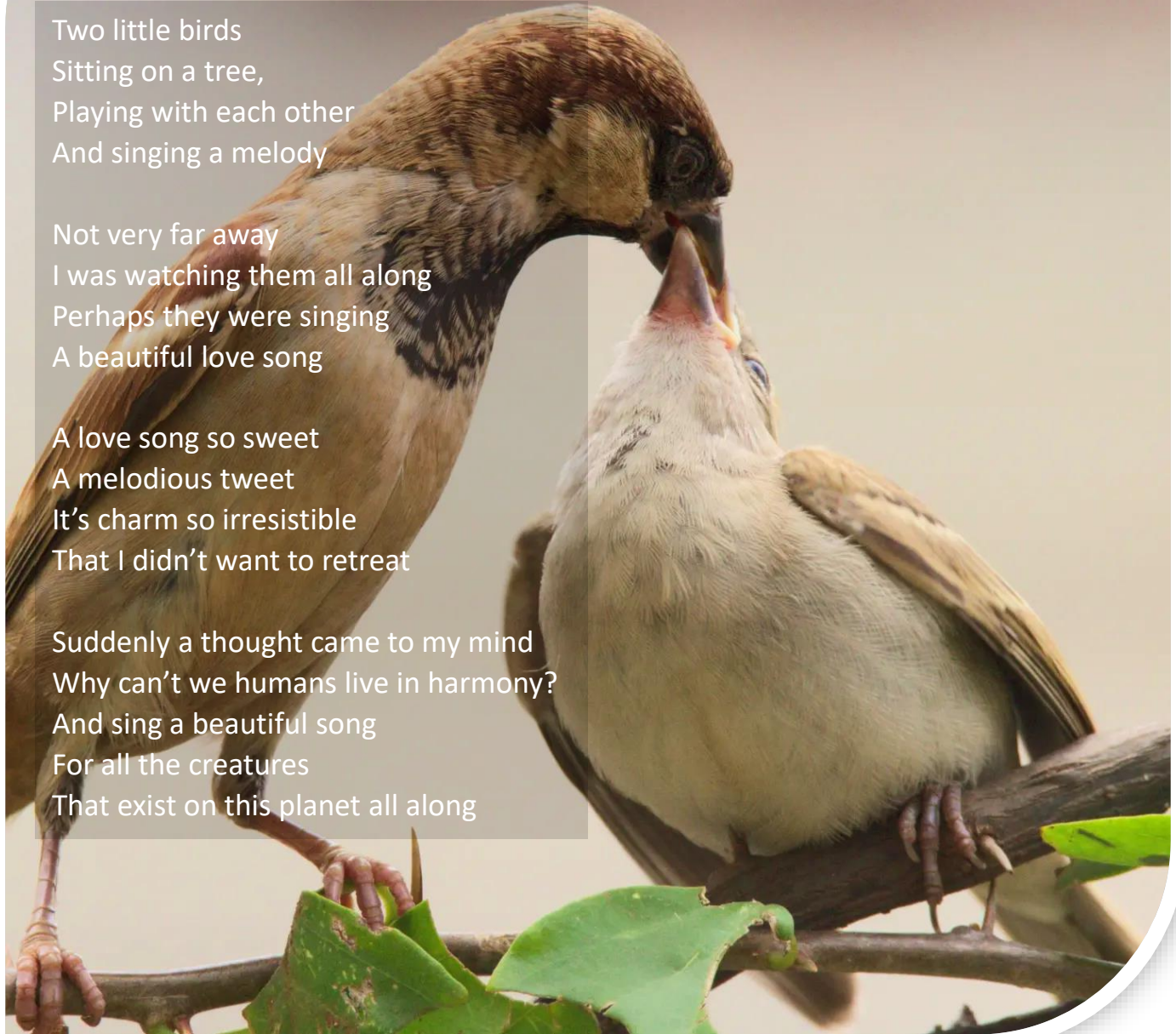
Photograph by Dipti Sharma
Instagram: dipti.sharma_

Two little birds
Sitting on a tree,
Playing with each other
And singing a melody

Not very far away
I was watching them all along
Perhaps they were singing
A beautiful love song

A love song so sweet
A melodious tweet
It's charm so irresistible
That I didn't want to retreat

Suddenly a thought came to my mind
Why can't we humans live in harmony?
And sing a beautiful song
For all the creatures
That exist on this planet all along



The Mighty Tiger

Deepti Agrawal

Wait! Do you hear something?
Shhh! It's the sound of death approaching
Herd of deer forgot their munching
With Glowing eyes
He ran as smooth as silk
Vibrant stripes camouflages
The bush, the vines, the greens
Covers the field with mighty stride
Complete arena glowing with pride
With utmost speed and grace
His grandeur moves, embrace
One big swift leap
Ends the hunting trip
Quick razor sharp claws
Make the doe's blood flow
What a mighty kill it was!
There was no hint of any flaws
That's the power of the cat
Nothing could overrule this mortal combat
But,
The fiercest beast is vulnerable too,
The social animal hunts it, too
Need to protect and understand
There is a place prearranged for every brand
Save Tigers, Save the Environment



I'm a Zoo

I breed all sorts of animals,
That loiter, lurk, hibernate, bask, wander, loaf,
The sloth and bear live in me lazy and procrastinating,
The lion roars in my wild full of himself, an ego trip,
The tiger ever prowling in my grounds, ready to pounce,
All set to attack all life, prey to smother, with all his might,
The monkey chatters like these humans on virtual spheres,
The wolf waits licking his lips from behind the foliage and sneers,
The elephant restlessly moves on fours, chained waiting to turn rogue,
The rhino so indifferent, grazing, selectively deaf, till irritated to charge,
And a wild toro rages within the fenced arena, teased, in a cloud of dust,
The gorilla is done with life and sits with a smoke, having the last laugh,
The deer is the saving grace, but so edgy, nervous, it is truly infectious,
The zebra is confused like a prisoner of war in a Nazi camp, in striped pyjamas,
The giraffe watches all of this in complacency for his side of the grass is greener,
The tortoise is contemplating on how to reincarnate in his next birth, slow and steady,
The fox is busy planning a great escape with the vixen sitting under barbed wire,
The exotic birds are so vain, that they are happy in their own droppings,
The snakes and such reptiles hiss just to intimidate onlookers, they're in control.
The rodents are celebrating their catches of leftover animal lunches and dinners,
The hippo has forgotten to move for the slush is a comfort zone and he sinks ,
The humans are permanently surprised at creatures that they don't understand,
And now I want to break these fences and throw out these creatures from my head.
I'd rather be on open ground..



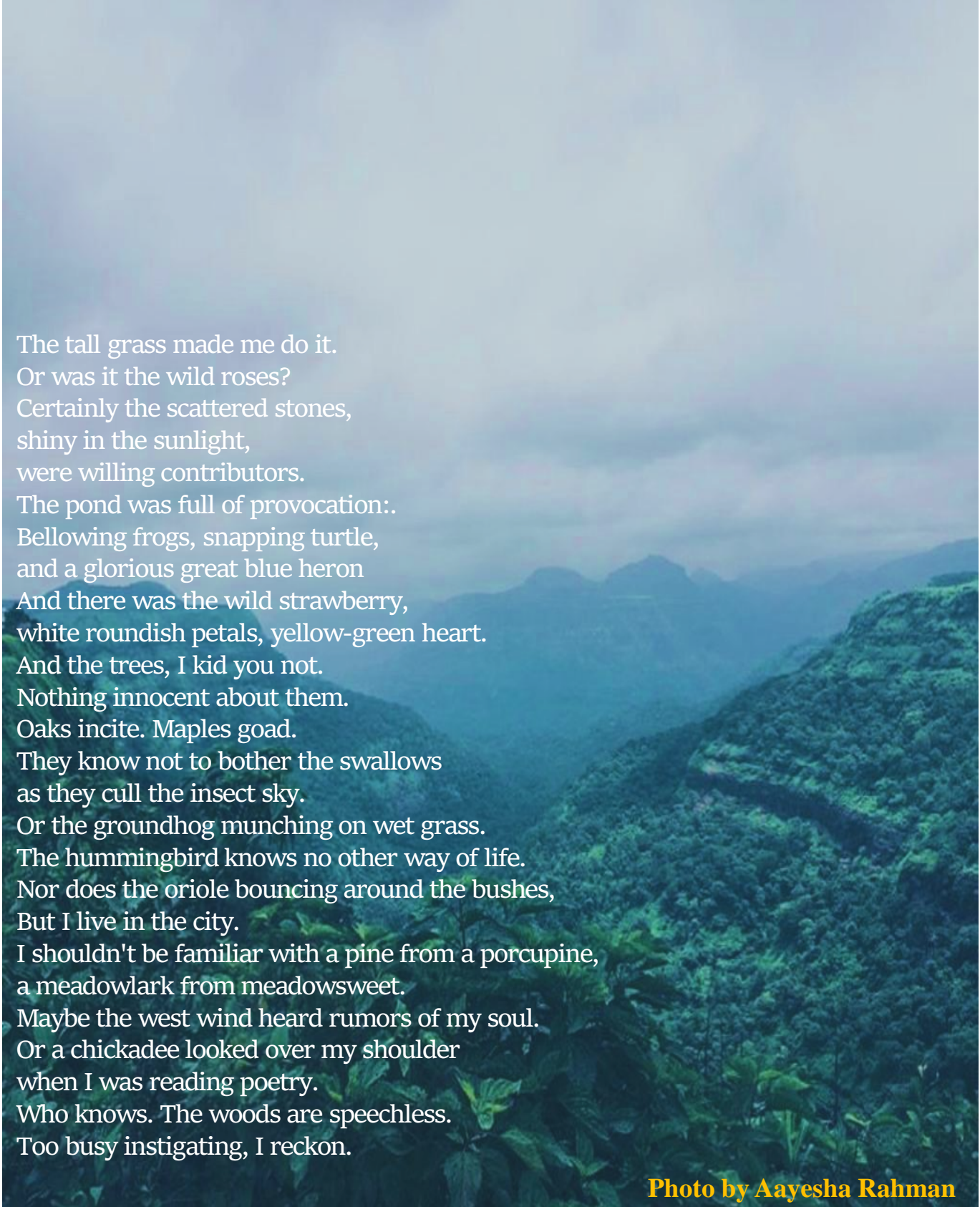
Geetanjali Dilip
Artist, Poet,
Professor of French



Photo by Gurdeep Singh

Why Did I Walk In The Woods?

By John Grey



The tall grass made me do it.
Or was it the wild roses?
Certainly the scattered stones,
shiny in the sunlight,
were willing contributors.
The pond was full of provocation:
Bellowing frogs, snapping turtle,
and a glorious great blue heron
And there was the wild strawberry,
white roundish petals, yellow-green heart.
And the trees, I kid you not.
Nothing innocent about them.
Oaks incite. Maples goad.
They know not to bother the swallows
as they cull the insect sky.
Or the groundhog munching on wet grass.
The hummingbird knows no other way of life.
Nor does the oriole bouncing around the bushes,
But I live in the city.
I shouldn't be familiar with a pine from a porcupine,
a meadowlark from meadowsweet.
Maybe the west wind heard rumors of my soul.
Or a chickadee looked over my shoulder
when I was reading poetry.
Who knows. The woods are speechless.
Too busy instigating, I reckon.

Photo by Aayesha Rahman

Meadow Life

by John Grey

What else is there to do with a meadow
but roll around in it. When it's you and
I, holding hands, running, laughing,

that's what the bluebonnets expect.
Flop to the earth, kick off shoes,
shake and shuffle our backbones

into the soft grass's cozy springs
until we both believe this surely is
the finest mattress in the world.

So low to the ground, not just the
sky but those blue petals look down on us.
We trust in their gentle spikes,

their breeze-fueled bonhomie.
They celebrate the trespass of my lips
on your sun-licked cheek,

the drop of your head to my chest,
the spill, the spread of hazel hair.
Another bloom...an evanescent butterfly.

to flowers, there is no difference
between a life and a moment.
From us, they won't learn otherwise

Photograph by Pragya Bajpai

An Apology



Shristee Singh
Poet, Writer, Editor

A tiger ventured into my town,
And People gathered to see, as if it was a clown!

It stood hiding in a secluded corner
As the mob moved around proclaiming warner

The king of the jungle had lost its way
Whilst at night it was hunting for its prey

When he entered the jungle of humans it realised not
And amongst the traffic and buildings it got caught

There was mayhem outside his hiding place
Crowd was wondering what to do, if it attacked in case

As it peeped out to run back to the woods
A man with a gun in front of it stood

And he shot the majestic beast without a second thought
Not giving it the chance to escape, which it ought

Sorry dear tiger, majestic creation of Lord Divine
If only humans had not reduced your green shrine

A lifeless cadaver you wouldn't have been
And would be ruling your jungle, green and clean

Photograph by Brajesh Singh
www.brajeshsingh.in
Insta: @brajeshsingh23



“Pando” they christened
Dominion aspen clone
Not a single ray glistened,
As the ancient groan.

Beast roamed, birds freely chirped,
Rivulet glided bounteous
The woods unmarked
Greenery stupendous.

Anthropoid ascent
Cursed hunger insatiable
Provoked inhuman lament
Pedigree blamable

Lumber chopped
Barks stripped
Multitude limbs ripped,
Jungle roared tormented

Shattered hearts askew
Terra firma crimson
On it's cadaver grew
Biped metropolis son.

Dendrophile mourned
Metropolis ravished
Biome devastated
Man-kind persisted.

Gaia's cries ignored
No longer she mothered
Those humans unbothered
And set loose calamities enraged.

Human hamlets obliterated
Nature reclaimed, restored..

Gaia



Meera Bhansali
Poet and Writer

Gaia, meaning land or earth, is the Greek Mother Nature. She is the primal goddess personifying the earth. She is considered a 'Great Goddess' and is held highly in the Parthenon as a primordial deity. Although considered God of the Earth she was often referred to as more of a 'power' than a defined being. Gaia is, in presence, the earth. The earth is said to hold the soul of Gaia whilst her bodily presence is existing in all forms of her creations including humans, trees, animals etc.



Embroidery by Fehmida Haider

A lone tiger sitting in his den
Ponders
When I hunt
It's called kill
When humans hunt
It's labelled as game
When I mark my territory
it's termed as dominance
When humans mark their boundaries
They hail them as country and nation.
I and humans
So unlike but same
We both mark our borders
And kill and gets kill
To keep ourselves safe from our own
brethren.
But why am I known as wild and ferocious ?
And humans civilized and sophisticated
What is the difference
I cannot fathom.

Poor Me



Waheeda Hussain
Educator, Editor, Poet



Trees around the water holes
Wild winds blow free
Carrying a roar, sometimes
a trumpet to the mountains
Flutter of wings race with the
unruly grunts from among the green grass
Bamboo groves lost
In creating a symphony
Pairs of colours dancing in rhythm
Butterflies in sunshine.
Cicadas never silent, the dampness
of the rainforest itch their throat
Waterfalls in deafening decibels
Million droplets blanket the space
Dear calls and a langur replies
from a tree top; a striped prowler is on
Doe eyes twitch, leap dart and
the herd flies over the meadow
The voices of the forest turn into a music
Inviting the valley below.

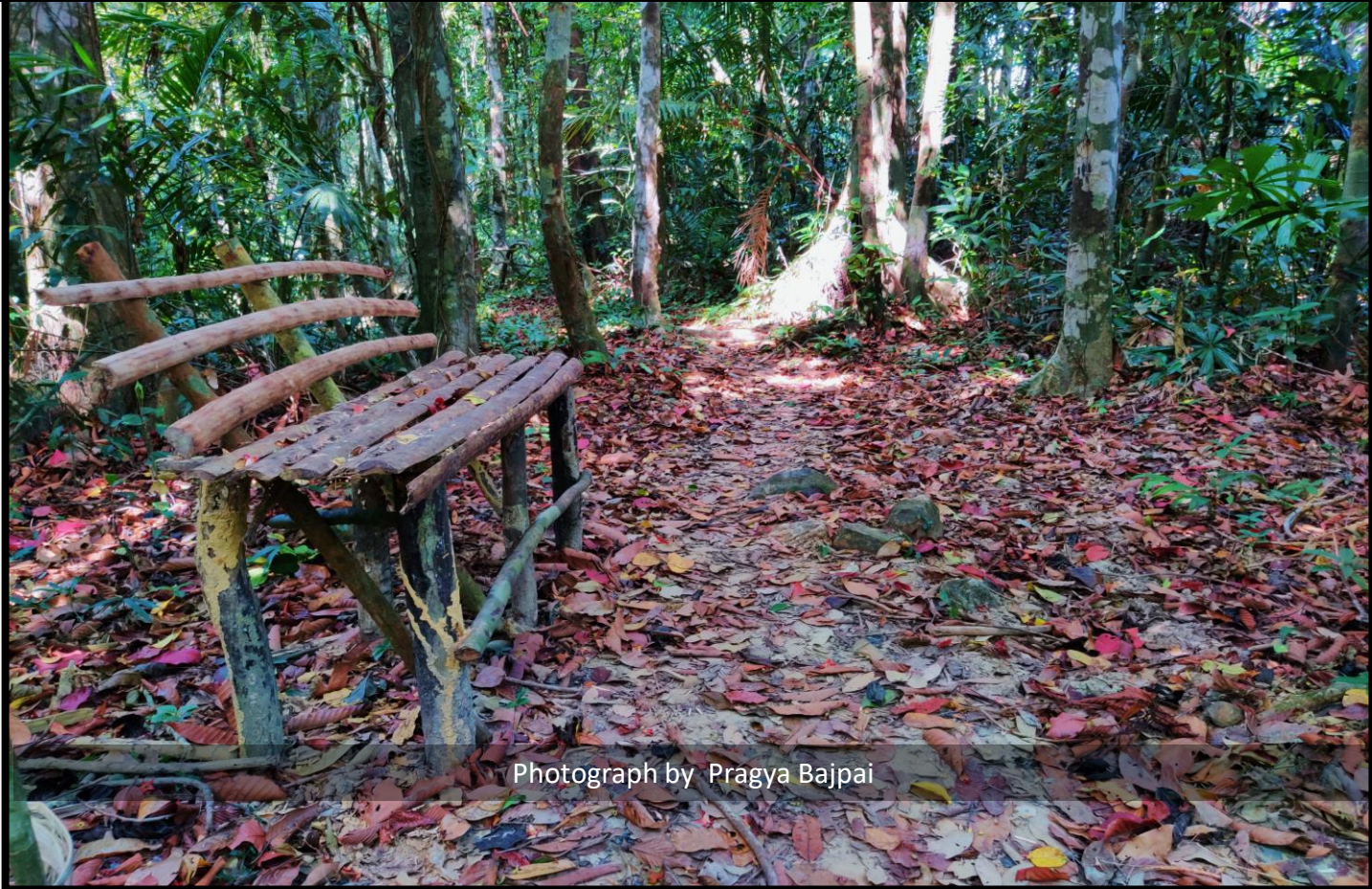
They come, clear their way
Dry every dampness, machines growl
Rivers shrink in fear
New voices shiver the valley
Earth trembles, towers rise to sky
Voices reply from the mountain
Flooding rivers gush, slopes slide in mud
Crashing hills bid goodbye to the valley
the voice is now a cry.

Voices of the Wild

Poem by Sherin Mary Zacharia

The Jungle

Bharul R. Chhatba



Photograph by Pragya Bajpai

The jungle is a wonderful paradise
Where innumerable thicket, flora, fauna resides.
Quirking, shrieking, roaring sounds make melody
Mighty animals, birds, insects stay in harmony.
Trees, shrubs, creepers stand unafraid
Thunder, storms, waterfall, haze.
King lion pounds to roar loud
Horses in galore, elephants chill in ponds.
Busy birds weaving nests
Spotted deer runs to save from cheetah's chase.
Laughing monkey swinging on the branches
Baby giraffe pull her mother to clutches.
red sun shines on myriad land
Serene moon mellows magical wand.
Inspiring ecosystem, raindrops dews
here we see all the dancing hues!

Cacophonous

By Pawandeep Singh Bahl

A sting goes through a numb mind
Never was away, it visits too often,
Parting away, yet never quite leaving
Seeds of alone take root in the heart.

The mind speaks a language of silence
As garrulous thoughts sizzle and sink,
Lips are sealed, with the little to speak
Affront, a dance of shadows- happy or feigned.

Yet a noise in head itches like lice
Of things said, unsaid and of things done
Purposeless meandering, pleasure and leisure
The cacophony of life carries on with little sense.



Painting by Kavya Goel

Is this Anonymous? Mother Earth

Earth, you are our mother,
You save our life,
You give us birth,
You rear and bear us,
You made us and you will destroy us one day,
You are the most powerful,
You are the form of a Goddess,
But we human beings are destroying you,
In the name of modernization,
We are destroying land, forest, waters,
By not knowing your essence,
You give us food, land, air, water and shelter
But human beings are becoming selfish and greedy,
Mother Earth, you are our wealth,
No other wealth can be more important than you,
So, we should save our Mother Earth.

By Binod Dawadi, Nepal

Mother, you save and protect us,
From the danger, troubles, calamities
You nurture us and care for us
Nobody cares and loves us as much as you do,
Mother earth you are a wonderful Gift of God.

Mother Earth, we can't save you,
In modern times, by putting in laborious efforts.
We can't protect you,
But we can only provide knowledge about you.
Show your importance to the world,
If we manage to save Mother Earth,
Mother Earth will also save and love us,
What we give to others,
Comes back to us.
Let us Protect Mother Earth: nature, animals, living beings,

If you will not protect and save them,
Who will save them?
Who will love them?
Mother Earth, your sacrifices are greater than ours,
You taught us so many lessons,
That we should be patient and work without any hope and expectation.

Spring

Fluttering of wings and chirping passerine
Squeaking squirrels and nightingale fine
Spin and whirl in the warmth and sunshine
Fragrant blossoms and fresh blade
Renew and rejuvenate
Crispy winter is now behind
Let us hope and rejoice
Let us forget desolation and despair
Let us dance and sing
Nothing is as adorable as Spring

This Spring

The music that was born in her heart
The lyrics that were composed in her mind
Could not be now
Recollect and rewind

Poor Girl!

It was not her fault
She had been waiting for her beloved
The whole winter falls

Sitting gloomy and sad
With the violin in her hands
Her delicate fingers on the strings
Her silent tears trickling
She dreams to sing the forgotten song
Lying into her lover's arms
This spring..

She Like the Cherry Tree in Springtime

She like the Cherry tree in Springtime
Blooms and blossoms in her prime
Dazzling pink, she blushes and glow
She beams with joy and wait for her beau

She, no longer a non- age
Contemplates her future ahead
She strides at her own pace
Carefree and dizzy head

In lieu of a new horizon
Ignorant about the ways of the world
She stands tall and graceful
Like the Cherry tree in Springtime.

Photo by Dr. Pragya Bajpai

By Waheeda Hussain

Nabarupa

Binod Dawadi
Poet, Nepal

Nature, you are beautiful,
you changed me into a better person
you taught me to be benevolent,
you are God, you are heaven!
you don't discriminate
you don't hate people
you love everyone
you love all the living beings
as well as non-living beings
you are god's gift,
We write verses to praise you and thank you
We don't have words,
you give us air, water, fire, and places to survive,
but human beings do not save you,
they destroy you,
But
Mother Nature, please do not cry,
you show your presence
by showing climatic changes,
and making us realize our mistakes,
nature you are great, and
we must live in your closest proximity.

Photo by Charu Singh

Tigers



Dr. Purnima Trivedi Kulkarni
Poet, Writer, Editor

The burning bright beasts of the jungles
Elude my diction and domain of erudition
Reasoning stops at the sight of the striped creatures
As my emotions gain acceleration!

No scripted strips of intellect needed
A poet can only be at a vortex of emotions
Taming the beautiful Tigers is an arduous task
Kudos to the Department of Forest conservation!

The tropical dense forests of Madhya Pradesh
Are ruled by some ferocious and gleaming creatures
Fierce Tigers can be spotted crouching on the ground
With stunning looks and chiselled features!

It is said that a herd of elephants from Sanjay Dubri
National Park
Made the Bandhavgarh tigers feel safe and secure you
know
Tourists marvelled at the forest's heritage
As the beasts' histrionics stole the show!

White Tigers, all set to relinquish the prey
One cannot miss their wilderness and rage
The striped leaders have fierce determination
Doubtlessly they are the forest's heritage.

The jungles of Kanha, Panna, Pench and Satpura
Teeming with Tigers and Tiger reserves so many
The State has everything a nature lover asks for
The beasts captivate the mind and enjoy their
hegemony.



Jungle Love

By Dr. Purnima Trivedi Kulkarni
Poet, Writer, Editor

A jungle is replete with stately verdancy,
Tis the heavenly abode of Mother Nature,
Where the poet hears euphonic sounds,
God is a Designer of a very high stature.

Where birds soar upwards and downwards
Curveting and diving all around,
Where pristine air emanates gallons of Oxygen,
Paradise on Earth, I have found!

Where brooks flow swiftly and grass grows
high,
Where adventures run wild,
Rich in unparalleled beauty and serenity,
I feel connected and reconciled.

The jungle shelters the wildlife,
Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, like one huge family,
Where Love and harmony perpetually prevails,
Bewitchingly beautiful like the town of Amilly!

The air is clear, crisp, fresh and easy to breathe,
Where I gaze at the wonders of God.
Densely desirable and a splendid place to
marvel at,
Where I love to carry my camera and Tripod!

I feel thoroughly mesmerized and drawn
In communion with Mother Nature Divine,
Tis the most breathtakingly awesome setting,
Amidst moonshine and sunshine.

Jungle is a much - cherished world,
Where the sight of green colour dominates.
Green is the earth's favourite garment,
This is where the poet in me forever ruminates.

Misty fog floats over the trees and valleys,
For miles in front of me and around me.
I witness a thousand rainbows mixed together,
Where the syndrome, I, transforms into "we."

Artists can never capture its beauty and glory,
With paintbrushes, multi chromed,
Nature's palette has the most flamboyant
shades,
The perfumed air dishevels my hair that's
neatly combed.

Shades of green turn to yellow, then turn into
gold,
Turn to orange, crimson, scarlet and purple,
Promenade in jungles can have a cathartic
effect,
I remain untouched by obstacles and hurdles.

Sounds of water splashing against rocks,
The cataracts haunting me like passion,
I hear the sound of wind blowing,
Out of benevolence and compassion.

Birds and animals bubbling with effervescence
Here I can view, feel and hear nature
everywhere.

Dark and deep woods are my eternal homes
Where I wish to perpetually stand and stare.

Painting by Ritu Bhatnagar

Murder in God's own Country Kerala

Dr. Purnima Trivedi Kulkarni
Poet, Writer, Editor

The cold-blooded murder of a pregnant elephant in Kerala's Palakkad district made my blood boil. She had eaten a pineapple stuffed with fire crackers, allegedly placed by some ruthless locals. The cataclysmic death of the female elephant and the trauma she went through had obviously caused a huge outrage among the wildlife lovers, who demanded a strong action against the perpetrators of violence. The incident came to light when a forest officer Mohan Krishnan narrated the horrific details of the pregnant elephant's death on social media platforms. The famished elephant was found meandering into a village in search of food after abandoning the Silent Valley.

Pineapples stuffed with crackers were made by locals to protect their fields against wild boars. The lethal fruit exploded in the pregnant elephant's mouth, leading to an unavoidable tragedy. So impactful was the cracker explosion that her tongue and mouth were charred and severely injured. The elephant wandered around in the village in excruciating pain. She was unable to eat anything because of her infected wound.

Unfortunately, the negligent officials learnt about the female elephant only two days before her death. The pregnant elephant walked up to the Velliyar River and stood with her mouth and trunk sunk into the cold water perhaps for some relief from the unbearable pain. The forest officials brought two captive elephants, Surendran and Neelakanthan, to lead her out of the river.

The elephant was taken back inside the forest in a truck, where the forest officials cremated her.

I felt extremely sad, devastated and ashamed after reading this earth-shattering story. Is this why God gave such high intelligence to Man? Why then should we not expect Corona or Cyclones to wipe us out? If Man continues to perform such bad Karma, we deserve to be wiped out by PRAKRITI /Mother Nature.

Humans slaughter animals after inflicting a lot of pain and suffering. Within each such animal, there lives a soul and with slaughter, the soul is ripped of the body forcibly. Humans out of sheer ignorance abuse nature. Such people have to repay for their uncouth behaviour in this life or next life.

Its high time that the humans look at their Karmic balance sheets.



What's the Big Deal?

Article by Shivkumar Iyer
Bilingual Poet and Author

As I write to you from the wild continent of Africa and having returned from a week-long trip across two countries that boast of being home to the Big 5 and Big 9 animals & the famed, elusive mountain gorillas, the trip has indeed proven to be educative. And it was during one of these trips in the wild that a random thought about our fascination with spotting big animals and literally neglecting or rather being disinterested in seeing the sheer variety of fauna around us hit me hard. This was further strengthened by the experience gained during the safaris and park visits with tourists/ travelers from other nationalities who exhibited similar interest in photographing & spotting the famous 5 animals each & every time. These 5 animals, namely the lion, leopard, rhino, elephant & the African buffalo are large African mammals who are not only among the most poached, but also the most difficult & dangerous to hunt on foot. The hunt of these animals was considered a feat by trophy hunters and the fascination with these animals hasn't changed significantly over the years.



Painting by Tushina Thakur

Some animals like the Cheetah, hippo, zebra & giraffe have attempted to tag along & managed to be a part of a larger family called the 'Big Nine' that has been marketed by safari operators to pacify the 'not so lucky' tourists who are prompt to leave a negative review on Tripadvisor or some website about their wildlife viewing experience. It is quite common to find photography exhibitions, conservation drives, colouring competitions & several other initiatives/events around these animals, while the insignificant thousands of species simply retreat into oblivion, struggling to find attention & eventually any efforts to save them from extinction.

To name a few animals randomly, who would cross your path and many amongst us wouldn't care to photograph them again, and this list is again simply indicative and not exhaustive. Riverine or the Bushman rabbits whose current population is less than 300, the Ethiopian wolf whose habitat in the Rift Valley of Africa is perhaps the only place one can spot them today, or take the Pickersgill's Reed frog, an elusive, shy amphibian who has lost its home to mining, agriculture & urban development and to add to the list are the Cape Vulture, pangolins, leatherback turtles and addax, to name a few.

What's the Big Deal?

By Shivkumar Iyer

The real message of this write up would be achieved if it stirs interest among readers to at least look up these names on a search engine & be aware that it's only animals like these that complete the mosaic of wildlife that our planet or the continent of Africa is. It may even inspire or encourage some to study more about these species & contribute positively to their conservation in any small way as possible.

Now, with the intent being clear let's ponder over life lessons that one can draw from this instance. In life too, like on a wildlife safari we tend to concentrate & be on the look out for big things – like a college education, a job, a promotion, bank balance etc., while we remain oblivious to the several seemingly insignificant but important aspects of life that make life what it is. If one were to list these, the list would be endless but what comes straight to one's mind follows – time we give to our family, time we spend on introspection, recognizing & loving people who strive for us without any expectation, good health and the list goes on.

While everyone of us would have heard the famed story of the college professor who emphasized on putting the big rocks in the glass bottle first, then the pebbles, followed by the gravel, sand and the beer, it is rare that we clearly identify these in our lives- i.e. things/people who are not so important, or not so very important at all. And maybe all those whom we do not consider as rocks-perceive them as being important are simply reduced to being lowly gravel or sand even if they deserve to be so or otherwise. The reasons why we make a big deal of certain things/people and neglect the sundry rest speaks a lot about how we as humans, rather living beings exist.

The seminal work '*Beyond the Economic Efficiency in Biodiversity Conservation*' by German author Franz Gatzweiler shows how people perceive biodiversity and how it determines choices of how to conserve certain species. People's attitudes and preferences are usually the driving force for promoting biodiversity conservation policies and it is seen starkly in today's world where the economics of conservation are heavily tilted towards the bigger species. Birds, small reptiles & mammals, insects & the like occupy the least mind space as well as expenditure and the same has resulted in systemic extinction of over 160 species over the past 'informed' & 'active' decade, and approximately 99 percent of species that walked the earth are officially extinct/disappeared today. The scores of marsupials, invertebrates, rats, birds notably the Capricorn rabbit-rat, Indo-Chinese warty pig, Christmas sandpiper, Redonda skink and Navassa rhinoceros iguanas who are extinct today due to indiscriminate habitat destruction, industrialization, mining & introduction of inimical predators, have left an indelible impact on ecology which cannot be reversed or replaced.

As we usher in an era of Teslas, cryptocurrency & adventurous space exploration, it is imperative that we recognize the building blocks of our planet & respect each species individually for its merits. An eye opener to the reckless rollercoaster we are riding on is a visit to the famed Dubai Museum of the Future, which has a complete floor dedicated to conserving the DNA of every species of the planet and possessing the power to recreate any being. So much so for development & human ingenuity, I guess we would be greatly benefited if we respect each species, let them be & allow them to procreate & prosper without intervention or disturbance. We never knew that men had the power of saving this planet, and affixing priorities to conservation until we visited national parks and institutions of this kind which are nothing but edifices of human failure to exist in harmony with nature – to correct myself- exist in harmony equally with all of nature without being selective about size, creed or appearance.



Wildlife is a term that refers to all forms of life, including plants and animals. It does not depend on humans directly to live. Wildlife can be found in all eco systems. Deserts, forests, plains and grasslands. A number of wild animals are globally declined between 1970 and 2014, according to the latest edition of the Red List of Threatened Species issued by the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

Some believe that the term wild animals refers to predatory animals, while it refers to animals that have not been domesticated by humans, and have remained loose in the wilds, bushes, deserts and various valleys, and humans have not been able to control or tame them.

There are hundreds of species of wild animals in the world, and they have many characteristics that make them a world of wonder and mystery.

They depend on a different lifestyle from pets, live far from humans, and rely on themselves in collecting their food, and most of them have excellent hunting skills. Despite this, many species have become threatened with extinction, especially because there are many reasons that affect their lives, such as: Natural disasters such as earthquakes, volcanoes, forestfires, floods, droughts, disease outbreaks, poisoning or undernutrition or perhaps some of the reasons are human, such as: hunting and attacking the forests in which they live, making them homeless, in addition to destruction of the vital environment and wildlife in general. Many of them are exposed to poisoning as a result of the use of pesticides.

Nowadays, most countries of the world are resorting to measures aimed at preserving wildlife in general, such as creating nature reserves for wild animals, especially those threatened with extinction, and the provision of food and protection to them, and the prevention of approaching them by fishermen, especially during the breeding seasons. Many international, regional and local associations and organizations concerned with wild animals and their conservation have been established. The extinction of any of them constitutes a great loss to the vital system.

Preserving wildlife is the duty of every individual. The states and societies must fulfill their duty towards animals, whether they are wild or domestic. Because these animals were created by God to play a pivotal role on earth. Preserving them is a solemn duty of future generations.

Life through the Eyes of Wildlife

Pratibimb_Aksh



Photo by Kumar Akshat Saxena



Aanvi Neupane

Why is it so often felt that humans rarely love the wild species of flowers or admire the wild creatures roaming freely about in nature? Do they really lack the beauty the potted flowers possess or the love and empathy that the domesticated animals show towards their owners? Or is it just that we humans fail to notice the elegance in wildlife? If I were to choose between either of the options, I would go with the second one. I refuse to believe that weeds are any less pretty than roses. I refrain from thinking that wild animals always mean to harm humans. I love the fluffy white dandelion weeds that sway to the tunes of nature, making their way with the wind. I adore how a mother monkey takes care of her child, holding it tenderly to her heart. And I feel that these wild creatures hold the essence of life in a way that we humans have never done.

Life through the Eyes of Wildlife

It is said that a baby elephant is not only the responsibility of its mother but of the herd. Even if a mother dies, the baby is equally loved and looked after by every other mother elephant present in the herd. Every time I watch these creatures, I feel livelier. Birds chirping early in the morning make me feel grateful for a new day, a new beginning. The compassionate look in the eyes of a dog whenever I stretch out my hand to offer it some biscuits makes me see all the love that we have within us to offer to the world. They have so much warmth and tenderness in them. So much that it is visible in their eyes. They teach us teamwork, compassion, gratitude, loyalty, kindness, and patience. They teach us life.

Wild florals have their own way of showing existence. They grow and bloom even in adversities. They get trodden, and yet they have the same charm and sparkle in them. They might be plucked, cut, or uprooted, yet they grow back again even with the slightest of the favourable conditions. Days and days of exposure to the extreme weather, yet they hold their heads high. It is in these simplest of the things that life resides. If we can see through the adversities and not lose our calm, we can enjoy every bit of the breath we take. Nothing could have explained life better than these wild florals and faunas. Wildlife has always been the chief tutor of life for me.

Every time I look into nature, I feel immensely grateful to be alive, to behold life as it is. I feel grateful and overwhelmed. There is something about the wind of the forests, the fresh smell of the leaves, the sound of the deer moving about, the sound of the dried leaves, the light through the trees, the sight of the elephant drinking water, the touch of the soft stem of a newly planted sapling, the feel of the soil underneath the feet, the taste of the wild berries. There is something about all these small moments that can simply not be replaced. Nothing could change the emotions attached to these instants. They are imprinted on my mind so powerfully that they shall only go away with the last breath I take.

Aanvi Neupane

BRAHMAND

Book Reviews



Painting by Madhavi

BOOK REVIEW

Amidst the Sun Flowers: Letters to My Grand Children



Author: Abha Rosy Vatsa
Pub Evincepub Publishing
Bilaspur Chhattisgarh
Pages:150



Reviewed by
Dr. Roopali Sircar Gaur
Social Justice Activist, Writer
Poet, Lifelong Teacher

Abha Rosy Vatsa is an award-winning poet and author. After her inspiring and motivating autobiography *A Gift of Life* she brings us another unique book. Written in an epistolary manner it addresses her yet unborn grandchildren. “Amidst the Sun Flowers Letters to My Grandchildren” is a book full of wisdom emanating from an experiential space. Her chosen audience draws our curiosity while introducing us to a universal note. It could be any grandmother writing. The only difference being that this “grandmother” Abha is writing futuristically.

The book expresses a compelling desire to leave behind a trunk load of wisdom for her grandchildren to be used at any stage of their lives. It is at the same time a precious book for children, grandchildren and adults alike. It is a book which speaks to us with deep understanding. Behind the Sun flowers and their constant seeking of the sun lies the philosophical basis of the book’s wise contents.

The author’s voice is as always an authentic one. it is a truthful journey of a life well lived. An experiential, non-didactic, profoundly spiritual treatise. It’s not about the author, it’s all about guiding gently the boat of life.

It isn’t easy to write for another unseen generation. The bouquet of values in *Amidst the Sun Flowers* is a leap of faith. There are eighteen chapters that document an amazing imagination and self-belief. Through poetry, quotes, song leads, Abha Rosy Vatsa allows moments to “ponder”.

The author speaks strongly about achieving ones goals. Her own experience of never letting go of a dream is fascinating. You must “believe in it” she says, and you must just get down to achieve it. This is her mantra. The loss of her manuscript, the errant cunning typist, the hurdles in her path does not in any way stop her from accomplishing her goal. The goal of writing this book.

She advocates pulling oneself out of despondency and shock to find a way out. She never loses focus on the target. Even if it meant rewriting her lost manuscript. She leads with examples. Stories from the Mahabharata like the one about Arjuna and his amazing archery and single-minded focus illustrates the advice given.

BOOK REVIEW

As a reader the chapter on forgiveness is profound. It personally helped me get free of an emotional situation and move on. That is how important this book can be for all of us. "Forgive others just as you forgive and accept your own mistakes". While grandparents love their grandkids what is it that attracts a child to an elderly person? Is it that the child shares a common closeness to heaven? While the grand child is on its way in the grandparent is on the way out. Both reflect heaven's beatific light.

For someone who has closely and objectively read Abha's literary work I can say with confidence that there is a clear stream of spirituality which flows through all her work. It is a rare and delicate gift that the poet author possesses.

In the epilogue she addresses those unborn grandchildren telling them "this comes from a seasoned soul." "Do justice to the gift of life bestowed upon you." She pleads.

In her own inimitable style, Abha has not hesitated to quote, site, refer to any other source from world literature. It enhances and supports her own belief or faith. "... embrace the teachings of the book for they come with not only my wisdom but wisdom of many elevated souls." She extols.

"Do not stop dreaming. What one wishes one can attain. A dream without consistent efforts is just a dream" she says. Using examples from her own personal life, through self-composed poetry, through wisdom gathered from great writers and poets the book moves on to make its mark. It's a life coach. This book called *Amidst The Sunflowers!*

The humorous black and white sketches by Avijit Sarkar well known Australian artist enlivens the narration. They draw our attention to the contents and bring alive the narrative. Cheerful characters dot the sky line of the narrative. They continuously remind us of the purpose and target audience of the book. The grandchildren.

Abha has poured herself into this precious book. To find happiness even if the source is another species like the love of a dog is also recommended. Kindness she believes is the greatest gift we can offer to the world. And love heals everything.

The most important advice she proffers is to value family. To make all efforts to protect and cherish one's family. Those who do not value family must then imagine living life like that of an orphan. Every chapter ends with a suggested song. Knowing how young people love music the author suggests an appropriate song. Music soothes and music embraces.

It's a value-based book touching upon all essential subjects. Truth, happiness, relationships, life work balance, parenting, family, forgiveness and living with grace and more. The grandchildren addressed here in will use the grand moms advice long after they have out grown their nappies.

The prologue and the epilogue are personal letters. "Dear grandchildren" it says. Touching, loving and full of longing. It's a will and testament of one who has risen phoenix like. Beyond bitterness, beyond negativity. *Amidst the Sunflowers* is a practical and lyrical book which has something for every reader.

Reviewed by
Dr. Roopali Sircar Gaur
Social Justice Activist, Writer
Poet, Lifelong Teacher

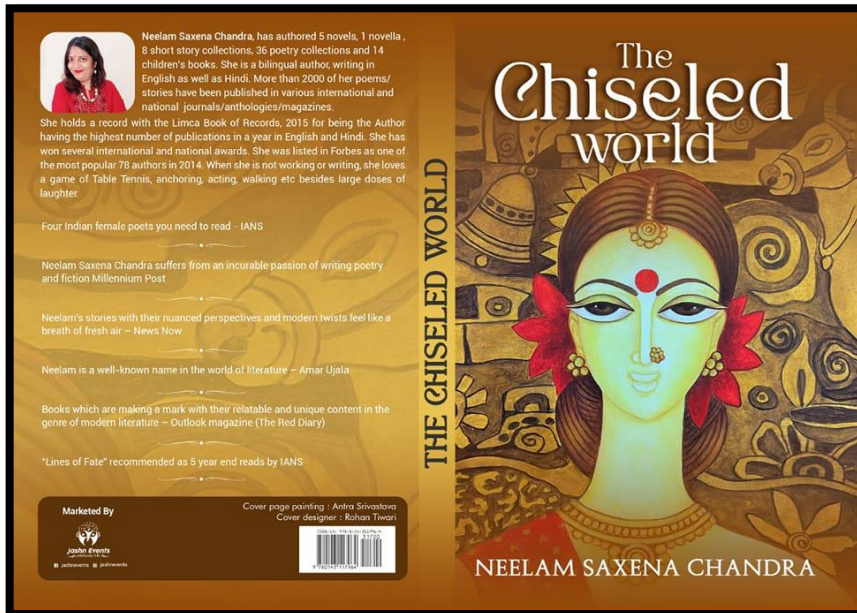
BOOK REVIEW

The Chiseled World

Author - Neelam Saxena Chandra

Publisher- Shubharambh Publication House

Literary Genre- English Short Stories, 146 pages



Neelam Saxena Chandra's latest short story collection, *The Chiseled World* is riveting, engaging and absorbing. She imbues her prose with authoritative intensity. She conveys the stark realities lurking behind the scrim of social surfaces, that we routinely face. They continue to haunt a reader's mind. Most of the characters are shaped by the social, economic and cultural conditions unique to Indian life. *Chiseled World* is a hands-down masterpiece. It has stirring places you'll want to revisit, reconsider, maybe even take shelter in. Neelam Saxena is such a master of setups. She has a great penchant for observations, and as a writer, she understands what we not only want but maybe need right now ... There is range here, particularly in characters and relationships: single people, mothers and daughters, loners, bracingly honest and complex personalities. In these 15 affecting stories, Neelam unveils the hidden worlds, layered under the one we know, that can be accessed only via trauma, displacement and pain. The aesthetic pleasure of Neelam's writing is anesthetizing. She is an astonishingly gifted stylist, but it is her piercing understanding of the complex world we live in, makes these stories vibrate with life. She has stories of exceptional loss, conflict, vulnerability of people where personal and private moments can unfold. Her stories are packed with unique combination of fear and empathy. Whatever it takes to get the story from the head to the page—is exactly what Neelam gives you. It is remarkable that she can create stories that cause a reader to shiver, to smile and to shed a tear in the space of a few pages. Her collection pulses with the humanistic empathy that marks a major part of her literary work.

BOOK REVIEW

The Chiseled World

All the characters are wildly different from one another, yet undeniably bound together by the voice of our finest storyteller. Even in the depth of the darkest shadows, a light of hope steadily glows.

Neelam's stories do not merely document traumatic experiences in the early 21st century; they testify to larger truths about our lives ... tender and wry. You will find many delights in these complex, thoughtful portraits.

Our fourteen-year-old student from Discourses, Durvakshi Sonawane writes,

The author Neelam Saxena Chandra has tried her best to narrate a story called The Wealth about a bond shared between Ashutosh and Vaidehi.

Ashutosh is a retired, selfless man. His kindness towards Vaidehi is remarkable. Vaidehi's efforts towards the family are convincing. Kunal, Karan and Supriya's personalities are in proximity with realism, as it is a basic human tendency to be selfish. The end is disturbing where Vaidehi disagrees to live with her Dadi. The readers are discomforted with mixed emotions of happiness, sadness, and over ambitious nature of Vaidehi.

After sharing this snippet, the collection is bound to magnetize the readers. On the whole, The Chiseled World is bound to leave an indelible impact on the readers' minds.



Reviewed by
Dr. Purnima Trivedi Kulkarni
Poet, Writer, Editor

ब्रह्माण्ड

वॉइस ऑफ़ द कॉसमॉस





कानन

जंगल वन उपवन कानन,
धरा सुसज्जित इन आभूषण।

लिपटे धरती से ज्युँ भीगी लट,
धारण धरणी को हरियाला पटा।

जीव जन्तु खग विहग पक्षी पखेरू,
औषधी लकड़ी फल फूल और तरु।

आश्रित समस्त, इनका बसेरा वन,
कानन अवलंबित मानव जीवन।

सृष्टि के आधार प्रकृति के प्राण,
मनुष्य को नहीं सत्य का भान।

काट रहे उजाड़ रहे अनमोल संपदा,
सूनी माँग सी रिक्त होती वसुंधरा।

कल तक जो चूमते थे अम्बर,
आज शिथिल पड़े धरा पर।



रेखा डोलिया

वो शाखाएं बलशाली भुजाएँ,
टूटी बिखरी हो गई तितर बितर।

तपती वनस्पति का चीर कलेजा,
गढ़े पलंग कुर्सी खिड़की दरवाज़ा।

जंगल की रक्तिम बूंदों से सिक्त,
नीद कैसे आयी हुआ न उर विचलित।

प्रलय से पहले करलो प्रकृति सुरक्षा,
वृक्ष रोपण और पर्यावरण की रक्षा।

लहलहा उठे वन उपवन का हर अंग,
समन्वय ही मानव का जब सृष्टि संग।

पर्यावरण पृथ्वी का श्रृंगार

है विश्व पर्यावरण दिवस आज,
तो सूझा है मानव तुझे यह काज।

कर रहा हर जगह भाषण,
लगा रहा वृक्षारोपण के फोटो,
सोशल मीडिया में छाने को,
मत खुद को पर्यावरण पर थोपो।

परि और आवरण से मिलकर बना,
व्यापक है यह शब्द।
नहीं है चर्चा एक दिन की,
देने होंगे अनेकों वर्ष।

पृथ्वी का श्रृंगार करते वनमाला,
नदियां, पर्वत श्रृंखलाएं,
देते नैसर्गिक सौंदर्य ऐसा,
मानो स्वर्ग जैसे की अप्सराएं।

सब जीव जंतुओं का हे मानव,
तुझे करना था रक्षण।
पर भक्षक बन तूने तो,
करा अतिशयोक्ति शोषण।

फल स्वरूप त्रस्त होता तू,
समय-समय पर प्राकृतिक आपदा से,
फिर झंकृत शोभित हो गुहार लगाता,
ईश से बचाने विपदा से।



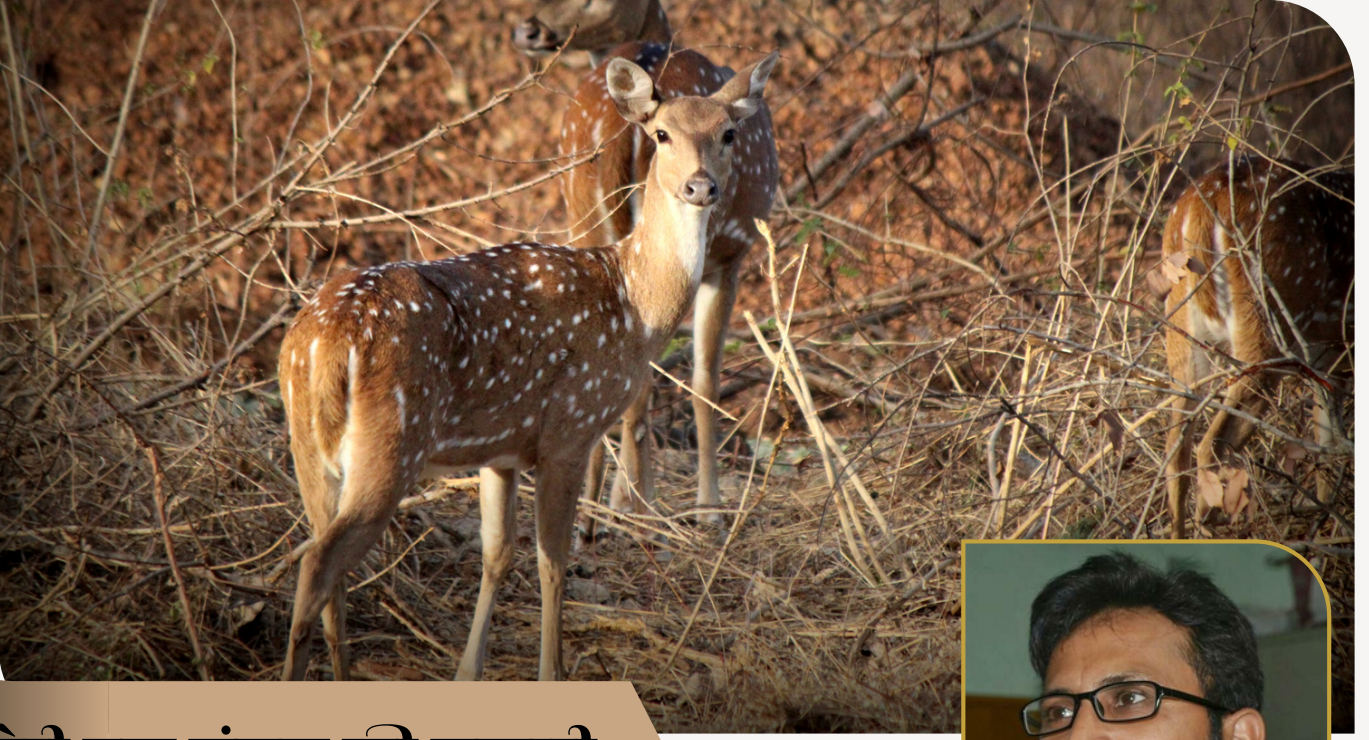
अभिशाप्त हुआ है अपने ही कर्मों से तू,
फिर क्यों हाहाकार से है घबराता तू,
यदि स्वस्थ जीवन देना है,
आने वाली पीढ़ियों को तो,
कम कर फैलाना प्रदूषण,
ले शपथ पर्यावरण के संरक्षण की,
और कर वृक्षारोपण के साथ वृक्षारक्षण भी।

तभी पुनः संचालित होगा,
स्वस्थ निर्मल पावन जीवन,
खिल उठेगी पृथ्वी पाकर हरी-भरी
पर्वतमाला,
स्वच्छ जल स्रोत और घने वन।

आओ प्रण लें हम की,
देंगे मिलकर पर्यावरण को यह उपहार,
ना करेंगे दुरुपयोग प्राकृतिक संपदा का,
ना करने देंगे किसी को ऐसा व्यवहार।



अंकिता बाहेती



मेरी एक जंगल की सफारी



संजय गुप्ता

संकरे रास्ते ,
कुछ टूटे, कुछ मरम्मत से,
गड्डे भरे कुछ , तो कुछ नए बने से..

पत्तों से लदे विशालकाय दरख्त,
फूल भी दिखते कुछेक पर,
आवाजें पक्षियों की और कलरव ...

पत्तों की होती सरसराहट ,
कुछ जानवरों के आने की,
निगाहें जो उस तरफ उठ जाती...

छोटे से जानवर दिखते,
कहीं हिरन, कुछ जंगली सियार दिखते...

तलाश एक बड़े जानवर की,
तलाश एक अदद शेर की ,
चीता भी दिखे तो कम नहीं ,
पैसे वसूल और कोई गम नहीं ...

सूर्य का प्रकोप पूरा था,
बिना जानवर हमारा सफर अधूरा था ...

अचानक दिखे पैरों के निशान,
उम्मीद जागी, यही तो है वो पहचान..
चल पड़े उस ओर , निशान जाता जिस ओर।

एक पोखर , और एक दरिया का पानी ,
गाड़ियों की थी अब उसी ओर खानी।

निशान थे बस यहीं तक ,
खत्म उम्मीद जो थी अब तक ..
लक्ष्य कहीं आगे बढ़ चला था,
हमें निराश वो कर चला था।

ये थी हमारी उस दिन की कहानी
की थी जिस दिन जंगल की सफारी।

बड़े जानवर न देखने का बहुत था मलाल
पर जंगल देखने का अनुभव था बेमिसाल।

जिस पे झूला डाल कर,
पेंगे बढ़ाता था,
हो गया आंगन नदारद,
वो डाल ढूँढता हूँ,
हाँ मैं डाल ढूँढता हूँ।

चिलचिलाती धूप है,
झूलसाती गर्मी,
हैं नदारद पेड़ पथ से,
मैं खड़ा स्तब्ध पेड़ों की,
ढाल ढूँढता हूँ,
हाँ मैं ढाल ढूँढता हूँ।

खेत बिक के,
बन गए हैं मौल से,
हैं नदारद हल कृषक के हाथ से,
मैं खड़ा स्तब्ध बस,
सवाल ढूँढता हूँ।

कोयल सी बोली,
अमवा की छाँव,
नदी का स्वच्छ जल,
और मेरा गांव,
हो गयी जो नदारद,
वो मोरनी सी,
मैं खड़ा स्तब्ध बस,
वो चाल ढूँढता हूँ।



प्रियांशु सक्सेना

मेरे शहर में...

चाँद क्या तुम्हारे शहर में अब भी नज़र आता है?
क्या वो मेरे सन्देश अब भी पहुँचाता है?
क्या तुम उसे देखकर मुझे याद कर लेते हो?

झूठे कहीं के!

तुम्हारे शहर में भले ही अब भी चाँद नज़र आता होगा,
पर मेरे शहर का चाँद
तो छुप गया है धुंध की परतों के पीछे-
वो तो मुझे भी नज़र नहीं आता!
जब वो मेरा दीदार ही नहीं करता
तब कैसे पहुँचायेगा तुम तक मेरे सन्देश?

पर्यावरण का जो हाल हम आदमियों ने किया है
उससे कैसे भला चाँद नज़र आएगा?
कैसे हम ताज़ा हवा ले सकते हैं?
कैसे हम उगते और डूबते सूरज को साफ़ देख सकते हैं?
कैसे हम उड़ती चील को बुलंदियाँ हासिल करते देख सकते हैं?

खैर, बुलंदियाँ हासिल करने के लिए
अब चील ही कहाँ बची है?
न ही चकोर बची है
चाँद से मुहब्बत करने के लिए!



नीलम सक्सेना

खैर, चकोर होती भी तो रहती कहाँ?
पेड़ तो सारे धरती में यूँ समा गए हैं
जैसे वो कभी हुआ ही नहीं करते थे!
हवाओं में घुटन होती है,
आखिर उनमें भी ताज़गी नहीं है-
इस दूषित हवा में सांस भी नहीं ली जाती!

जब मेरी ही मजूदगी पर सवाल हैं-
तो कैसे तमन्ना करूँ कि यह चाँद तुम्हें सुनाये
मेरी मुहब्बत की दास्ताँ?

मेरे शहर में तो अब
खिड़की की जालियों पर
कौए के सिवा कुछ नज़र नहीं आता,
और सुनाई आता है
सिर्फ़ शोर ही शोर!

पर्यावरण

नभचर-वनचर ढूँढ़ते,
सघन वृक्ष की छाँव।
नदी ताल हैं नीर बिन,
प्यास बुझे किस गाँव।। 1।।

अनुशासन में है निहित,
सकल-सृष्टि आधार।
झेल रहा पर्यावरण,
पल-पल नये प्रहार।। 2।।

वृक्ष सदा सुन्दर लगे,
हरी -भरी हों डार।
पीर सभी की बाँटना ,
धीर मनुज श्रृंगार।। 3।।

अनुशासन की डोर में,
बँधा समय का चक्र।
बिगड़ा पर्यावरण है,
प्रकृति हो रही वक्र।। 4।।

सूरज को हम कोसते,
करते नहीं निदान।
पौधारोपण में निहित,
धरती का परिधान।। 5।।



प्रीती शर्मा

इतनी सी बात



सुनील जोशी

प्रकृति से कर खिलवाड़, जाल बिछाते चले
रौंद कर जंगलों को, आशियाना बनाते चले।

बहता हुआ जल, कहीं छांव नजर नहीं आती
वो प्यास बुझाने की आस, नजर नहीं आती।

आती है याद पेड़ों को लगाने की बहुत, मगर
बात इतनी सी है, कि याद रोज नहीं आती।

वो बहते झरने, बागों के झूले सब छूट गए हैं
मयूर-नृत्य, कोयल की बोली सब भूल गए हैं।

वास्तविकता से दूर, सभी भ्रम में जी रहे हैं
बात उपयोगी है, मगर समझ में नहीं आती।

वर्ष का एक दिन मुकर्रर करने से क्या होगा
आज लगाया पौधा, न जाने कल कहां होगा।

वृक्ष न होंगे, तो हम कैसे जीवन गुजार सकेंगे
क्यों इतनी सी बात, सबको समझ नहीं आती।

आओ पेड़ लगाएं हम

बंजर वीरां धरती को,
हरियाली चुनर ओढ़ाएं हम।।

बूंद बूंद ज्यों घट भरता है,
आओ पेड़ लगाएं हम।।

शस्य श्यामला धरती थी जो,
कण कण स्वर्ण उगलती थी।।

कहो आज क्यों ऊसर बंजर,
मरूभूमि सी जलती है।।

शीतलता की बाट जोहती,
इसे हरित कर जाएं हम।।

आओ पेड़ लगाएं हम...

पर्यावरण प्रदूषण रोकें,
श्वास शुद्ध वायु भर दें।।

करे प्रकृति का विनाश उस,
दोहन को सीमित कर दें।।

आने वाले कल के लिए,
सत्कर्म एक कर जाएं हम।।

आओ पेड़ लगाएं हम...



हिमांशु जैन मीत

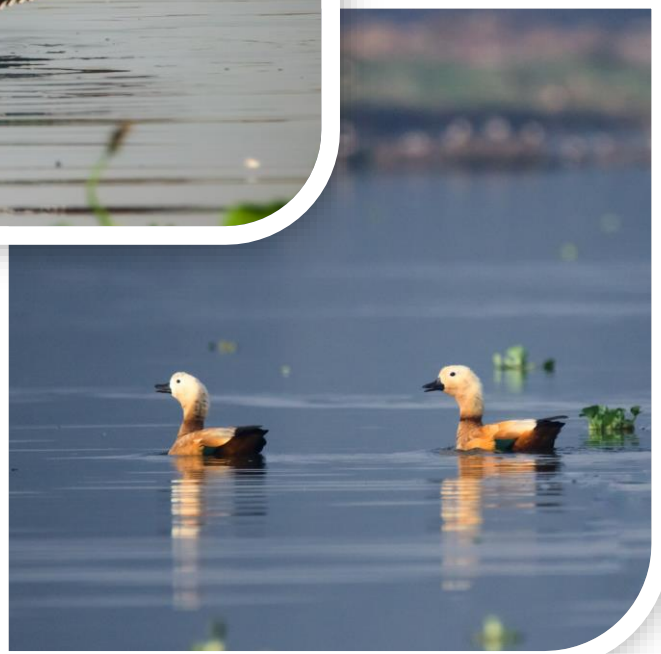
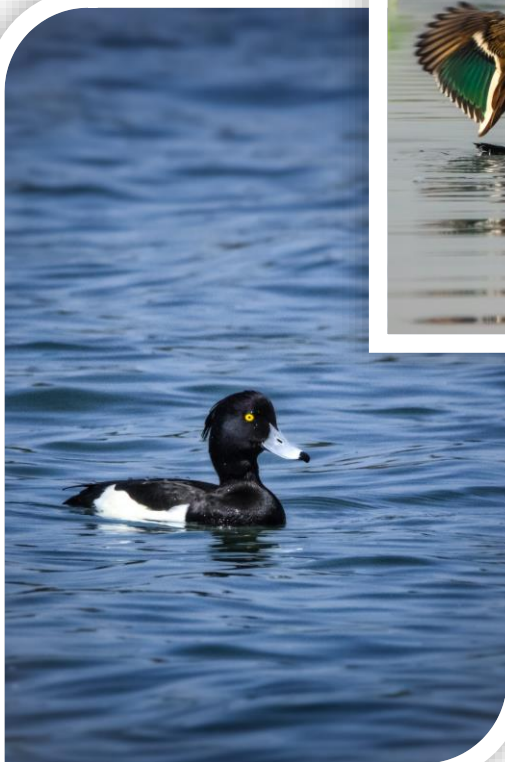
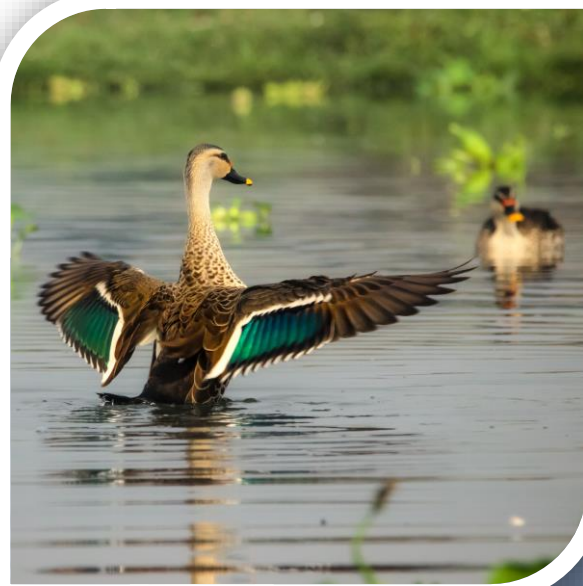
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Charcoal Sketch by Capt Ashish Pannase

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T Venu Gopal

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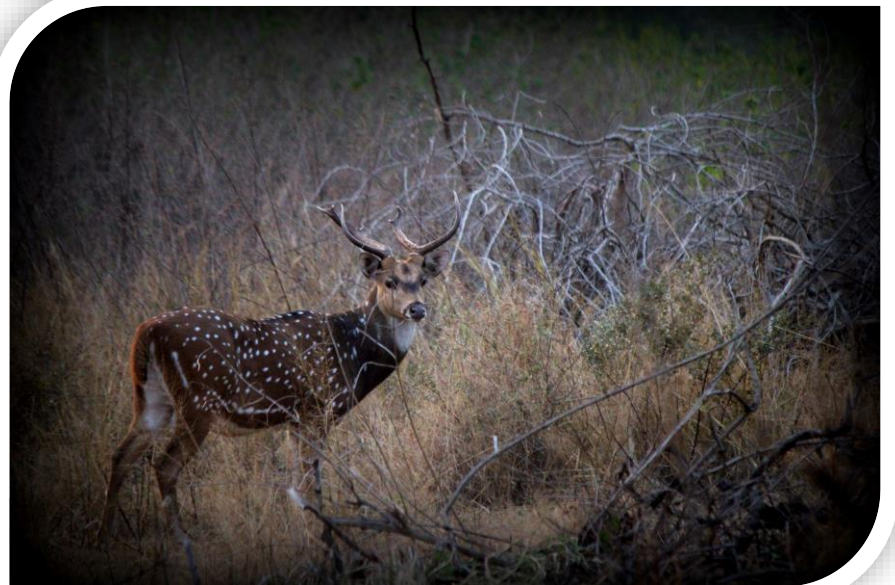
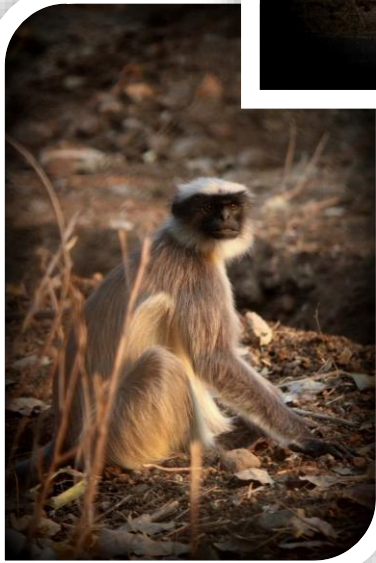
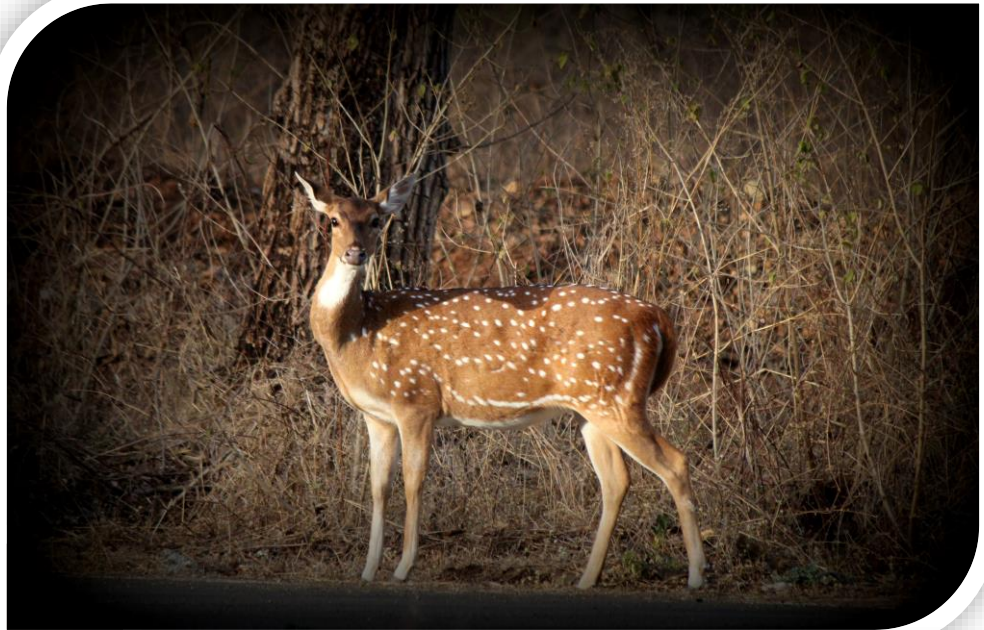
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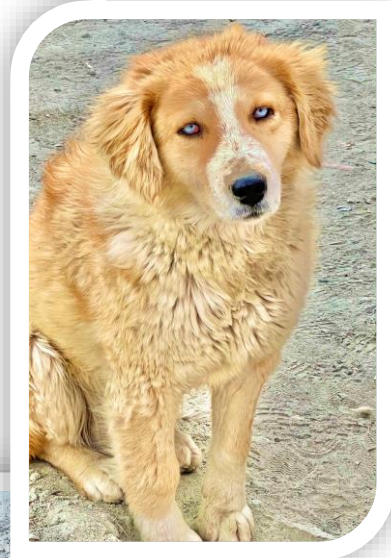
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Painted Stork
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Elephant-Corbett



Brahmini Kite
Dighal

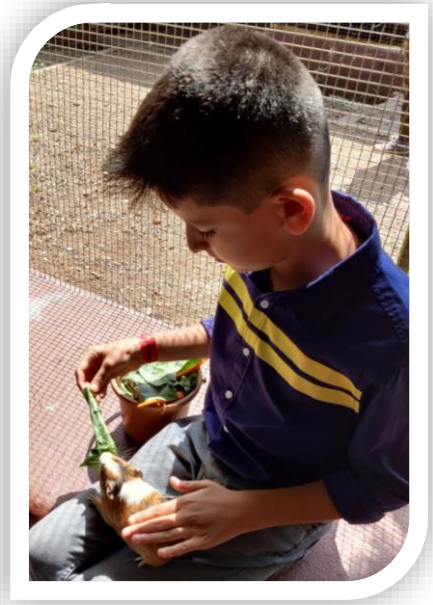


Common Kestrel

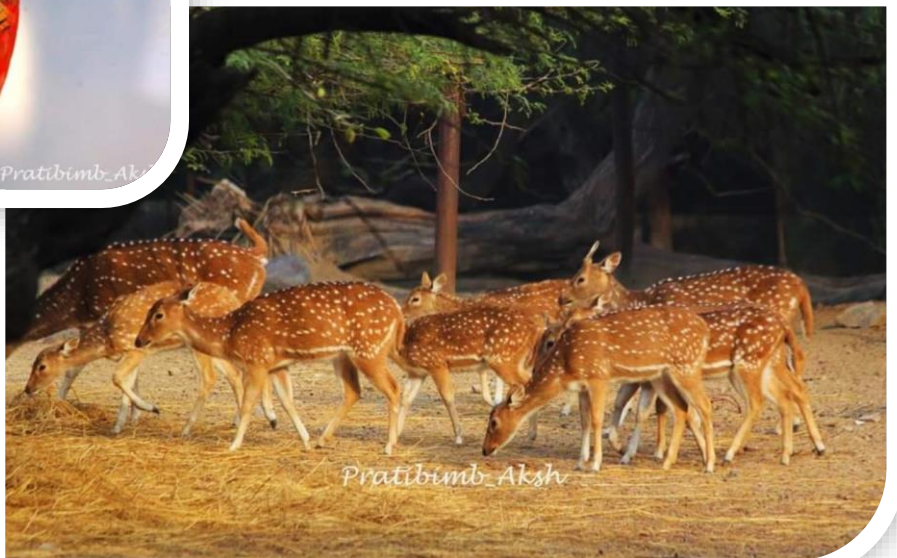


Collared Kingfisher
Andamans

Purnima Kulkarni



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2. Submissions for images of Original Paintings and Photographs in high resolution are cordially invited.
3. **OPEN THEME**
4. Stories and Articles must not exceed 800 words.
5. Poems should not exceed 30 lines.
6. For Hindi submission, font should be Mangal.
7. Mail your submissions only in MS Word at voiceofthecosmos@gmail.com with the following declaration:
'I hereby state that the story/poem/article/picture/painting submitted is my original work and has my copyright.'
8. The contributors will receive an acceptance mail after the deadline.
9. Submissions that do not adhere to the guidelines are not accepted.





Painting by Amiya Chatterjee