

K.V. Raghupathi

Who Shall Curate the Beauty of the Valley?

Why have the guns sprouted like wildflowers in the valley?
Like the shots in a Hollywood film of the 1960s I heard
day after day, night after night in the valley
that was once known for its spring beauty,
film shooting and refuge for the artists.
When can I hear the tenderest whisperings of the birds?
Where have they gone hiding?
When can I sense the silence of the valley?
When can I see, only trees and their thick foliage
but not soldiers in camouflage holding guns marching ahead?
I hear only crunching of their boots.

Women like rag pickers search for their sons amidst debris
among the ruins, among the blood-splattered ramshackle buildings and houses
unmindful of the eerie atmosphere and the darkening horizon
trembling, wailing with their faces covered with anger, frustrations, and shame
hurling stones and vile words at the forces.

Violence in the valley on its four legs prowling
kicking the silence wounding.
The valley is bleeding between the thighs
like menstrual blood flowing and tainting
the green with the night stars turning red in the sky.
The valley is so hollow one can see blood right through it
How cheap life all is!
How empty life is at the nozzle!
Blood-locked all the seasons
life nursed in the womb returns to the womb of the earth by a bullet.
There is no violence like the valley-violence.

Can spring resuscitate life with new nestlings sing
replacing the sound of bullets?
Along the trackless track of the valley
before the world ending blood
there is no life like a valley-life that passes by
Who shall curate the beauty of the valley?

Social Distance

Six feet from others is like a rule
that we follow in a ballet.
But the rule can never slice warmth and love in blood.
I cannot miss overhearing things, hop and play
I cannot stop strolling through the roads and streets.

I cannot forego the ease of opening a door for someone.
 I cannot connect with people and friends via zoom.
 I cannot give up shaking hands, holding hands and swinging
 or sharing the sidewalk comforts
 or even having a drink with others.
 I look for where 'social' and 'distance' meets.
 Surely every inch of place on this globe is mine
 The streets and roads are full of people with no six feet distance rule
 I can no longer do
 as the world flows around me like the river Ganges under the bridge.

About the Poet

Poet, short story writer, novelist, book reviewer, critic besides a staunch yoga practitioner Dr. K.V. Raghupathi (1957) has published twelve poetry collections, two short story collections, two novels, eight critical/edited books besides five books on Yoga and numerous stimulating and thought-provoking articles in various international journals, both on line and print. His poetry collections include, *Desert Blooms* (1987), *Echoes Silent* (1988), *The Images of a Growing Dying City* (1989), *Small Reflections* (2000), *Voice of the Valley* (2003, 2014), *Wisdom of the Peepal Tree* (2003, 2014), *Samarpana* (2006), *Orphan and Other Poems* (2010), *Dispersed Symphonies* (2010), *Between Me and the Babe* (2015), *On and Beyond the Surface* (2018), and *The Mountain is Calling...* (2019); two novels: *The Invalid* (2014) and *The Disappointed* (2015); two short story collections: *The Untouchable Piglet* (2017) and *A Gay and a Straight Woman* (2018). His poetry is rooted in the abundance of philosophy, nature, transcendentalism, imagery and social perspectives, and replete with similes, metaphors, personifications, apostrophe, irony, climax, anti-climax and full of rhetoric and symbols. More often he takes the readers on the spiritual exploration of radical philosophical thoughts which strongly speak through all the collections. He is a recipient of several awards for his creativity at national level that include Michael Madhusudan Dutt Award (Kolkata, 2000), H. D. Thoreau Writing Fellowship (Mysore, 2001), Best Chosen Poet for 2003 (Mumbai, 2003), Lifetime Achievement Award in Poetry (Chennai Poetry Circle, 2010), Rock Pebbles National Award for Creativity (Bhubaneswar, 2014), King Phrasal Arbind Chowdhury Award for Poetry (Parbhani, 2018), and a Citation of Brightest Honour, International Sufi Centre (2020) besides Lifetime Achievement Award in Yoga and Best Yogic Publication Award (Bengaluru, 2018). He lives at Tirupati, AP. Email: drkvraghupathi@gmail.com