

K.V. Raghupathi

The Woman and Her Kitchen

For a woman, the kitchen is a fundamental
in her life like her own blood.
For her, the kitchen is her house, the house is her kitchen;
it is her domain, she is the Queen.
None can intrude, neither her other half nor her children.
But for this woman, kitchen is a stigma.
So, she abstained from it,
solely depending on outside food.
She cooks no longer.
Her mates fouled her,
but she ignored them.
For her, it is like a stain on a white sari.
She says it has shamed her existence
and stripped off her individuality.
Now, grown old, her lifetime getting spent
drop by drop,
she realizes she is the kitchen and the kitchen is she.
It is her womanhood,
without it life is drudgery and meaningless.

Black Scorpion

One black scorpion saw I when the painter
removed a lump of stained clothes on the floor.
It lay there lifting its forward curve
over the back ending with a venomous sting
ready to assail.
“It’s deadly dangerous. Kill it,” said the painter jumping aside like a cock.
“But I am an *ahimsavadi*
and I respect and love life in all creatures
irrespective of their size, colour, and poison.”
“A scorpion is a scorpion. Kill it,”
His anger and anxiety flew like projectiles

directing another painter to fetch a long stick or a big stone.
 “It’s true a scorpion is a scorpion.
 When once my two-wheeler screeched in front of my house,”
 thus I recounted the event under the afternoon summer sun,
 “between the wheels slithered a black scorpion like an eel.
 I drove it off with a stick into the thick dark bushes.
 Thus saved I its life in darkness.
 For this *karma*
 I reaped its rich harvest.”
 Even before the other painter brought in a long stick
 I caught it cleverly using my skill
 in a polythene cover
 took it outside
 and released it in the thick bushes far away.
 It thanked me for saving its poison
 lifting its venomous sting in glee and triumph.

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 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: drkvraghupath@gmail.com