

Kavita Shastri

Green Trails

Bowing in cohesion,
Owing to pressure
We stand, sensing danger
Ready to be martyrs,
Paving way to building bridges.

Nesting birds,
With no packers and movers to move their nests
Insects, squirrels, rodents...millions,
continue their daily chores
Hoarding their winter coffers.

Mute, we witness
Infringed spaces, turning
Deaf, dumb, blind to our
muffled cries,
humans stabbing deep into our hearts,
wailing, wreathing we cry.

We witness the mynas
Putting their last straw to their nests
The crows awaiting just
One more day for their eggs to hatch,
The eaglet awaiting her moment to soar high,
The baby squirrel crossing the threshold
To pick her first berry,
Friends around celebrating
their silver and golden anniversaries,
All pensive. await to be gagged, maimed
Regimented in lines,
To be logged in timber yard.

United we grieve
We wail, sigh ceaselessly
Our death warrants issued to save a

few minutes of human time:
State sponsored, waiting for the noose
To be publicly hanged, We
Curse as we part:
Lesser rains!
Drier spells!
Hotter climes!

Caves at Meghalaya

A dreamy haze
Envelops the maze
Cavernous path of yore
Ascending, descending
Turning left, right
I tread
The water trickles
Meandering through
Crevices and corners
Casting magical casements
I watch, aghast in awe
Nature's mystery
Unbound.

Venice Floats

Below the sea level
Stands a city,
Floating
On canals
Bereft of cobbled roads,
I take a gondola ride
Through the olive-green waters
The mossy foundation
Of antiquated structures visible
A history unfolds
Of Venetian merchants

Trading in spices on the Kerala coast
 Growing rich
 Shylock, Portia, Bassanio,
 Peep through the Shakespearean window
 I try deciphering
 The mosaic
 At St. Mark's Cathedral
 Admire the amalgamation
 Of Gothic, Baroque, Renaissance
 And new classical here
 The Dodge's Palace
 Thousands throng
 To admire the venetian magic
 In masks of their choice
 Gaping at the dining table of Europe.

Survivors

Bidding goodbye to
 Extant folks, the dugongs
 And manatees,
 Treading in terrestrial space
 The elephant trumpets
 Its way, unabashed
 Not marginalising the other,
 Spared this time by the
 Shots of George Orwell;
 Safe out of the imperialist discourse
 roaring, musth.
 Bizarrely represented as white!
 Non indulging in language games
 You, emerge as Airavata
 Hegemonically controlling:
 The thunder and lightning
 Reigning,
 As the elephant headed God,
 As a dream precursor to Gautama's ascent,
 Emerging sacrosanct in temples, Gothic churches,
 On mosaics, in totems,

Spearheading battles and processions,
Trumpeting.
Living in peace,
Jostling for space
Far from the maddening crowd
In deep, dense forests
Seismically communicating
And bonding with loved ones
Fighting your vulnerability
Surviving.

About the Poet

Dr. Kavita Shastri is serving as Associate Professor and Head, Department of English and Media Studies at Vijaya College, Jayanagar, Bangalore. She has been teaching both at the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Level. She has presented papers and chaired sessions at several National and International Seminars, Conferences and Workshops. Several of her papers have been published too. She has guided students for both M.Phil. and Ph.D. Programs. She is a budding poet and translator. Some of her poems have appeared in E –Journals.