

Poetry Series

Khurshid Alam
- poems -

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Khurshid Alam()

Is a writer by profession. He writes poems, stories and on other subjects. His especial contribution is in the genre such as Investigative Poetry and Grammophile (a term coined to mean a campaign against incorrect grammatical usage and carelessness in writings post Internet era) . Currently he is writing a novel.

A Drop Of Dew

A dropp of dew can enliven
the thirsty buds
can cause a new life
can create a reason.

A dropp of dew can drown
a village, flood a country
can cause tears
can push a people.

A dropp of dew can dry up
the sky, can make clouds
can thicken fogs
can blind the people
can end the reason.

Note: Publsihed in Muse India, May-Jun 2009.

Khurshid Alam

A Poet Laments

Stars are shining bright and the moon is up
Clouds are making homes for them
They lead to their destinations in peace.
I find no reason to write on disharmony.
No reason to lament.

Grasses are green and plants are laden
With fruits. Flowers bloom and swing
The aroma rents the air with a hope.
I find no reason to write on despair.
No reason to lament.

Courts deliver justice to the people
They deserve. Police help them bury
Atrocities. And the government swears.
I find no reason to write on pessimism.
No reason to lament.

People celebrate festivals and share joys
In glee. They all congregate in the temples
They have no reservation, no aversion.
I find no reason to write on their follies.
No reason to lament.

Note: Published in Muse India, May-Jun 2009.

Khurshid Alam

An Inclusive India

Ajnabi is registered a Christian at school
And bargains exemption of fee by half
And all miscellanies full; and sings hymns
To Jesus and celebrates Christmas.
He enjoys mirth unbound and has no vices.
He reverences Palestine, Ichthus and the Cross.

He stops cars and buses and collects
Donation to organise the puja pandal
On Dashehra and throws colors of joy
On others on Holi and dances
To the tune of cymbal and dhak
And joins the crowd to the sacred river
And immerses the idols and returns home
With much faith and peace in heart.
Manu's adventure, Om and Swastika
Are the ideals of his Hindu faith.

At home he observes fast in Ramadan
And goes to the mosque every Friday
And celebrates Eid and prides in listening
To the sacrifices the prophets made for mankind
Abraham's black stone, Crescent, and calligraphy
are his driving forces.

India is an inclusive nation—
Profane and sacred; traditional and revolutionary
Godly and samkhya; political and social—
And now a new micro-India will arise
From some where in the crowd
To move the wheel of life!

Note: Published in Muse India, Sep-Oct 2009.

Khurshid Alam

At The Crossings

We'll meet at the crossings
Or see each other in the crowd
Or match eyes from a distance
Then we'll realize
What we lost and what we gained.

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Khurshid Alam

Bargain

I've seen
many men of lesser quality
rise upwards
and have immense influence
on the people around
and many others of best quality
fall down
under the excuse of recession
when job is badly appraised
and responsibility blindly assessed
and salary adversely reduced.

A nude man
barely in skin
shies from people
tries to hide everything
so many secrets
fears to share with others
the poor chap letting no chance to disclose
what he has, what not
but poor in the effort
he wears all that he has
the skin covers him all over.

The politicians
first woo the people
then the parties, leaders and independents
to make a government at the Center
they refresh the old promises of road, clothes and house
and add to give power, control economy and guarantee security
And bucks
to the fellow politicians
and creamy posts to some, ministries to the others
but people always find themselves
on the margin
once the vote is over
they are again in the queue
waiting for the next hustings
when they would get the chance

to teach them once more
what pain it is
to go back from the words
while the parties enjoy
the deal they gain.

Should each of us not flung a party and bargain
road, clothes, house, power, economy and security?
An India with one billion parties will be a fine idea.

Note: Published in Muse India, Sep-Oct 2009.

Khurshid Alam

Election Scenery

Psephologists competing with their opinion polls
A prophecy they draw to the final hustings
Bouleversement for one wing; anti-incumbency for the other
They profess for the polls to be polled at the booths.

James W Lain's Shivaji: the Hindu King in Islamic India
Or the burning Gujarat; or the Lucknow saree-stampede
Are the pawns of the Nationalists' games in the fray.

The Rightists are not the less nationalist though
Men of foreign origin are to be kept at bay
For they aren't ours, they advocate.
Xenophobic or panophobic they're, it is hard to say
For strange to the imagination or the play
They granted the Diaspora a double privilege.
Of which the Constitution does not have precedence.
And many of the migrants are of yore, settled abroad
And well progressed in a more tolerant politique
And their acquired privilege is far above the parochialism
Back at home. They pride to associate with their neo-nationalities
Even many have expressed despotism and many are cynic
For the favour awarded, but all's fair in the worlds' largest democracy.

(This poem has been published in the magazine Meantime, Volume VI, Issue 02,
Kerala (June 03,2004)) .

Khurshid Alam

Foliage

Leaves foliage, the green turbans, on
The silky branches to clutch on unsuccessful
Efforts.

What thought the farmers have?
To prevent the sun pass across?

The sisters are sisters without brothers
The brothers are brothers without sisters

No relation the farmers harvest
The sandy fields cannot be watered
By the oasis.
The girls should not share the little water
They should not stand on their feet.
They must foliage, clumber; the parasites
Should hope for no resort.

The sands hold no centrifuge
The buccaneers should roll over
The world and no grass should be grown
No sleep for them and no sleep for
Any one else.

(This poem has been written in reaction to the radical cleric of Taliban Maulana Fazlullah who announced banning of schools for females in the Swat district of Pakistan's North Western Frontier Province on December 24,2008. This poem appeared with The Blu Fog Journal, April 1,2009) .

Khurshid Alam

Harmony

Tiger, tiger burning bright
He'll leap up above the sky
When the Moon would shine
And the Sun would define
The Commandments shall spread far and wide
The Fire shall flame in the air high
The Buddha shall be born again
To teach the world how to weave
The Turban of pride.

(This poem celebrates World Religion Day that falls on the third Sunday of January each year. This poem appeared with The Blu Fog Journal, April 1,2009) .

Khurshid Alam

I'm Slave To Myself

I'm slave to myself.

I'm slave to my desire:

My desire is boundless.

I'm slave to my fantasy:

My fantasy is variant.

I'm slave to my needs:

My needs are large.

My slavish behaviour creeps upon me

To spoil me from the root.

Khurshid Alam

In Disguise

They take shelter in the auto rickshaws
in the daylight and sit in much calm
in much commune with the police on patrol
and invite the passers-by at Laldarwaza.

They smile, lure and gesture
and wear red coloured garments
with tattoos on the arms and vermilion on the head
that spell an erotic design
if the marks can veil them?
Have much powder on the face, dark lipstick and well combed hair
the shampoo can be smelt.
People have a look at them
read the invitation and choose and smile back
with reserved lips and hypocrite brows—
they pride there is no red-light area in Ahmedabad.

From somewhere a man approaches Maya
and whispers some thing; and sets the deal
she keeps smiling and talking all the while
Her sharp nails and the polish bright
the vulgar curves, ebony skin and black eyes
lure the man; and he takes a rickshaw
off the sight, beating the heat of the summer.

Profession's battering superimposed on her body
the oil on the head had caught the heat of the sun
the stench of the powder under her armpits, and the sweat
soaked panty spoiled his taste. He cried his wife's name
while struggling between her legs and pushed her away
He quickly put on his clothes and ran away
in a madness, as if he swore never to come again.

Note: Published in Muse India, Sep-Oct 2009.

Khurshid Alam

In Search Of Peace

I'm in search of a home
Where lights twinkle
And burn the house warm
People share their haves.
And hug each other in love.
They have no complaints in heart.

Gods are sleeping
Houses are burning
Each home claims there prevails
Peace at its door.
Claims turn to arguments
To disagreements
To wars.

Argument cannot house peace
Religion can teach you peace but
Which one to choose from a dozen?
Each claims it preaches peace
Yes, it does it claims
Claims turn to arguments
To disagreements, to wars!
How a fight for peace
Can bring peace?

Religion has taught us a lot
Should it teach us to narrow arguments
To tolerate disagreements
To co-exist with other claims?
Should it be a path of soul searching
Embodying peace, loving humans?
Should it bring people together
Make them love and turn
Arguments to find an answer?
Will then I embrace Religion.

Note: Published in Muse India, May-Jun 2009.

Paths Are Obstructed

Paths are obstructed at the no-man's land
where they die gasping at the boundary
against the barbs grounded at either side.

Let me move without a stop

I want to excavate the old stories
the customs, the norms and the mores
to make a tribe of a people
who have no schisms, no forms
and dance only to the tune of Nature.

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Khurshid Alam

Perspective

I took just a few steps
And the road ended
I took a stride
And the path finished
I measured the fields
And the land locked
The world is so small!

And then I began on the journey
The roads lasted without an end
I took strides
But the paths never crossed
I came across the fields
To touch the horizon
It seemed bowing at a distance
Above always
I tried and tried
It has no ending!
The world is so vast!

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Khurshid Alam

Shez Mingled In Me

I worship the prophetess of love
beauty, majesty, glory, and desire -
she is the sublime of all arts.

Smitten by her beauty I kissed
on her forehead: she taught me
to read her as I do the Bible.

Opiated by her aroma
I touched her skin pink
soft and so affectionate: she sedated
me and I bowed my head low.
She was the epitome of glory
I fumbled on her body with crave:
she admired my humbleness.
I sought solace in her lap
and went in a trance:
she was out of breath and could teach me
no ahead.
Finally she surrendered. She deigned.
She could spell no word
except she gave me a blink or two.
She crept into me and vanished
Now I smell she, I wine she
I've made an idol of her and sing a hymn to her daily.

Published in the book titled An Anthology of Contemporary Love Poems edited by
Rohitash Chandra & Ed Coet

Khurshid Alam

The Doll

The doll imitates the forms
Of a woman
But it lacks the content—

The dark patches gone
The hirsute cleansed
The black heads removed.
Untimely blinks, sneering face
Under unkempt hair
Big laughs and irregular teeth.

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Khurshid Alam

The Golden Birds

The golden birds flock
To the fields
Fluttering and dropping beads
Weaving them into garlands.

At the day break
They count their valuables
One, two, three...and more and more
Yet they lament at their yields
They've gathered little; yearn for more.

Yet fluttering and yet dropping
Yet counting, yet lamenting.

Note: Published in Muse India, May-Jun 2009.

Khurshid Alam

The Grass Is Shaking

The grass is shaking
a mouse may be nibbling
at the root
The grains will soon turn
into heaps under the anthills.

Outside millions will bend on their knees
Or sulk in the alleys
or peep into the dark well
or crumble, scream and die.

Or will I see some from the folk
Shooting at the American Civic Association
tearing stomach of innocent people
Why should they die of starvation?
They should die from the bullets instead, instantly?

Note: Published in Muse India, Sep-Oct 2009.

Khurshid Alam

The Mysterious Man

My mother scoffed at us for ours no fault
She had put sweets from offerings in a box
To distribute the sacred eating equally among us all:
"All should have equal favour", she taught.
Free from her daily routines she opened the box
"And four sweets were missing, she found
Who stole the parshad? " she shouted
And threw the rest to us without a choice.
We're surprised who stole the sweat
We enquired each who committed the mischief
None was brought to the book
Every one swore none knew anything!

My sceptic father kept an aid-box ready at hand
If there's a mishap and we'd be treated at the instance
And then my sister broke her toe
She screamed in pain and created a hue
My father searched the box every nook and corner
But no trace of it could he find. He abused us all
She cried at the highest and raised the sensation
To enrage my father who loved her more than us
We searched it everywhere without a trace
But we found neither the box nor the mischief
We're surprised. Every one swore none knew anything!

Posters and banners they put every Friday
For the movies that would play at the theatre
By the next day many posters were torn
Some beyond their sign, some half-bitten.
Many invigilators were left to look into the secret
And they searched high and low with no avail
"Who did it? " they always thought chewing
Tobacco, or with cigarettes between their lips
For they said the pills added some more intelligence
But they always came back with empty hands.

There's always a Mysterious Man who does the mischief
And hides himself some where in silence to laugh at us
In troubles and confusion with no trace of him.

Note: Published in Muse India, Sep-Oct 2009.

Khurshid Alam

The National Library

Many couples couple to the serene campus
But they don't love; never marry each other
Yet they're apace for a feeling unrealised
They often take bits of paper and make equations
They do, they don't; till they get a predominant zero.

Some scholars come in boots and tie
With shirt-in on fine pants and the glasses
On their nose which tell how much ordeal
They've suffered and they work daylong
For their purpose and gather all papers
And they make a good name and win fame.

Many regulars hunt the library, in the Main Building
In the Magazine section, and other Departments
They chose; and browse through the documents
And come back with signatures in the register
In a faint hope: they would find an alcove
Some day later and the readers would study
Them through their signatures – how they fritted
Their time, many for decades and created
Noise and bustle in the Depart Mental canteen
And their mind is departed indeed from the deeds
Yet they don't get tired of their indolence!

Some silent readers never agitate but study
In the corner and they pack up their papers
In the Xerox and in the notes they jot down and go
With their purpose finished and complete
Their degrees and diplomas of their institutes
And they go away with time. They never oppose
The arsenic water or the nicotinic tea
Or the intolerable noise created by the stand-fans.

Those who'd roamed in the luxurious library once
Come off and on though years might pass
As if they're addicted to take a look at the building
Bibliophile or nostalgic they might have gown!
But they pride to associate with it in short!

(This poem was published in the journal Readers' Mind, Vol.1, No.1. Oct-Dec,2004. A journal published by the National Library Readers' Forum, Calcutta, India) .

Khurshid Alam

Weave Dreams Into Act

We sleep to dream
We sleep to dreams
We wake to act
We wake to facts.

We weave dreams into act
For act is fact
And to act we dream—both are twins.

Khurshid Alam

You Turned My Faith

Till a few minutes past, my eyes were blank
Then you painted yourself in them beautiful
Now I plant flowers and leaves of different hues
In my garden where once stood the store room
For a litter of garbage and dumps
And offer water to the birds at my window
And sing along their chirping again and again.

Till a few minutes past, my heart was blank
Then you entered into it and dwell there
Now I feel the world such a worthy place to live
Should I die I wish to be reposed in some corner
Of the earth than go to the heaven above
And lie with you some day for ever.

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