

अफसाने

Of lived SOLIDARITIES, unfettered musings and fierce love which springs from winter

Last winter in Ramjas

Lately, the Delhi sun does not scorch;
It soothes.
The conversations around JP TeaStall
retain their buzz.
The bickering for extra ice in the iced tea
Is only replaced by desperate calls for
Chai before it's too late to enter the class.
Ink-stained fingers wrapped around a cup
of tea,
feet hopscotch between slivers of warmth.
The ice cream vendors outside college
have started to disappear,
Lacchu Bhaiya with his Bhelpuri remains put-
he speaks nostalgically about winters and
summers alike.
The drizzle smears our glasses with a
world painted in light, swift brush strokes-
We don't linger too long to marvel.
We walk to the Chai-Sutta point instead,
Ambling in groups of two or three,
picking a dried leaf on the way as a
keepsake for the winter after the next.
Campus turns lazily on its back,
blowing clouds of condensed air,
ash-ing our histories with the flick of a
finger.
We wait,
impatiently,
Bracing/embracing each other for our last
winter in Ramjas.

-Dipanjali Singh



Anti - National

हाँ इस कलम की नोक पर, सच की स्याही से लिखता हूँ।
मैं मानवता का रक्षक हूँ, Antinational सा दिखता हूँ।
ये राम-रहीम की धरती पर, तुम खेल जो खेला करते हो।
इस शस्य-श्यामला भूमि पर, जो झूठ का धंधा करते हो।
मैं सच्चाई का बीज वही! लो फिर से रोपण करता हूँ।
मैं मानवता का रक्षक हूँ, Antinational सा दिखता हूँ।
है 'सच' बाजारू बना दिया, ये खेल वही पुराना है।
क्यूँ देख तमाशा हँसते हो, तुम्हारा ही काटा जाना है।
इस सच झूठ की मंडी का, देखो मैं खंडन करता हूँ!
मैं मानवता का रक्षक हूँ, Antinational सा दिखता हूँ।

"ये बात भले ही टरका दो,
इन कहकहों में उड़वा दो।"

पर मत भूलो ये बस बात नहीं, ये फिर से वही गुलामी है।
तुम आज भले आजाद ही कह लो, कल फिर वही कहानी
है।
इस तथाकथित आजादी पर, देखो मैं क्रंदन करता हूँ!
मैं मानवता का रक्षक हूँ, Antinational सा दिखता हूँ।
Antinational कह दो भले ही, कहलो तुम गद्दार मुझे।
मारो-पीटो फिर से दबा दो, ये 'चिंगारी'.. हर बार भले।
पर याद रखना दिन वही, जब जनता फिर से जागेगी।
तुम certificate बाँटते रह जाओगे, वो भगा-भगाकर मारेगी

- खेमराज मीणा



हे भीष्म !

दहो श्वास कि बिना दहे ये प्राण नही तपने हैं
तपो प्राण कि बिना तपे ये दोष नहीं गलने हैं
बिना गले दोषों के जीवन तम से भरा रहेगा
कहो सखे ऐसे जीवन को जीवन कौन कहेगा
ज्यों लोहे को ,खड्ग बनाने ,आग मिटा देती है
ज्यों लंका जय करने सृष्टि जलधि सुखा देती है
ज्यों आभूषण बनने, पहले स्वर्ण को गलना पड़ता
अंधकार हरने इस जग का दिए को जलना पड़ता

ठीक वहीँ, शंकर होने को गरल पचाना होगा
जो आए कोई पथबाधा उस से भिड़ जाना होगा
मदिरा के लोलुप न बंधु नीलकंठ कहलाते
नरम बिछौने सोने वाले, कभी न धरा हिलाते
श्वासों का तपना, प्राणों का गलना नहीं सरल है
मौत यहाँ उस पार अमरता, बीच की राह गरल है
द्वंद्व गात के बड़े कठिन हैं, उनकी विजय वरो हो!
स्वयसिद्धि हो लक्ष्य मात्र बस ,खुद से युद्ध करो हो!
नहीं हिलेगा सहज हिमालय, तांडव रूप धरो हो!
जय कर हर रण, मृत्यु मारकर, तब हे भीष्म मरो हो !

-दीपांशु भार्गव

A poem for my unborn

A moving train
Towards home, against will.
The pain of a death
Drugged to numbness.

Not once but thrice over.
Hands over mouth
Hands over body.
Whose body.

I am that which he creates.
Shadowless, like my unborn.
I am unborn.
Undone.

The floor is as dirty
As he calls me.
Wait, he does not speak.
He is gone; I, forgotten.

Kill him, kill her, kill it.
Faceless, shapeless, lifeless clay.
You would have been me, mine.
Or, would you have been him.

His face everywhere.
Your face in his.
My guilt, his doing.
Un-mother myself.

No love for the other
Not mine, not his, not ours.
Who will hold you?
Demons walk on two legs.

Have I seen you before?
Hellish nightmares like owls.
I hear the screams.
Sorrow becomes you.

I did not create you.
Yet you are part me.
Child of coercion
Imprisoned in my inability.

Impotent anger inside
That which he violates.
His member.
Dismember.

Apologies to the mangled body.
Incipience comes
To sudden halt.
My station is here.

-Vrinda Nair

हाँ मैं किसान हूँ

हालांकि ये एक ज्वलंतशील मुद्दा हैं तो
उन्ही किसानों की दर्द गाथा को चित्रित
करता हुआ मेरा ये कार्य।।।

धरती का सीना चीर मैं फसल उगाता हूँ,
हा मैं किसान हूँ अपने बच्चो को आधे
पेट सुलाता हूँ,
ताकि भर सके पेट ये दुनिया जहां, उस
तड़पती धूप में भी हर रोज जाता हूँ,
हा मैं किसान हूँ अपने बच्चो को आधे
पेट सुलाता हूँ,
जाड़े धूप की चिंता होती नहीं, बरसात
का डर सताता है, वर्षा होते ही उस
आंधी में भींग विह्वल हो जाता हूँ,
हा मैं किसान हूँ अपने बच्चो को आधे
पेट सुलाता हूँ,
कभी दो जून की रोटियां लाया तो कभी
खाली हाथ ही लौट आता हूँ,
हा मैं किसान हूँ अपने बच्चो को आधे
पेट सुलाता हूँ,
कर्ज, कर्जमाफी कितने झोल बुने लोगो
ने, मैं तो उस कराह में भी दब सा जाता
हूँ, कोई बैर नहीं मेरा, मुझे कर्जो का
राम नहीं, कर्जो का बोझ खुशमिजाजी में
से जाता हूँ,
हा मैं किसान हूँ अपने बच्चो को आधे
पेट सुलाता हूँ,
टूटू बिखर जाऊ रास्ते पे ,उठा लेना,
क्यों की तब मैं तपिश में जाली हुई लाश
बन जाता हूँ,
हा मैं किसान हूँ अपने बच्चो को आधे
पेट सुलाता हूँ,
खुशकिस्मती मेरी क्या होगी रे मानुष, मैं
कदम कदम गिरता हूँ, मायूस होकर
सूली भी चढ़ जाता हूँ, पर फिर भी मैं
मुस्कुराकर जिंदगी के गीत गाता हूँ,
हा मैं किसान हूँ अपने बच्चो को आधे
पेट सुलाता हूँ,।।।

-शशांक गौरव

FEBRUARY 2017

Wordcraft, the Literary Society in collaboration with the English Department of Ramjas College, organized a seminar on the 21st and 22nd February, 2017 titled 'Cultures of Protest'. The purpose was a thematic academic exploration. However, the violence that unfolded on the two days rendered Ramjas College, an unsafe space for many. A lot of us, who were living on campus at the time, had been forced to flee ensuing those dreadful days of violence in February, 2017, for the fear of being beaten up again. The seminar was disrupted and did not in fact, take place, apart from the first two panels on the 21st morning.



Two years have passed since and our desire for the air in the Ramjas to breathe 'khulla', time and again gets stifled by fear-mongering. The ECA which was a popular hangout spot in college in my first year now lies almost deserted, a constant reminder of what had been, as the nostalgia sinks in. The back gate which allowed us free access now remains locked at all times and IDs have to be produced hurriedly, at the main gate, instead. Our gates locked, spaces inaccessible and the absence of discourse enthusiastically being bounced off each other, places the idea of free university spaces in grave danger. Yet, solidarizing on all levels and at all fronts carves the spaces for dissent to emerge once again, on the threshold of azaadi.

एक पुराना अफसाना - MY FIRST DAY IN RAMJAS -

I joined Ramjas College as a lecturer in 1984. In those years, Ramjas had a reputation for extreme violence on the premises, and it was believed that teaching hardly took place in such an atmosphere.

This incident happened on the very first day of my tenure. As I walked towards the staff room, I saw, in the lawns adjacent to the staff room, two large groups of students in volatile confrontation with one another. The two groups were facing each other, each threatening the other with the usual male 'main tujhe dekh loonga' language.

As I watched nervously, waiting for the bloodshed to begin, I noticed a completely fearless Dilip Simeon (from the history department) planted between the two groups, and soon after witnessed him twist the ears of both student ring-leaders, scolding them as he did so. The crowds soon sheepishly dispersed. As I walked a short distance further to the entrance of the staff room, I saw a few student union boys lying prone in the doorway, with a few others shouting slogans demanding something or the other. In order to enter the staff room, I stepped gingerly over the 'dead' bodies blocking the door. As I entered the staff room, Saleem Kidwai came up to me and said, 'Welcome to Ramjas College'. For the record, I must state that in spite of the frequency of such scenes as the one I saw that morning, teaching did usually take place, and those same students who behaved like hooligans in the lawns were actually quite non-confrontational in class. **-Dr Roopa Dhawan (English Department)**

Remembering our yesteryears



January and February 2018. First and second years might not remember this, but there was a recent time when the corridors of Ramjas College were free of the numerous “LOITERING IS PROHIBITED” and “YOU ARE UNDER CCTV SURVEILLANCE” signs (the latter in several places that were not actually under CCTV surveillance). In late January 2018, students of Ramjas took to countering the new signs with posters in order to reclaim the college space as theirs to roam in freely, with lines such as “Ramjas Hamara Hai” and “Reclaim Ramjas”. Around the same time, the Ramjas College Staff Association passed a resolution condemning the officiating principal at the time for embezzlement of funds, and held a series of dharnas. On the 9th of February, 2018, students of Ramjas held a Jan Sunvaiyi in the amphitheatre, where issues related to college such as the inaccessibility of girls’ bathrooms in the evening, the quality of water in the hostel, and sexual harassment were discussed. The highly eventful beginning of the first semester of 2018 proved that Ramjas’s tradition of questioning, discussion, and dissent is as alive as ever.

Winter in a

It rained leaves that day, yellow leaves.
The branches were dried up, the sparrows were flying low.
We sat there not holding hands.
Just looking at the same sky.
I told her that I like how she lets her curls fall on her black eyes before telling stories about her trips.
And I didn't let her realize that I know that she squeezes her nails on her palm whenever she talks about her mom.
She told me that she likes how things turn dark at night.
And she likes the city in the reflection of car lights.
And I told her, I like the days in the same way.
We sat there holding hands.
Just looking at the same sky.
One day I told her I like winters.
The other day she brought me winter in a box.
-Shalini Shukla

काश! तुम इंसान ही होते।

शायद तुम शैतान नहीं हो,
ये तो तय है कि तुम भगवान नहीं हो,
इंसान के लिबास में हैवान तो न होते,
झूठ के सीने पर सच की गुहार तो न रोते,
काश तुम इंसान ही होते।

जिन्होंने जलाये थे मासूमों के सपने, वो आज कहाँ हैं,
खाक किये थे जर्जर आशियाने, वो आज कहाँ हैं,
लाओ, ये दोष भी हमारे सर कर दो, जज़्बात तुममे कोई बचे कहाँ हैं,
गली-कूचों पर यूँ ईमान तो न खोते,
नफ़रत के बीज खुले आम तो न बोते,
काश तुम इंसान ही होते।

जो वतनपरस्ती में चूर हैं, पूछो उनसे, उनके मायने क्या हैं,
फिर पूछो खुद से, तुम्हारे फ़ायदे क्या हैं,
जो एक होते तो वो यूँ बदहाल न होते,
इन ज़िंदा लाशों के तुम सरताज न होते,
वहशत की दुनिया के तलबगार न होते,
काश तुम इंसान ही होते।

ताकत सर पर है चढ़ी, क्या कीजै,
सत्ता सबसे है बड़ी, क्या कीजै,
महकूमों का दर्द जो जानते तो न जाने क्या होते,
सच को जो पहचानते तो न जाने क्या होते,
कम से कम शोषित लाश दर ब दर तो न ढोते,
मौत पर बेअसर यूँ चैन से तो न सोते,
काश तुम इंसान ही होते। -गगन हितकारी

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