

Pallavi Banerjee – Two Poems

Fall in Seasons of War

Nippy mornings with hues from an old coloring book,
Pastels of hayed-grass, skies and chickens and butterflies,
Trees orange and children ever-playing.
And stretches of tulips and sunflowers- white and yellow.
Like sun beams softly blanketing the lazy meadows.

Old leafy books tucked in new wooden shelves in sunny afternoons.
When old-men and brown trees nap.....
Mornings warmed by honeyed sun and comforting sweaters and caps.
And orange marmalade on toasts and rich coffee.

And between fall and winter curious eyes shine unquenched, unknown to destiny.
Simply soaking in moments.
And today, between then and now, a passing of centuries, a plummeting of faith, a break
of trust, a stupor of rage, a sigh of madness, defeated omniscient eyes, search.

Colors scattered and lost in a million undiscovered continents.
Flowers, torn and trampled, fall the color of dirty ice.
Books, burdened by snobbery of erudition, without the will to soar.
From my picture window, the sun bites me with its cold fangs.
Wind chills fill the heart's crevices.
And wars begin, wars end with no clear victories, no justice.
Journeys begin to end in mazes.
People kill and get killed for reasons ghastly and godly.
Each life, each moment in time,
You play the games by rules - tricky and treacherous
Hoping to escape someday unhurt, pretending to dream of colors lost.
For you believe there's no truth, no retribution, no forgiveness, no love.
Today, seasons come and go and you wait for them for reasons wrong and cruel.

Untamed Thoughts of Night

Bare love, naked words, poems of passion are myths.
We muse over them, bask and weep for the unknown.
Fabled words – tear soaked, float in the blood of an age
where prayers stifle, anger is kind, fear timeless and
hatred is holy.

And love a pretext for mocking compassion.
We say with a deep sigh - death is easy.
I try to write about it all,

I call out your name,
Through the clouds of mist and blazing sun,
My voice blurs, my eyes choke, my limbs sever from my soul.
I writhe in pain; I squirm in fear.
Fear of failings and futilities, fear of death in timelessness.
Fears that lurk quietly, conspicuously
in the darkest corners of our pretty houses.
Fear of an era stretch out its tentacles of enormous embrace.
I shudder.

Words scatter like trampled ants,
We hide amongst volatile dunes of complacent oblivion.
Lives fall apart like flakes of parched skin.
We grow old. Our brows wrinkle in smug contemplations,
Sleep the prodigal child of civilization lulls us to a waking slumber.
My old pen breaks – rusted ink – musty, smear my hands
Blue, black, white, red – I look for letters a child had learnt
and forgotten.
I wake up in the dead of a night – a child, yearning to live and unlearn

Pallavi Banerjee is a sociologist and does research on immigration, gender and families. She recently moved from Chicago which she still considers home to the southern comfort of Nashville to be a post-doctoral research fellow at Vanderbilt University. She lives and breathes sociology but sometimes, some nights and some afternoons take her to her first love - poetry. Some of her most favorite poets are Angelou, Plath, Neruda, Yevtushenko, Ammons, Ginsberg, Tagore, Shakti, Jibananda and Gulzar. Her favorite past time is to read poetry with her partner and to her cat baby.