

Khagen Saikia's Poems

I Want to Give an Advertisement

I intend to give an advertisement, an advertisement
For a few fair-spoken persons

They needn't know the history of the nation
Needn't understand the matters of culture
Needn't look at the wide field spreading to the horizon

A narrow trail, storm of sounds piercing the sky
To nurture this, they put their lives at stake

You may call it impetuosity or meaningless annoyance
I consider it the best way out
This is my inherited sensibility

They require maturity
In order to make man empty-headed
The matters acquired through research should be exploded

What could be more marvellous than this?
Many will come in new attires,
Will be delighted
Many subjects will fall down like dry barks of trees
The incidents will run fast like a hare
People'll be toothless, tongues'll be short
What could be a more pleasant matter?

Even if you don't like
I feel extremely happy at this
(For) to use your words—
the strange things or stories without hands and heads are like a shirt given by my father—
Which I keep wearing
This very shirt is—ingredients of my advertisement extended over a large area and visible
With cravings for a magical dream.

After the Storm

The world was an exquisite place
Before the storm
Melodious twitter of birds filled hearts with the gift of nectar

The murmuring sounds of the streams caressed mountains and hills
The people moved around looking for the ore of happiness
People spoke in unison yearning for peace.

One day
A storm devastated the enchanting appearance of nature
A horrific sound rang on the ears shaking the world
Fear, apprehension, scream
Turbid restless air
As if people were captive in a dungeon!

No one could be recognised,
Who was where and why
Distraught hearts in the question of existence.

Gradually
The storm came to end, the groans and lamentations subsided
The disturbed world became placid
The people alive walked staggeringly
Felt happy washing and wiping their bodies wallowed in mud.

Took a deep breath

No one was in old attire
Identities were new, the thoughts demanded novelty
A cosmic ascent was in the offing.

Glad to regain their lost happiness anew
The faces brightened up.

As though piercing through the dew drenched forest
came out a woman with svelte features
On her face a blithesome smile of new life.

Translated by Uttam Duorah

Khagen Saikia is an Assamese poet, novelist and writer based in Nagaon, Assam. He has six collections of poems and six novels to his credit.

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