

Pranay Phukan's Poems

People who don't read poems

People who don't read poems can't swim.
They don't know how to play with fire.
People who don't read poems can't face a storm
In their lives. People who don't read poems
Are indebted to others for the rest of their lives.

People who don't read poems can't sense
When truth slowly turns into dreams
And nightmares become reality.
People who do not read poems can't see
How their surroundings have turned into unseen despair and terror.

People who don't read poems are infatuated
In the search of imaginary God.
They have searched temples, mosque, church,
And even under the ground.
They couldn't find God. People who don't read poems
Don't know that God spends his time
Chatting with a derelict atheist like me.

People who don't read poems
Can't hear the cries of the fallen forest
Or the lifeless river. People who don't read poems
Can't experience anything, they sleep inside a cocoon,
Undisturbed from the warmth of dusky light.

Oh new times!

I am okay, outside,
But a storm stirs inside me.
On every breath is a turmoil.

Contemplating on the perilous future
I cry alone.

With just five grams of hemoglobin in body
How can someone identify
On whose instructions
Does the sun rise or set in the valley!
On whose wishes the rivers flow naked,
The forest into nothingness,
Youths turns to rebels,
And the farmers commit suicide!

Independence,
What a magnificent word!
A word on which millions and billions of people danced
One day
A word for which their forefathers
Were exiled for seeking it.

Oh new times,
What shall I seek from you?
Please return my beautiful valley,
Return the lost conscience,
Free us from the anarchy
Eradicate
The expansive human jungle
Where I might lose myself into 'nothingness'.

Translated by Sagarmoy Phukan

Pranay Phukan is an Assamese poet, novelist and writer based in Dibrugarh, Assam. He has published seven collections of poems. *Shubhecchar Swaralipi* is his new collection of poems.

Sagarmoy Phukan born at Dibrugarh and now a PHD scholar in the York University, UK. He has keen interest in Assamese literature.