

Lapis Lazuli

An International Literary Journal

ISSN 2249-4529

www.pintersociety.com

VOL: 10, No.: 2, AUTUMN 2020

POETRY

REFREED, INDEXED, BLIND PEER REVIEWED

About Us: <http://pintersociety.com/about/>

Editorial Board: <http://pintersociety.com/editorial-board/>

Submission Guidelines: <http://pintersociety.com/submission-guidelines/>

Call for Papers: <http://pintersociety.com/call-for-papers/>

All Open Access articles published by LLILJ are available online, with free access, under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non Commercial License as listed on <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>

Individual users are allowed non-commercial re-use, sharing and reproduction of the content in any medium, with proper citation of the original publication in LLILJ. For commercial re-use or republication permission, please contact lapislazulijournal@gmail.com

ANITA NAHAL

Three Prose Poems**Blues of a strong Indian woman in mid-America small town**

A fall. That accident no one saw coming. Those bones that cracked. My mom's sister's.

Nearing ninety and like all our family women, stubborn strength kept her alive. Emotional and physical that insisted on myriad things, sometimes not bountiful. Like that day on pruning the creepers on top of the back-porch pergola. "I could have done it." She repeated intractably later. A loud thud, a scream and immobilization followed. And depression, malaise followed me as I rushed with loads of junk snacks and my sweet mother's soul to keep me company over five hours of drive away. Corona days filled me with numerous fears as I had a mask on and kept driving and driving...

Her house lay empty and the step stool lay solemn, eyeing me in guilt. "How

much was it you?" I asked observing the mayhem. A potted plant thriving with flowers lay on its side just like I imagined she did. It was raining hard and the wind was blowing aimlessly. The scene seemed clueless as I took a picture of a memory of a strong Indian woman having another of her many blues in between the few greens and yellows too. Sixty years since she drove into that small place, with one street downtown in the middle of nowhere America thousands of miles from somewhere India.

All over the house a kind of dripping cultural odor followed me. I touched her ethnic collections in well-planned rooms

trying to sense her decisions...and mine. Photographs, wall hangings, cushions, paper-mache dolls, baskets...my

hand lingered on most everything though mostly on her handwritten notes found everywhere, even in old magazine pages. Like I found later of my mom's when she passed without me in a hospital in New Delhi.

Yes, I have the blues, many times too. Yes, I cry too, Yes, I fall even without the treacherous step stool. Yes, I scream too. And, yes, I brave it out too.

Flick away the blues, like flicking away a relentless breeze disturbed curtain. Or a fly in a car on a fast speed highway. A lot of flicking going on by strong Indian women on the move.

Ancient Creation

just one small perspective

Who am I to say how we humans were created? Biology, alien visitors or mythical writings passed from generation to generation defining theology from myriad lens. We spooned, we boomed, or we zoomed into creation is a mystery. Still. Still. The human mind will not accept one view. One way. One person. One God. Not one theory. So, who am I to say where I came from? Or you. Or him and her, or them. Or any identity chosen by self or shoved upon us.

I do know. I do know many other matters of head and heart. The movement, the sways, the tilts, the growth, the lull, the storms, the peace one hopes would engulf the human race. Skin color, religion,

gender, sexuality, nationality are artificial constructs. To beat. To subdue. To rescind. To pillage. To empower and power. To say one is better. Creation can be divisive, excessive, avoidable. Or, unifiable, sufficient and enjoyable. Who decides?

I do know. I do know, I am human, a wise old soul, made of wood, metal, dirt, water, fire and wind. I culminate in birth and regerminate in another birth, millions of phoenixes within me scream, cry, laugh, and make love. In every dimension, in every cosmos, in every memory left behind. Who will accept?

I carry the fairies of distant moons, the gypsies of ancient

hidings, the hippies of free bodies and the dervishes singing and dancing simply from the joy of life. Of being. Of goodness reaped and nurtured again and again after falling in the muck, my own and that of yours.

Do you know? Do you? Do you grasp the elixir I've prepared so carefully and thoughtfully from icy and molten juices and hues of rainbows, stars, planets, moons, meteor, comets and all that I could not even see and did not know? I blindfolded myself so I would not be biased against any of my children. Will you value me before time and sand runs out?

Broken People

A bit after two am the sad car veered on to the street heading towards the half-built bridge.
New Delhi is a sleepy, lonely city at 2 am, especially near unfinished edifices...
living or inanimate.

No horns
No other cars
No passers-by
No major lights
No other thoughts than survival
From one man gone mad that night.

“You bitch, I’ll show you I can drive! You think I’m drunk!” Screams confronted her senses. In reflex she grabbed the wheel extending her feet over his and pressed on the brake. Picking up her son she almost jumped out aided by his thick hands on her slim back. He actually pushed her out! Her sari *pallu* fell off. Gold shimmered on her neck and ears. Any bravado she felt was doused by vulnerability hastening to be a second skin. She drew her son closer as stray dogs and beggars sleeping under mortar, steel and cement, raised their heads at the sight that emerged from the screeching pedal.

The sky was watching too. Like an old forgotten sage etching their sight in memory...two terrified humans, standing at a deserted, nocturnal stretch, with heavy rain leaving no time for fear to take hold. “It’s okay, *beta*, we will be fine.”

What did he want? Did he want? His smelly hiccups and a wavering car drove off without a simple look back.

Rich, educated broken people...her, their child, and him.

No air waves sounded the alarm
No liquor let it be
No wisdom saw any sense
No decency chided
No other thoughts than survival
from one man gone mad that night.

Lapis Lazuli

BIO-NOTE

Anita Nahal is originally from New Delhi, India and currently resides in the US. is a poet, professor, short story writer and children's writer. She has two books of poetry, one book of flash fictions and three books for children. She teaches at the University of the District of Columbia, Washington DC. Nahal's interests are Diversity & Inclusion, U.S. History, African American Women's History, South Asian Women's History, International Relations, and Modern India. She has been a Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence, SUNY, Binghamton, NY, a visiting scholar of Gender, University of California, Berkeley, and a National Endowment for the Humanities summer teacher seminar awardee. More on her website at: <https://anitanahal.wixsite.com/anitanahal>

E-mail id: anitanahal@yahoo.com

