

## POETRY

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Shatarupa Mishra

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### **Mosaic**

Denuded,  
torn,  
plucked,  
she made  
a nocturnal reconnoiter  
of her insides.

Cupping,  
tilting,  
mating,  
the butterflies  
had already touched  
non-being.

Caliche,  
clay,  
cottonwood  
seemed distant now,  
as phonetic awareness came  
at the cost of the poetic.

### **Do I Have a Poem?**

Sun suffuses day with afternoon orange glow.  
Empty-eyed vegetable seller on the street-side  
traces aporia in wrinkles of brinjals.  
Lady walks by, a trail of memory  
catching her saree hem.  
Abscission –  
too rugged a word for smoothness of leaf loss.  
Hunger can be tamed, after all.  
They manufacture hunger in labs.  
O, there's a lily with a cropped childhood.  
Why is there leaf loss anyway?  
Paths unwind before her  
like petals of a hibiscus.  
But she cannot walk them.  
Gone are days  
when poems grew in empty cone buckets,  
base hollowed out and thrust into soil.  
For God's sake, tell –  
Do I see a poem glinting?  
No clue which crag holds the secret.

### **The Only Fruit**

Oranges tug  
at the membranous labyrinth  
as never before,  
and I hear an affectionate tone  
calling *amma* for the last time.

## Quest

A theme park welcomes  
its first batch of onlookers  
as the sun goes down.

Meanwhile, the palm trees  
prefer losing their identities  
to a silhouette of solidarity.

Sanguine lake-clouds sport  
with ripples, oblivious  
to furtive looks of Artifice  
who fails to understand  
why the seeker would not walk  
through its majestic doors.

Eternal quietude smiles  
on the candid lenses and offers them  
an echo without a ruse.

## Anything Goes

*O majhi re*

Can you tell what void looks like?

Laughter?

I know how that goes.

HA HA Ha Ha H H h h.

Or is it a hole in your boat -

one tenth of h,  
six-tenths of o,  
two-tenths of l, and  
one-tenth of e?  
Or is it a nest?  
*O majhi*  
I think I...  
glub, glub, glub,  
i...

## **Gravity**

With chanting of  
Lingaraj Temple in the eyes, walks  
a rebel towards the gate that she once opened  
from the other side. Vrinda is waiting for her feet, tender  
and wilting. One last word she has for her protégé. You prayed  
to me for chastity and I've kept your prayer. Now go out and kiss  
the world, a chaste kiss that will be too. Like the patched water  
pipe that asserts its claimed corner, the dissenter feels a wash  
of holiness when the dry earth in the pot moistens with  
her first teardrop of pity. Thus begins  
a new odyssey from transience  
to eternity.

**About the Poet**

Shatarupa Mishra is an Assistant Professor of English at Model Degree College, Deogarh, Odisha. She is a gold medalist from the University of Hyderabad (2010). Her short story titled 'Creation' is part of an e-book: *Esmeralda's Hair and Other Stories*. Her poems have appeared in Erothanatos, Rock Pebbles and Knot Magazine, USA. Her research articles have also been published in previous issues of Erothanatos. She is the Academic Coordinator of All India Forum for English Students, Scholars and Trainers and is on the editorial board of an e-book titled *Mapping the Shifting Paradigms of Post-Modern Society*, published by Smashwords, USA.