

2021

Translating the Poetry of Leena Malhotra

Komal Agarwal
agarwal.komal.jnu@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsarchive.library.albany.edu/liljournal>



Part of the [Language Interpretation and Translation Commons](#), and the [Translation Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Agarwal, Komal (2021) "Translating the Poetry of Leena Malhotra," *Living in Languages: Vol. 1* , Article 3.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.library.albany.edu/liljournal/vol1/iss1/3>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Scholars Archive. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Living in Languages* by an authorized editor of Scholars Archive.
Please see [Terms of Use](#). For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@albany.edu.

Introduction to the Translations of Leena Malhotra

KOMAL AGARWAL

Based in New Delhi, India, Leena Malhotra (b. 1965) is a poet, a film writer, and a film director. As a poet, Malhotra engages in the exploration of the experiences of contemporary India and writes on various social issues and systemic forms of oppression. She has published two books of poetry on social and cultural diversity, *Meri Yatra ka Zaroori Saman* (2012) and *Naav Doobne se Nahi Darti* (2016). She has also written films ranging from commercial to art house cinema and directed a film to be screened in film festivals. She had also been associated with theatre and played lead roles for two plays written by renowned Indian playwrights. Several of her poems have been translated into regional Indian languages and a few have been translated and published in Russian. Currently, she is directing another film titled ‘An Afternoon,’ and is waiting for the publication of her forthcoming collection of poetry titled *Adrishya Darvaazon ko Kholte hue* (2021).

Reading Malhotra’s poetry is like walking through the by-lanes of a crowded marketplace, with faint reminiscences of the bygone era wafting through one’s head, arousing a deep sense of familiarity to some intangible cultural elements alongside the aesthetic satisfaction of walking past some modern curio shops. Through her poetry, Malhotra pens down her bewilderment at all the massive changes happening around her, and yet what shines through the web and entanglements of the rapid, shifting change, is the firm grounding of the life that she has seen, the traditions that were, the heritage that serve as our anchorage, and the mothers and grandmothers who dared! The whispers of an era gone by and the gleaming of strong filial love make the time spent reading her poetry like traversing warm, old and familiar lanes of memory. Malhotra takes us to times that are evanescent yet eternal, a lost home that strikes as a strange one today and yet so familiar, the shared moments of community laughter and grief that our mothers and grandmothers were privy to pitted against the changing face of grief today, which has become private and leaves one shattered and lonely, with practically no one to lean on. Her poetry navigates through the necessary evil called change and progress, and in so doing, her poetry reiterates her strong belief in the therapeutic power of words, in her contemporaries and posterity becoming the harbingers of peace and hope, and in simple folks moving the sensitive souls towards a positive change and a better tomorrow.

The two poems of Malhotra that have been translated here, “A Mother’s Prayer” and “Exiled to the Moon,” offer a glimpse into the emotive yet rational, traditional yet progressive, and chaotic yet optimistic worldview of the poet. Malhotra’s poetry dexterously treads the tight rope of life and the many lows and falls one encounters therein, and in the end, strikes a fine balance between cacophony and harmony, tradition and modernity, rootedness, and unrestrained freedom. Her poetry is delightful, for the dreamers and the realists, the readers, and the critics alike!

In one of the emails that the translator exchanged with the poet, Malhotra skilfully describes the relationship between a creative writer and a translator. She firmly believes that a translator has to go to the bottom of the ocean of poetry to fathom its depth, so that she understands the thoughts, emotions and crux of the original and offers her own words to the same in her translation. “If a creative writer is Devki, then a translator is Yashoda,” quips Malhotra. Anyone familiar with Lord Krishna in Indian mythology would highly appreciate the

analogy given by Malhotra. Imprisoned by her own brother Kansa to avert his end at the hands of his sister's child according to a prophesy, Devki gave birth to Krishna in a prison. In order to protect Krishna, his father Vasudev exchanged his son with Yashoda's daughter, Yogmaya. Krishna thus survived as the foster son of Yashoda, who lovingly raised Krishna and became immortal in history. In a nutshell, posterity recognizes the contribution of Yashoda as the mother of Krishna, the achiever of many remarkable victories during his lifetime. Malhotra's likening of Krishna to a creative art piece which belongs both to the writer/author and the translator is a beautiful analogy; moreover, both Devki, the poet and Yashoda, the translator leaves indelible imprints on Krishna and his life, i.e., the poem or work of creativity. The poet and the translator thus have clearly demarcated roles to play, independent of each other, yet mutually woven together. Thus, a poet is the mother who births poetry, and a translator is the mother who nurtures the poems into efflorescence in a different tongue.

The colourful world of possibilities that the act of translation opens is not immune to a fair share of its own travails and frequent disappointments. The translator's experience of translating Malhotra's poetry was indeed a rewarding experience in the end, but definitely a slippery and bumpy terrain all throughout. The universality of human emotions—in the case of these poems chosen, a mother's many misgivings about her daughter's rite of passage, and the warm but distant possibility of a truly secular world—were the tools which truly mitigated the challenges posed by attempting a translation of the religio-socio-cultural specificities associated with India for an English readership. For instance, the polytheism in "A Mother's Prayer" could not be tampered with, and both the translator and the readers are expected to find relief or release by navigating through the beliefs and the fears of a mother who wishes to see her daughter fly out of her nest, but is also afraid of the many 'firsts,' heartbreaks and betrayals that her daughter will encounter in the new world she is treading into. The real fate of secularism in "Exiled to the Moon" is another reality that helps the readers comprehend the maze of the many mythical-historical-religious figures that people the world of the poem. Malhotra's "Exiled to the Moon" is a beautiful blend of rituals and festivals, histories and religions, different stories of genesis and a futuristic outlook towards life. It is a scathing comment on how the earth, i.e., our world, is not ready for the communal harmony as a result of which the reincarnated Hussain is exiled to the moon, the only secular space outside the domain of gods in the poet's imaginary. However, the poem also voices hope for a better tomorrow, when the reincarnated Hussain can paint the canvas with vivid colours which do not merely stand for a particular sect or religion, but bright hues which come together to create a spectacular painting that can be viewed from the earth. Perhaps one day in the future, the world will usher into a brave, new one, when it will become safe for Hussain to come back to his birthplace.

The rhythm, tone, and tempo of the original Hindi poems of Malhotra were also impossible to be replicated in the English translations. The translator tried her best to come up with an altogether unique idiom in the translations, inspired by, but not limited to the original. So, there are variations in the length of the lines and the stanzas, changes in the usage of punctuation in the translated text, a few omissions, and many commissions. Additionally, the translator also encountered some untranslatable words, like *kshirasagar*, which have been retained in the translation to communicate the import of the reference in the original.

There were numerous instances where a sentiment conveyed quite economically in the original was supplanted by a profusion of phrases in the translation. For instance, "*ek aakaash*"

in the penultimate stanza of “A Mother’s Prayer” could only make sense as “an expanse, a sky, or the space” in the translation, while the sentence “*aur honth maun dhaarana kar le*” in the original has been expanded to “[a]nd her lips wear an absolute silence— / a tranquillity of sorts,” and another sentence from the original, “*aur uski ekaagrataa use ekaaki kar de,*” got a new lease of life as “[a]nd her complete engagement / repositions her in a solitary spot, in an unwavering alley.” Perhaps one could have challenged oneself further to stick to the economy of words in the translation too, but the expanded metaphors were truly more enriching choices to make.

Lastly, a lot of “translatorial license” (if there is such a phrase) has been exercised in the last stanza of “A Mother’s Prayer” to connect to the title of the poem and the prevailing theme of a journey, by employing phrases like “[b]on voyage” and “odyssey,” and in taking the liberty of the mother not just wishing her daughter luck with the enterprise, but also that her journey turns out to be both “[r]emarkable and memorable.”

Poet: Lina Malhotra; Translator: Komal Agarwal
A Mother's Prayer

Love invariably brings with it distress, desolation
 An odyssey,
 is inevitably marred by deterrents, stumbling blocks
 A companion always brings along memories
 some treasured, some only bitter aftertastes
 An uphill flight often leads to fatigue
 Whereas visions sometimes send reality down an abyss . . .

Dear daughter
 Is it right to bombard you
 with instructions and cautionary tales,
 at the very outset of your journey?

Don't fall in love – you will suffer heartbreaks,
 Don't go globetrotting – you might stumble upon thorny paths,
 Don't seek a companion – sour memories will leave you melancholic
 Don't grow wings – exhaustion might escalate into a blackout
 Do not tread on these forlorn, barbed thoroughfares,
 dampened as they are by tears, whimpers, wails,
 I fear
 That my misgivings might downplay your resolve
 Thus, I have shut my eyes in a solemn prayer
 and have summoned all conceivable gods and goddesses¹—

O god of impediments –
 Let it be known to you
 That she does not readily venture out for fear of defeat
 So be watchful of the hurdles
 and ascertain that they do not grow to be so monstrous
 that they eclipse her spirit of triumph.
 However,
 You may consider letting her face
 her fair share of impediments too,
 But only as much as she can tide over and feel triumphant, in the end!
 And this exercise: of having fallen, arisen and moving forward—
 Will indeed fuel her voyage
 filling her with a renewed zeal!

O god of ambitions –
 Her dreams are often very extravagant
 I solicit thee to colour her aspirations

¹ Indians worship as many as 33 million gods and deities, which would be incomprehensible, almost bewildering for a monotheistic readership. However, polytheism is the very fulcrum of the poem.

in discernible, tangible shades
So that, when she wakes up from her reverie,
The truth that comes into sight,
turns out to be her vision realized.

O lord of truth –
Your principles need not always be acerbic
And hence my prayer to you:
Do not malign the truths of her life
With the acrimony of grim reality.

O presiding deity of love—
Let me give you a friendly warning
That she is not an average supplicant
Who will feel satiated at the mere exchange of prosaic words
and gratuitous promises
She is the mistress of unparalleled genius
She will summon all her energies
to bestow her affection on her companion;
She will never let the mutability of time
serve as the touchstone of her passion
She can live out her entire life
in moments,
howsoever evanescent
and
Surge ahead in her life
Having already tasted the bliss
of pure, unadulterated love,
however short-lived!
So, please secure for her
A lover extraordinaire
Who communicates not by uttering lyrics and vows
But one who can effect a joyous union
through the diction of his eyes
Such is the type of man she will fall truly in love with!

O master of the waters of the earth –
There is a woman, hidden inside her, perhaps sleeping—
one who is destined to suffer
the pangs of separation from her lover.
When she is engulfed in the vortex of hollowness
In the situation of
her cursed lover turning his back on her
finally leaving her all alone, stranded,
Divert the flow of all your streams
That very instant, or else

Her tears will wash away
 Your *kshirasagar*.²
 And when you do dry up –
 Do not come after me, accusing me,
 of not having issued a forewarning.

O sovereign of punishments –
 You might have to make formidable decisions for her
 time and again.
 because she is predisposed to committing blunders,
 But let me alert you:
 Don't be too harsh with her
 Because your severe penalty
 might take the shape of a challenge for her
 If all you intend to achieve, in the end
 is to bring her, face-to-face,
 with her mistakes,
 Then, I suggest,
 Maintain your composure,
 A brief spell of tenderness, a static gaze,
 And a short pause will work just fine,
 For her to apprehend her shortcomings!

O god of wrath –
 You may please consider staying behind in this journey,
 And not walk alongside her;
 I do not want her to put to waste
 these priceless years of her life
 In trying to avenge herself upon someone.

O fulcrum of the earth! O mother!
 I might truly need your help
 When she exudes a long, weary sigh
 when she contemplates giving up
 and the path ahead appears hazy, leading to a *nowheresville* . . .
 Just when she retracts her steps
 listlessly, drained, debilitated
 yearning only to return,
 At that hour,
 Use your mystical potency to turn the directions around
 And for a few moments,
 Keep aside your tension and trepidation of the world,

² In the *Samudramanthana* episode of the *Puranas*, *Kshirasagara* is the 'Ocean of Milk' in Hindu cosmology. According to Hindu scriptures, the gods and demons worked churned the ocean for a millennium to release *amrita*, the nectar which when partaken of would offer the gift of immortality. Alternately, it has also been identified as the place where Lord Vishnu, along with his consort Lakshmi, reclines over Shesha Naga.

Put on my outward form,
Take her into your motherly embrace,
And wipe out months and years of weariness—
But that's not all;

 Let her pour her heart out to you
 Patiently listen to her narrative
 Regardless of its length.

And mind you!

Do not smirk at her foibles:

She will feel offended

 And will speak no further.

When you spot an expanse, a sky, or the space in her eyes

And her lips wear an absolute silence—

 a tranquillity of sorts,

And her complete engagement

 repositions her in a solitary spot, in an unwavering alley,

You may interpret it as a positive manifestation

Of her renewed determination to advance

 towards her holy grail

Then, you may just retreat silently—

I know that from this point on,

She will continue her forward march

Till she prevails and reaches the zenith!

Bon voyage

Dear daughter . . .

Now, without further ado,

Embark on your odyssey,

Your mother will pray that it turns out to be

Remarkable and memorable!

Exiled to the Moon

A lady is bathing
 in the public bath of Mohanjodaro
 Taking the first post-partum shower.
 Seated on the stairs, watching her,
 are
 Christ, Mohammad, Krishna, Moses and 33 million gods and goddesses³.
 Her visage resembles the countenance of goddess Durga
 Her womb is akin to that of mother Mary
 The radiance on her face is comparable to Gabriel's.
 She has birthed a child
 Whose face bears a resemblance to Adam's,
 whose eyes are similar to those of Aadam,
 and whose hands remind one of Manu.⁴
 You are a reincarnation of Hussain
 You have descended on the earth with countless hues in your eyes
 Only, this time, to be
 exiled to the moon.

You will manage to survive there
 Because these colours are your oxygen molecules
 And better still,
 You can create your own shades
 And, while you are there,
 you can render innumerable paintings.

Concealed below the snow there,
 are
 nation, time and religion.

One end of the rope, Hussain,
 is held firmly by god,
 And the other
 has been lowered down to the earth.
 The moon is beyond the reach of god
 And is,
 as yet,
 secular.

That brazen fellow

³ Indians are primarily polytheists. It is believed that the total number of gods and deities worshipped in different parts of the country is approximately 33 million.

⁴ The first man or the archetypal man in Hinduism. The Sanskrit and Hindi term for humans is *maanav*, a derivative of Manu, literally meaning, 'children of Manu.' Manu is also the legendary author of the *Manusmriti* (The Laws of Manu), an ancient and significant book of law code in Sanskrit.

Participates in the celebrations of Id,
 and indulges in the euphoria of Diwali⁵
 That buoyant lad descends on the day of Karva Chauth⁶
 for the women eagerly awaiting its appearance
 I fear that the attraction he holds for women
 might make you jealous . . .

Hussain
 The old lady on the moon
 Has extracted enormous lengths of threads
 Abundant enough for the weaver Kabir⁷
 To spin them into a yardage
 big enough for your canvas
 And all of us
 from the loft of the earth,
 will feast our eyes on
 your most spectacular painting.
 I hope you know
 that gazing at the moon
 is not merely an obligation for us
 but also
 our carefully guarded desire.

May your banishment to the moon
 Prove to be auspicious
 And delightful!

⁵ Diwali is a festival of lights and one of the most important festivals celebrated by Hindus primarily, but also Jains, Sikhs and some Buddhists. The festival is celebrated during the Hindu month of *Kartika* (between mid-October and mid-November). Diwali symbolizes the spiritual victory of good over evil, light over darkness and also knowledge over ignorance.

Diwali is celebrated to commemorate the day Lord Rama returned to Ayodhya, his kingdom, along with Sita and Lakshmana, his wife and his brother respectively, after having served 14 years of exile and defeating Ravana, the king of Lanka. The festival is widely associated with Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and prosperity, with many other regional traditions connecting the day to the more popular gods and goddesses like Rama and Sita, Vishnu, Krishna, Durga and Kali, Hanuman, and Ganesha, and the less popular ones like Yama and Yami, Kubera, Dhantantari and Vishvakarman. In a nutshell, over the years, Diwali has become a pan-India festival, the celebrations of which last anywhere between 3-5 days.

⁶ Karwa Chauth is a festival celebrated by Hindu women on the fourth day after a full moon in the month of *Kartika* (between mid-October and mid-November). On Karwa Chauth, married women, especially in Northern India, observe a fast beginning at sunrise until moonrise, primarily for the safety and longevity of their husbands.

⁷ Kabir was a fifteenth century Indian mystic poet and saint, whose poems influenced the Bhakti movement in Hinduism. His verses are found in Guru Granth Sahib, the scripture of the Sikhs. Born in the city of Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh, his early life was spent in a Muslim family, but he was strongly influenced by Ramananda, the Hindu *bhakti* leader who was also his *guru*/teacher.

Kabir is known for being critical of organized religions. He questioned meaningless practices prevalent in all religions, but especially those in Hinduism and Islam. During his lifetime, because of his radical ideas, he was threatened by both Hindus and Muslims alike, but after his death, both communities claimed that he belonged to them. Kabir's legacy survives and continues through the Kabir panth, a religious community that recognizes him as its founder.

Works Cited

Malhotra, Leena Rao. *Meri Yatra ka Zaroori Saman*. Bodhi Prakashan, 2012.

---. *Naav Dubne Se Nahin Darti*. Kitabghar Prakashan, 2016.

लीना मल्होत्रा

एक माँ की प्रार्थना

प्यार होगा तो दर्द भी होगा
सफ़र होगा
तो होंगी रुकावटें भी
साथी होगा तो यादें होंगी
कुछ मधुर तो कुछ कडवी बातें भी होंगी
उड़ान होगी तो थकान होगी
सपने होंगे तो सच से दूरियां होंगी ;

मेरी बेटी
तुम्हारे नए सफ़र के शुरुआत में
क्या शिक्षा दूं तुम्हें --

प्यार मत करना - दर्द मिलेगा ,
सफ़र मत करना - कांटे होंगे ,
साथी मत चुनना - कडवी यादें दुःख देंगी
उड़ान मत भरना - थक जाओगी
इस दर्द से कांटों से आसुओं से भीगे रास्ते मत चुनना ,
मेरे ये डर कहीं तुम्हारे संकल्प को छोटा न कर दें
इसलिए
प्रार्थना में मैंने आखें मूँद ली हैं
और उन तैंतीस करोड़ देवी देवताओं का आह्वान किया है -

हे बाधाओं के देवता -
मैं तुम्हें बता दूँ
कि वह बहुत से खेल इसलिए नहीं खेलती के हारने से डरती है
तुम ध्यान रखना कि
कोई बाधा इतनी बड़ी न हो
जो उसके जीतने के हौसले को पस्त कर दे /
तुम उसे सिर्फ इतनी ही मुसीबतें देना
जिन्हें पार करके
वह विजयी महसूस करे
और

उसकी यह उपलब्धि

उसके सफ़र में एक नया उत्साह भर दे.

हे सपनों के देवता -

वह बहुत महंगे सपने देखती है

उसके सपनों में तुम सच्चाई का रंग

भरते रहना

ताकि

जब वह अपने सपनों की नींद से जगे तो

सच उसे सपने जैसा ही लगे.

हे सच्चाई के देवता -

हर सच का कड़वा होना ज़रूरी नहीं है

इसलिए मेरी प्रार्थना स्वीकार करना

उसके जीवन के सच में

कड़वाहट मत घोलना.

हे प्रेम के देवता -

मैं तुम्हें आगाह कर दूँ

कि

वह तुम्हारे साधारण साधकों की तरह नहीं है

जो लफ़्जों के आदान प्रदान के प्रेम से संतुष्ट हो जाए

वह असाधारण प्रतिभाओं की स्वामिनी है

वह जिसे चाहेगी दूट कर चाहेगी ;

और समय का मापदंड उसके प्रेम की कसौटी कभी नहीं हो सकता

पल दो पल में

वह पूरी उम्र जीने की क्षमता रखती है

और

चार कदम का साथ काफी है

उसकी तमाम उम्र के सफ़र के लिए ;

इसलिए

उसके लिए

अपने लोक के

सबसे असाधारण प्रेमी को बचा कर रखना

जो लफ़्जों में नहीं

बल्कि अपनी नज़रों से लग्न मन्त्र कहने की क्षमता रखता हो

और

जो उसके दूट के चाहने के लायक हो;

हे जल के स्वामी -

उसके भीतर एक विरहिणी छिपी सो रही है

जब रिक्तता उसके जीवन को घेर ले

और

वह अभिशप्त प्रेमी जिसे उसे धोखा देने का श्राप मिला है

जब उसे अकेला छोड़ दे

उस घडी

तुम अपने जल का सारा प्रवाह मोड़ लेना

वर्ना तुम्हारा क्षीर सागर

उसके आंसुओं में बह जाएगा

और तुम खाली पड़े रहोगे -

बाद में मत कहना कि मैंने तुम्हे बताया नहीं

हे दंड के अधिपति -

तुम्हे शायद

कई कई बार

उसके लिए निर्णय लेना पड़े ;

क्योंकि वह काफी बार गलती करती है

लेकिन मैं तुम्हे चेता दूँ कि बहुत कठोर मत बने रहना

क्योंकि तुम्हारा कोई भी कठोर दंड

उसके लिए एक चुनौती ही बन जायेगा

तुम्हारे दंड कि सार्थकता

अगर इसी में है

कि

उसे

उसकी गलती का अहसास हो तो

तो थोड़े कोमल बने रहना

एक मौन दृष्टि

और

एक पल का विराम काफी है

उसे उसकी गलती का बोध कराने के लिए ।

हे घृणा के देवता -

तुम तो छूट जाना

पीछे रह जाना

इस सफ़र में उसके साथ मत जाना
मैं नहीं चाहती
कि किसी से बदला लेने कि खातिर
वह
अपने जीवन के कीमती वर्ष नष्ट कर दे

हे जगत कि अधिष्ठानी माता
तुम्हारी ज़रूरत मुझे उस समय पड़ेगी
जब वह थकने लगे
और उसे लगने लगे कि यह रास्ता अब कभी खत्म नहीं होगा
उसके कदम जब वापसी की राह पर मुड़ जाएँ
और वह थक कर लौट आना चाहे

उस समय
तुम अपनी जादुई शक्तियों से
दिशाओं को विपरीत कर देना
और
अपने सारे जगत की चिंता फ़िक्र छोड़कर
मेरा रूप धारण कर लेना
और उसे अपने आँचल में दुबका कर
उसकी सारी थकान सोख लेना
और बस इतना ही नहीं
उसकी पूरी कहानी सुनना
चाहे वह कितनी ही लम्बी क्यों न हो
और हॉ !

उसकी गलतियों पर मुस्कराना
मत वरना वह बुरा माँ जायेगी
और
तुम्हे
कुछ नहीं बताएगी
जब उसकी आँखों में तुम्हे एक आकाश दिखने लगे
और होंठ मौन धारण कर लें
और उसकी एकाग्रता उसे एकाकी कर दे
तब तुम समझ जाना

कि
वह लक्ष्य में तल्लीन होकर चलने के लिए तत्पर है
तब
तुम चुप चाप चली आना

मैं जानती हूँ कि वह

अब

तब तक चलेगी जब तक उसकी मंजिल उसे मिल नहीं जाती

जाओ बेटी

अब तुम अपना सफ़र प्रारंभ कर सकती हो

तुम्हारी

यात्रा शुभ हो

मंगलमय हो

॥ चाँद पर निर्वासन ॥

मोहनजोदड़ो के सार्वजनिक स्नानागार में एक स्त्री स्नान कर रही है

प्रसव के बाद का प्रथम स्नान

सीढ़ियों पर बैठ कर देख रहे हैं ईसा, मुहम्मद, कृष्ण, मूसा और ३३ करोड़ देवी देवता

उसका चेहरा दुर्गा से मिलता है

कोख मरियम से

उसके चेहरे का नूर जिब्राइल जैसा है

उसने जन्म दिया है एक बच्चे को

जिसका चेहरा एडम जैसा, आँखे आदम जैसी, और हाथ मनु जैसे हैं

यह तुम्हारा पुनर्जन्म है हुसैन

तुम आँखों में अनगिनत रंग लिए उतरे हो इस धरती पर

इस बार निर्वासित कर दिए जाने के लिए

चाँद पर

तुम वहाँ जी लोगे

क्योंकि रंग ही तो तुम्हारी आक्सीजन है

और तुम अपने रंगों का निर्माण खुद कर सकते हो

वहाँ बैठे तुम कैसे भी चित्र बना सकते हो

वहाँ की बर्फ के नीचे दबे हैं अभी देश काल और धर्म

रस्सी का एक सिरा ईश्वर के हाथ में है हुसैन

और दूसरा धरती पर गिरता है

अभी चाँद ईश्वर कि पहुँच से मुक्त है

और अभी तक धर्मनिरपेक्ष है

वह दीठौला /

ईद में शामिल, दीवाली में नदारद

वह मनचला करवा चौथ पर उतरता है हर स्त्री इंतज़ार में
सुंदरियों पर उसकी आसक्ति तुम्हारी ईर्ष्या का कारण न बन जाए कहीं ...

हुसैन

चाँद पर बैठी बुढ़िया ने इतना कपड़ा कात दिया है

कि कबीर जुलाहा

बनाएगा उससे कपड़ा तुम्हारे कैनवास के लिए

और धरती की इस दीर्घा से हम देखेंगे तुम्हारा सबसे शानदार चित्र

और तुम तो जानते हो चाँद को देखना सिर्फ़ हमारी मज़बूरी नहीं चाहत भी है

तुम्हारा चाँद पर निर्वासन

शुभ हो !

मंगल हो !

- लीना मल्होत्रा