

I Have Come To See You, Mother

I am at the Dal Lake shore,
Wanting to put a garland round your neck,
I have come to see you, Mother,
Friends beseeched me not to visit you,
As there were many militants hiding in your folds,
Waiting to harm visitors, to be on the headlines,
To bring attention to their cause,
To pry justice from the “occupying” country.
Kasheer, the footprint of my life,
The cradle of my being,
Here I formed the first atoms of my consciousness,
Dreamt the first unpretentious dream,
Had the first rounds of my battles with the world,
Suffered the first heartbreak.

But I could not care less for the blood-drenched anarchists,
Who want to turn Kasheer into a theocracy,
Catering essentially to one faith,
But being unfaithful to democracy,
They have written their will across the stars,
But here on earth they fight dirty in the trenches,
I could not but come to see you Mother,
It is beyond politics, fear, and rationality.

There are two Kasheers:
One in the mountains, meadows, and lakes,
The other in the cities,
towns, and villages where people live,
There are two faiths that are available here:
One preaches peace, beauty, and equality,
The other: war, hatred, and insanity.
It is a duel between God and man,
Who will win any fool can answer.

I am not interested in man's follies and lust,

I want to touch the corner of time,
I want to be an element of universe,
I love not man less,
But I trust nature more,
My umbilical cord with Maej Kasheer,
Pulls me to her, unmindful of fear and sneer.

I went to Shalimar, Nishat, and Chashma Shahi,
I skimmed on Dal Lake endlessly,
And saw fish and lotuses pink and yellow,
And their round green shawls,
They greeted me with pregnant silences,
They wanted to say a lot to me but the lack of privacy hindered.

In Pahalgam there is a thin veil of a stream,
Streaming vigorously in spite of the boulders trying to impede it,
Liddar has frothed and frolicked for a thousand years,
Defying the authority and foolishness of man,
The ring of the mountains with choreographed undulations
Circle Liddar with easy majesty,
The utterly graceful pine trees dot them in an ethereal needlepoint design,
Unmindful of the flow of time.

Have you seen the different moods of Dal Lake:
Scintillating, serene, sublime, sad, saucy,
We think we understand her but the foolishness of that claim
Is apparent to anyone knowing even a little,
Man makes big of his understanding and achievements,
Talents and unquestioned authority,
But gods laugh at his littleness and silliness,
And do not know where to begin removing the veil of ignorance over him.

In Zethyar I apologized to Shesta Devi for coming to her for the first time,
She eyed me with a compelling serenity that sent shivers down my spine,
I was reminded of my sinful past and irresolute stance to do better in future,
I lingered in the compound yearning to have a spiritual outlook,
But my reverie was broken by the thought that even sinners can find life valuable,
If they are truthful, work hard, and keep their mouth shut.

The meadow of Gulmarg looks to be a transition to something heavenly,
What has man done to embellish it, nothing, but scattered a cluster of hotels?
The central part of Gulmarg,
its face, is so natural that it lacks any worldly sophistication,
An incredible opportunity to adorn it has been squandered,
Under the starry-skies of Gulmarg one feels that God is eavesdropping,
Happiness is a worldly concept,
Pine-suffused mountains of Gulmarg create an aura beyond happiness.

Nowhere in the mist over Dal Lake is written Azadi,
As Dal Lake is eternally free, no one can imprison it,
Without inner freedom there can be no outer freedom,
Freedom is a state of mind, not a political contract or a religious ecstasy,
God is freedom, to be contemplated, meditated on,
and lived,
Man was born free but politics and organized religions have chained him,
Let's break these chains, we have nothing to lose but our sorrows.

In the folds of Kashmir mountains resides the solemnity of gods,
In the swirls of its breezes plays the music of the universe,
Kashmir is the eternal enigmatic smile of God,
Disturbed now by some selfish and rude outsiders and insiders,
A dagger thrust in the grand design,
My tears flow to wash its wounds.

Today I have snuffed out all my fears,
Trampled all the taboos,
Discarded all the customs,
Broken all the worldly chains,
I have come to see Kasheer, my Mother.

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