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Three Poems

By Raj Sharma

Autumn Tones

Clogged veins
Choking lungs
tooth decay

frequent visits
to orthopaedists
for shaky knees,

aching joints.
Shivery, wakeful
late fall nights

while memory plays
strange tricks.
Yet fires

keep smouldering
under fragile
rib-cage

in the drying sap.
Let these withered
arms hold you

still, my love
and see
twilight stars

in your eyes
as birdsong
rivers thru

the flickering maples
of a dying day.

The Seed

Seed, die not
though barren
is this earth;

cleave
though
the crust

crack and crumble

the iron frost
of wintry nights

carve out a path
into flowing
streams of spring

blossom forth
into shy buds
of maple

the buoyant
shoots
of elm and oak.

On Havelock Island (India)

Bleached
coral shores

silky, sleek
rainbow runners,
blue-gold snappers,

gliding across
shallow reef
as westerly

sun
cascades
down upon

silent beach.
And you
unfold

petal by petal
amidst
spraying surf.

Mapping
magic geography
I slide down

a wet
valley.
Beaked parrot-fish

dart by
under thick-rooted
mangroves,

then all is forgotten:

rocking
overhead palms,

shattered silver
of moon
on indigo seas

just you remain
steering us
towards stars.

A retired professor of English, **Raj Sharma** has worked at universities in India (DA University, Indore), Iraq (University of Basra, Basra) and US (University of Florida, Gainesville). Publications include thirty poems appearing in literary magazines like *Grey Sparrow*, *Folly*, *JD Review*, *Exercise Bowler*, *The Fine Line*, *Ascent Aspirations*. A chapbook of some poems is being published by Red Ochre LiT Press. Short stories have been published in the *Sun Oasis* and *SNReview*. In addition, a collection of short stories, *In My Arms* has also been published. He also has published more than a hundred articles on Indian tourism and culture.

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