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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.

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## **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:

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rocking  
overhead palms,

shattered silver  
of moon  
on indigo seas

just you remain  
steering us  
towards stars.

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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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