



Three Poems

by Raj Sharma

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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 and Chair of English Studies at DA University in Indore (India), **Raj Sharma** has also worked for four years at University of Basra in Iraq and at University of Florida for a semester. His field of research was modern American Drama (O'Neill). Publications include more than 100 articles on Indian culture and tourism in India's leading papers and magazines. Twenty stories and many poems and translations have also appeared in them. A collection of short stories, *In My Arms* (2000) was published by Writers Workshop, Calcutta. In addition, 40 poems and stories have appeared in such American literary magazines as *Grey Sparrow*, *Folly*, *South Jersey Underground*, *The Fine Line*, *JD Review*, *Exercise Bowler*, *SNReview*, *Sun Oases*, *Ascent Aspirations*. A chapbook of some of my poems was published in March 2013 by Red Ochre Press.

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