

Free Verse Poem

BEING HUMAN – THE SHRINKING HEART AND THE WANING HUMANITY

Suba Rathi Rajagopal*

I walk along the road side market.
How appealing they are!
You may have a voice “Not all”.
Of course!
But, look here, this man,
The man who wrapped up the towel
With unknown knots on his head,
Whose eye balls are in motion consistently,
To the right now looking at his customer,
The lady whose hands play to
Pick the ladies finger by
Breaking its bottom for thirteen minutes.
He says nothing.
Still wears a sweet smile,
Answering “mmmm...mmm”
To her question “Are they really fresh?”

Striding four pace away,
There the hooked man,
Sitting in a shade of little hope
To sell the basket of ball pens.
The fruit seller, on the opposite side,

To my right, covers his fruits
To save it from mosquitoes kissing.
The lady with coolers on her head
Passes him a while
Hits a basket of fruit;
He and I hurry to pick it, he shouts in vain,
“She could have at least turned back, a sign of sorry”.
People act like they are blindfolded.
Nobody really bothers us in this
Classy world except some pity looks.

The man with the decent tucked
White shirt asks him the price of the fallen apples.
The seller says, “It is 120/kg sir. It is fresh sir.”
“No. I can give you 180 for 2kg apples”,
Says the man dabbing his brow point.
The seller takes the polybag gazing me in despair.
The decent dressed man,
Giving the card to the seller to swipe it.
Laughing at his digitalized
Brain, the seller says,
“Sir, please get the change for
Two hundred rupees,
Or then, leave the apples here”.

Turning to the other side where
A lady barks at the man to bargain.

I cross her over,
Those words drip into my ears,
“No, No, I can’t take it besides this rate!”
She bargains the onion for which the seller will get five rupees profit.

Waning Humanity!
We pick the bar coded products in the malls and bazars,
Without reading its back and front covers,
Not concerned
About its manufactured and expired dates
To buy the franchised branded
Products which live in the AC room 24/7.
If you get confused about what to buy,
You can immediately hear, this “How can I help you mam?”
With the artificial smile,
The working men and women buzz around you like an
Advertisement of Colgate.

Once everything is done,
The trollies are filling with CGSTs and SGSTs heavily.
We stand in a queue to pay the bill
Where our mind will urge to search one more last product
While the billing counter is playing with the smart cards.
We cannot bargain here.
We cannot yell at them. Isn’t it classy?
You may now hit with a question,
“Why do we bargain as they are providing offers and bonus cards?”

If you consider it an offer, you are a sophisticated fool.
The more you pay the more they steal.
Everything becomes mechanical here.
And we call it as Classy.
People do not have time to look at each other's face and smile.
We are here.
In this busy growing world
Where we think we live whereas we merely EXIST.
Yes. Virtually the hearts are shrunken!

But,
When I walk along the roadside market.
The fat lady calls in every people
Who walks like they don't hear her thunder voice,
To see her sandal shop varieties.
A kid holding her apple on the one hand,
Holding tightly her mother's hand too on the other,
Passing the lady,
Leaves the sweetest smile in a glimpse towards this lady
Whose voice mixed with a little smile now!
A smile that makes her day up!
That can connect you and me!

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