

Winter's Rage

Aarif Mushtaq

O' Winter thou art brute & cruel,
Thy rage make one's hearth devoid fuel.
Thou art tyrant to birds & break twigs,
You engulf whole land beneath thy wings.
People do oft quiver & shiver in cold,
Be it men, women, young, small or old.
People sip "Nuen Chai", warm themselves, prefer to remain indoors,
Children turn quarrelsome, insist to play out on freezing courtyard floors.
In Kashmir "Kangris" are welcomed with open heart,
"Yezbund" is burnt in them during festivity & nuptial knot.
"Yech" loiters shouting in courtyards, roads & lanes,
Taps freeze & icicles hang on the window panes.
Bears lay hibernating amid upper mountain holes,
Women are seen collecting brushwood & coals.
The Sun becomes hazy, wears a white shroud,
As if completely dead & buried under a cloud.
The Stars too grumble about biting cold,
They wish their grief be narrated & told.
Water in brooks, streams, rivers & lakes become dry,
Snow falls in abundance on plains & mountains high.
Branches turn bare, trees become dead,
Nature wears a dark canopy, none there to fed.

Leaves become dead, scatter beneath the trees,
Denizens exasperate amid chilling winter breeze.
Jasmines, Lilies, Marigolds lay stiffened in flower bed,
Lovers turn forlorn none there to wed.
Winter strangulates Nightingale's joyful song of summer,
Sweet melodies & chirping of birds become a cacophonous murmur.
Lovers lay fettered & confined within four walls,
For they yearn to sing ballads betwixt waterfalls.

Glossary

“Nuen Chai”:-It is a form of salt tea mostly cherished in Kashmir.

“Kangri”:-A traditional Kashmiri firepot used by people to warm themselves.

“Yezbund”:-It is a type of incense burnt during marriages in Kashmir as a sign of good omen.

“Yech”:-A kind of animal, who roams barking with the arrival of winter season in Kashmir.

About the Author

Aarif Mushtaq hails from Anantnag district of South Kashmir. He holds Masters in English from Department of English, Islamic University of Science & Technology Awantipora Kashmir. He is a freelance writer & writes on varied themes & topics. He currently serves as Lecturer English on academic arrangement in School Education Department, Government of J&K.