

Great Plains

I filter my narrative
To justify life in being
Lilac clouds
Over the cornfields
Of southern Illinois
Storms concocting on one side
Bright sun on the other
Driving into the heartland
On a mission
From the claims adjuster
I reveled in the clarity
That the slant
Of late day light engendered
Your voice on the phone
I am not alone
I have meditated everyday
In some way
For 45 years
So what do I know now?
We are mired here
In our density
And thus attired
Our feet encased
In cinder blocks
Also an incipient flame
Time bleeds wild roses
Time is always on time
It dims and discloses
It will be dark when I arrive
Anything can happen now
Nothing has supplanted
The last update
I am most alive.

No No

No cookie dough hat no service
No shoes no chaser
No largesse no egress
No dragonfly soul no raspberry tent sartorial kit
No sleepwalking armadillos
No spectral analysis of azure gum
No threatening wait staff with lilac spray paint
No pentatonic sparklers
No aggressive finger stirring or droplet flicking
 while intoning a Donald Duck recitation
 of D.H. Lawrence's Ship of Death full register
No munchy munchy no yum yum
No gravy train whistle stops
No dimensional hourglass gazing
No amanuensis entrè sharing
No humvee liturgies
No shirt no life
No alluvial gold no emerald slurpees
No modern art mural making with
 macaroni bazooka blasts
No gratuitous seeing and being seen
No ampere amnesty
No mutant doggie bags
No tellurian water skis
No using menu to name your band
 (Cake Trout, The Coffee and Creams, Slaw,
 Bobby Bagel and the Schmeers...)
No doing inside what you wouldn't do outside
No bring your own greasy grass wine
No gluten free wannabes
No more no no poems.

Before

Before the overlords towed the moon
Into synchronous orbit
Before its coppery clang augured
An eerie tonality
Before the fragrant fields of arcadia
Glistened with morning dew
Before ancillary dimensions
Sidestepped fixed ratios
Before the anvils of the ancestors
Received the kiss of flame
Before the sages became antennas
For the encapsulated names
Before this very very moment
I parse the singularity of Self
Vernal equinox of diametric
Diamond doors
Yankee calypso vector victor
Penumbra popcorn clarity capillary
Renegade solemnity
It is the flowering season
Rotunda of the natural world
Emotional overlay of human history
Swept by Gobi sands
Frequency is a pronoun
Emperor is a clown

To Be

To be human
In this age of anxiety
To inhabit a body
To be divided
To be congruent
To be available
To be made malleable
By circumstance
To be invested
In the blue air
Of all that contains us
Move my hand
Delineate my nomenclature
Oversee my transition
To your volition
Talk to me through me
Guide me
To an oasis of stars
Where I deconstruct
The notion
That the system of the world
Is purely mechanical
Newton knew
That powerful energies
Inform our lives
And inverse gravity
Draws us inexorably
To the heart of God.

Of

A word from above

Conflating thusly

Disparate things

Bad bugs unite

The cockroaches

Of coriander

Fire ants

Of lucidity

When you cancelled

San Francisco

The airlines

Of covetousness

Still took 200

Did posterity record the

First pronouncements

On the abacus

Of the abstract

The angry wasps

Of the storm?

The sloths of dissension?

My secret

I am an "of" addict

Hard pressed

To write a poem

In unemployment

Of this stratagem

The more unrelated the better

cont'd

Such as
The orange gum
Of your predisposition
Or the green algorithms
Of night
I can do this all day
I can't and won't stop
No of's anonymous for me
Need I remind
Lurking interventionists
To refer to
The airy almanac of a dove:
This supreme
Amalgamator of a word
Rhymes with love.

Anthony Bourdain Take 1

The world wonders why
You hung yourself out to dry
You had an 11 yr. old daughter
And still lead yourself to slaughter

You crossed border after border
From disorder to disorder
Victim sans perpetrator
Is that the oath we swore?

I know the dominos of dark decisions
Enable a loose logic of derision
Irrational numbers multiply
And funnel down to a sigh

Substances siphon energy
And taint our sensibility
You chose option zero
And suddenly you're a hero?

Karma adjudicates your final home
Your lacrimose lawyers:
Gravel, Shale, and Loam!

As the radio revealed
Your fatal indelicacy
A hawk ate a snake
High in a tree

Ruling: Sedition to Self, first degree
Sentence: Eternity say the runes
Of cold black suns
And blood red moons
Licking the devil's onions.

Anthony Bourdain Take 2

God do you even care
That some intrepid souls accept your dare
And let their light flare out
To make their desperate signal count?

Could it be a clue
That a lot has changed
Since we debuted?

At our inception we didn't vote
For mandates we've since learned by rote
Time and space were gerrymandered
There seems to be a double standard.

If the NFL can update rules
Why treat us like karma mules
Are there unalienable rights
Or must we remain incurious and contrite?

Could it be that this peripatetic chef
With a flourish like a treble clef
Went out proud, unbent
To make an indelible statement?

Lately you seem distracted
Your light a bit diffracted
Maybe you've hit the skids
Trying to raise us unruly kids.

We know that earth was conceived of as a school
And he may have broken a cardinal rule
But please slice and dice him some merciful slack
And welcome this kitchen wizard back.

BIO

Ravi Singh studied with Ted Berrigan in Chicago 1974/75. He was editor of Out There Magazine. He's been published in Oink, Telephone, The World, Chicago Review, New Delta Review and many others. He's been a Kundalini Yoga Teacher for 35+ years.