

## An Ode to Instinct

Blasts and bombs and bursts, ugliness and cruelty and worse  
Charred bodies and broken spirits, each grave holds captive multiple souls  
Taste of death, the flavor of pain – Oh! All hope has been slain  
Gone are the days when nature oozed with the sounds of melodious springs  
Untamed forests, magical valleys, towering mountains were the kings,  
Lush green landscapes: haven for both the man and the beast  
Clear blue skies and sparkling oceans hid treasures beyond and beneath-  
Eagles dashed and hoppers jumped  
under the sheath of water and of grass,  
they pounced and danced and whirled and pranced, fresh air they could breathe  
Free spirited they ruled the earth: the hunter and the beast  
Death was certain and pain was reality  
Following life was mortality  
Alas! All is gone and now what remains is a shadow of me

The skies hunched with iron birds that mar the pristine charm  
Oceans burdened with metal machines, tainting the vast expanse  
What once breathed over the land now resurrects from within  
Like black omen, it swallows all that dares to breathe  
Choking and smothering senses, to demons life bequeathed  
Dim cataract ridden sight estranged to the North Star  
Eardrums shattered by blaring lies and whispered false truths  
Peace, justice and fair play are flavours, an invalid palette can taste no more  
the raw pulsating smell of life: wild galloping mustangs of passion leashed  
Harvests of moldy existence abandoned- regrets of life reaped  
all dampened and quashed by the blast of cold cold air

Souls chaffed by worries and despair  
yearn for balm of love and care  
Alas! All is gone and now what remains is a shadow of me

A scary place is this 21<sup>st</sup> century,  
where children have been robbed of their toys  
sand castles and harmless marbles are sports of eras gone by  
virtual spaces and mindless faces have killed all the joy  
hide and seek and hop scotch fun  
skipping and chasing enjoying the sun – lost forever  
screens and windows and portals clouded by manufactured reality  
vision limited to sight; prisoners to technology  
from the touch screen to the ATM machine  
to the swipe of a card, to all the glimmer and sheen  
Instant gratification like instant coffee is a hot commodity now  
Hunger remains hungry; thirst just slithers around in your mouth  
More is not enough, Oh! And thirst has changed its creed  
Gluttony and lust are served on platters of naked greed  
Alas! All is gone and now what remains is a shadow of me

Fighting nature making clones, waging wars whilst Mother Nature groans  
Equilibrium defenestrated, all balance gone  
Like poison ivy that spreads its claws, a strange competition has taken the floor  
Epidemics and pandemics have now joined hands;  
relishing the banquets of nauseating valor  
HIV and Ebola feast on human candor  
whilst senility is cured just to raise senseless banter

And nature just sighs, her hands tied  
Watching in horror the urea, the drugs the steroid  
Choking with vaccine that is injected in her, she cries in pain and writhes in displeasure  
A panacea is discovered - or this is what they think, anti-aging, life sustaining treasure  
The balance is tipped do not they see – dust to dust, if not now then at eighty  
At birth is passed the death decree  
Why fight what is surely to be- but they don't see  
Alas! All is gone and now what remains is a shadow of me

Who am I, do you not know me?  
I am grounded in reality  
I am the fear that makes the prey lead the way to safety  
I am the dread of the predator that doesn't want to die hungry  
Instinct I am of holding on to the natural and the known  
Of a bird putting a nest together, a child trusting his mom forever  
Also I am in the rage of a lion and the fury of a man wronged  
The fluttering of a caged bird and the bleeding wrists of a prisoner bound  
To moan and grieve over lives lost and buried dreams  
The lament of a lover or the wail of a widow  
Find me in all of this- this is who I am -this is me  
This is me!  
But how can you, for I am lost and all that remains is a shadow of me.