

# Volume 3

## The Dream

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[Red Seal]



Poetry by Harry Jivenmukta

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## **Dedication**

**For those that cannot sleep**



When I woke up in that guest house  
Just outside Kangra\*  
And looked out into the mist  
Looking for you,  
Years after we had been here last,  
You were not there.

I wondered where  
You might be now,  
With that infectious half smile  
And red painted nails.

All I could think of were  
Those times  
When we enveloped each other  
And giggled at the lyrics  
Of some Bollywood  
1950's song.

\* Kangra - a town in the Himalayas





Rattling bangles, allowed  
Only in the room  
But not at the shrine.  
Would anyone believe me  
If I told them how you were  
In the twilight?  
Not only rattling bangles  
But stamping anklets  
and all that laughter  
Aimed at the mountains.

Even right up there,  
At the snow line  
There must have been a Buddhist  
Who heard it all,  
Carried on the breeze.

What must he have thought of  
All that irreverence?

Poking fingers  
Into a plate of cakes,  
Looking for freshness, and nuts.

I told you they were  
From the German bakery,  
The best for 100 kilometres.

You applied bright red lipstick  
Before you took the first bite  
Just to provoke me.

And licked cream off  
Seductively before  
Offering me some.

We thought we should kiss  
To make sure we both had  
The same taste of walnut cake.





I wanted to know why  
A Buddhist statue couldn't  
Wear lipstick, or for that matter  
Make-up.

You had big eyes  
Forbidding me from even thinking  
Such blasphemy.  
I love your dramatics.

Wearing a headscarf in temples  
As if you were always  
So good.  
Even then you didn't look innocent.

Anyway, God knows, and I  
Know all about you.  
If you could, I bet  
You would dance for Krishna.



Let's cover the statue  
You said,  
Because it was probably  
A good idea.

I reminded you of all the  
Statues sculpted into the walls  
Of Hindu temples.  
But you were adamant.

So we lit incense sticks as well,  
Sandalwood and jasmine  
And I walked you around  
The room, seven times.

Then we ate lemon cakes  
With icing on top.  
And to drink, goat's milk  
Again, from the German bakery.



The sun streamed in  
And the purdah of the mountains  
Was lifted for all to see  
Their grandeur.

Your hand was so small  
In mine considering  
That the mountains  
Were so big.

But your smile still melted  
Everything around it.  
We were so small  
In the bigness of nature.

You whispered to me  
Brittle words, soft and special  
That mean so much.  
So much in so little.



We were bound to each other  
Inevitably  
Amongst silky scarves  
Multi coloured.

Will we ever leave?  
You asked me.  
I said: Never!  
This is my spiritual home.

I placed the whole  
Mountain range  
In your heart centre.  
That is forever, I said.

Your heart was beating fast  
As I held you tight  
In the street.  
Really? you asked.





The necklace in the shop,  
You pointed with your eyes.  
I said wear it and you  
Did, all day long.

Do you want to sleep  
With me or the Buddha  
I asked?  
Both of you.

With the mists gone  
The day was warm  
But the night was freezing  
Tighter, I held you.

Who can hear the wolves?  
Is that a spirit of the mountains  
Scratching on the window?  
Or the frost forming?



I told you a story about  
The lost soul of a young man  
Pining for a lover  
Lost in the winter snow.

Listen very hard,  
I told you  
Can you hear his yearnings?  
You listened, holding your breath.

When the snow melted,  
I said, she emerged, a Devi,  
And she called his name  
And he was ecstatic.

Together they roam the high passes  
Uniting lost lovers  
And saving the magical words  
Spoken, of love.

Crunchy bread

With butter and cheese.

A breakfast to write home about.

So I wrote a poem for you.

And what will you give me

In return, I asked?

Your face contorted in thought,

Nose and forehead wrinkling.

You gave me a kiss

But I said I could have

one of those anytime.

So you kissed me again.

Bread and kisses consumed

It was time for pondering

The rest of the day.

We sat on the balcony.





Packing up suitcases

Three for you

One for me

And some song DVDs.

Make sure the Himalayas are

Safely packed in your heart centre

I reminded you.

Yes, they are there.

The ponies we had booked

Three days ago

Arrived, suitably late.

No time now, we are packed.

What will you take

In your heart centre, you asked?

Your perfume, your wiggly nose,

Your creased forehead, and cake.

Never say goodbye.  
It is too final.  
Dosvedanya is Russian.  
'We will meet again'.

The taxi driver looked  
Through his mirror  
Keeping an eye on us.  
I thought he was very diligent.

Mountains left behind,  
Now plains, hot, and then  
racing on through  
To Delhi.

No one knew here  
What it had been like.  
I squeezed your hand  
'Hold on to the dreams'.

