

## The Rickety Red Bus

By Kanchan Chatterjee

the rickety red bus  
(the same one i used to ride during the 70's)  
starts, coughs

the fifty-something driver puts it on first  
and it rolls  
slowly, on the tarmac

in my backseat two guys  
in their mid-twenties starts to talk  
about 'development'

it's noon,  
early feb. and the air is warm  
already

someone mumbles  
about the impending water shortage

the red eyed driver  
(he'd already taken his dose of cheap alcohol)  
spits out  
the tobacco and swears at the  
passing truck

the newlywed groom  
shows something to his bride

they giggle  
one more time. . .

## Chutu Palu - At the Bend

By Kanchan Chatterjee

more hills, a car  
passes by  
us  
dim  
sun  
more trees, here it's slow  
moving  
everything, feels  
good  
3 hours till  
i'll  
be near  
canary hill, open cast

mines, cycle load of  
coal, in gunny bags, on the way  
to Ranchi  
nobody bothers  
about them  
or the half-cut  
hill

by which a new road  
is being  
laid, they say  
development, damn  
those trees  
we don't see  
any more vultures  
here

the kid in the front seat  
starts another game in his cellphone  
(or whatever)  
never looks out the moving window, misses

# Writing Raw

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a brilliant  
waterfall

her mom isn't happy  
she says too much trees  
around, her hubby with an i-pad nods  
absentmindedly

they yawn  
and wait. . .

## Untitled

By Kanchan Chatterjee

This time it was different.  
The shops are all gone.  
They have cleaned up the place after the blast.  
I had to deposit my cellphone at the entrance and they charged 100 Rupees for  
my dilapidated camera.  
The temple was crowded and people were chanting sutras or whatever, circling  
around the Tree, offering flowers.  
Everything was so sombre, businesslike.  
Maybe I was off . . . whatever. . .this time it didn't click with me.  
But I'll come back. Later.  
looking at Buddha. . .  
his earlobes  
too long

## Strawberry

By Kanchan Chatterjee

Strawberry, it's sunny and the wind is cool + I've  
checked the air pressure, filled the gas tank,  
taken one extra pair of  
woolen gloves for you  
Strawberry  
let's go to the hills. . .  
maybe tomorrow you will  
have a different breath  
you will worry  
about your nails or eyelashes  
you might see a different moon  
and say  
I don't know you!

## Gunnu

By Kanchan Chatterjee

11 PM. It's a cool January night. The lights in the nearby park are dim, desolate. Someone is singing a 'Nagpuria' song down the road.

His drunk voice drifts away. . .

After a while a convoy of trucks goes past, over the bridge, towards the industrial area.

I get up, open the door, and lit up one.

The last three years has been slow and taciturn.  
I inhale.

From the terrace I can see Gunnu's sleeping face.  
He'll be 13 soon.  
He will protest the crew cut.  
His voice will break.  
He will come to know... he'll explore things, people. . .

I looked at his bicycle at the corner.

Far down into the mist  
They start another song. . .

## Sid, Hyenas and Me

By Kanchan Chatterjee

Sid, hyenas and me  
12 noon, we cross another culvert, silently.

Sid is brooding.  
On my left, out the window  
the Canary hill flash past.

I look at the speedo, we're hovering  
around 100 kmph.

We're going straight- to Bagoder. Then we'll turn right- to Topchanchi.  
There's a beautiful lake out there. . .

'How's she?'  
I ask Sid.  
To loosen up the heaviness.

He looks at me, smiles, a childlike smile- says nothing. . .

I look straight. Ease the accelerator a bit.

It's going to be a full moon night.  
They say hyenas still roam by that lake.

**Kanchan Chatterjee bio:** Kanchan Chatterjee is a 47 year old male executive, working in the ministry of finance, government of India. He is from Jamshedpur, Jharkhand India. Although he does not have any literary background, he loves poetry and scribbles as and when he feels the urge. His poems have appeared in various online and print journals, namely, 'Eclectic eel', 'Mad Swirl', 'Shot Glass Journal', 'Jellyfish Whisperer', 'Bare Hands Poetry', 'River Muse', 'Decanto' 'Ygradsil', 'Off the Coast', 'Red Booth Review' 'Electric Windmill Press' 'Under the Basho', 'Oddity', 'Coldnoon', 'Randomly Accessed Poetics', 'Cease Cows' 'A hundred gourds', 'Camroc press' etc.