

***Thoughts That April* by Dr. Alka Singh, Jaipur: Yking Books, Genre: Poetry,**

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In “Thoughts That April”, Dr. Alka Singh propounds sundry themes and ideas that are extremely pertinent to the current milieu. She has vividly described the grim effects of Pandemic, the robustness and ascendancy of women, the aesthetic fervor and solace in nature and some food for thought. In “The Dangerous Cordons of War” and “Razing the World Around”, she mentions how the Covid 19 Pandemic was extremely devastating and virulent, hindering the lives of myriads of people leaving them with indelible trauma. She describes Corona as, “Had it been a visible foe, / we, in unison would’ve ousted it so / Wicked and rascal, this peril sanguine, / robbing, usurps our planet green”. “Covid-19- a demon stands, / challenging culture, / and policies in band. Be safe within, / in four walls of home. It’s the strength and force so sound”. She exclaims in these poems how lethal was the pandemic and the only way one could safeguard thyself was by confining within the boundaries of the house.



In the later part of the book, Dr. Singh also explains the unprecedented cry of a foetus. “A Foetus There...Here to Say!”, enumerates on the deplorable practice of female infanticide, a tradition that has been prevalent eons ago but is still practiced in some parts of the world. She writes, “See, the barbaric customs and scorching terms, / foetus killed in its own serum. Hey!

strange! Female foetus in the feminine lieg, / so strange! But not the thoughts! Let it breathe the light of the day, / unborn foetus has something to say!" The poet is expressing the cry of the unborn foetus who is beseeching to let her witness the world, but the age-old conformist traditions are immutable.

In "Flower in Amphan", "Flat Spring", and "Shades and the Drops", Dr Singh aesthetically reminds us of the consolation and comfort in nature. Nature heals us in manifold, and this is exactly what we witness in her poems. She describes, "Shades and the drops this dreamy land / hopes come forward every dawn, / and the heat to take it long again ... on the crest of stone it grows, / Nature permeates the things for long". The vivacious Spring is seen as a season of mirth and merry; a harbinger of happiness. "The wind is swaying for a new squirm, / spring is on, and victory seen Flat spring, it brings life, / making ravaged green".

Celebrating the ardor of women and cherishing them despite their flaws is also an eminent theme of the poetry collection. Dr. Singh in an integral part of the anthology commemorates the spirit the women, in poems like "Woman, the Growing Self" and "A Singing Woman", she elaborates on the resilience of women, who are often victims of patriarchy, but what keeps them going in this world is their strength of character. "A singing woman questions the song, / and the answers, / smitten in the mob / along the rail as menacing trail". "Woman, the growing self, / remains intact to her desire love, a world of her choices". Why are women so selfless and compassionate? Why do they give love and ask nothing in return. This anomaly itself portrays how magnanimous a woman can be in this world - a place where she is unheard and jilted for.

Lastly, the poet gives some food for thought in poems like; "The Final Gyan" and "Something that is Full of Will". She impels and persuades the readers to live life joyfully, to be grateful for their surroundings, to love and appreciate their family and to find happiness and solace in little things. "Something that is full of will, / someone that is moving still, / be there turns or empty will, / it works for him, it makes way go". "What remains in questioning self, / the eternal force that keeps us work, / our own critics, our own self, / sending finer breezes on, and, we in the warmth of love".

"Thoughts That April", is an artistic and appealing anthology that dives us deeply into reality showcasing things that are genuine yet under glorified. It is a delightful read, is fresh and sublime and a marvelous escape from mundane life. Readers can resonate with all that the poet has tried to portray, because they would have been in similar situations sometime in their life.