

of  
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*edited by*



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## SUDESH MISHRA

**S**UDESH MISHRA (b. 1962) is a descendant of Indian indentured workers in Fiji. He was born in Suva, and educated in Fiji and Australia. He has taught at various universities in Australia, Fiji, and Britain. He is the author of four books of poetry: *Rahu*, *Memoirs of a Reluctant Traveller*, *Tandava*, and *Diaspora and the Difficult Art of Dying*; a couple of critical monographs, *Preparing Faces: Modernism and Indian Poetry in English* and *Diasporic Criticism*; two plays *Ferringhi* and *The International Dateline*; and several short stories. He is also (with Seona Smiles) the editor of *Trapped*, an anthology of writing from Fiji. He has contributed articles to *Social Text*, *Subaltern Studies X*, *Mémoires*, *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, *Borderlands*, *New Literary History*, and *Emergent*. Anthology appearances (among others) include *Twelve Modern Young Indian Poets* (Edinburgh: Lines Review), and *The Literary Review Indian Poetry* (New Jersey: Fairleigh Dickinson University), all edited by Sudeep Sen. Sudesh Mishra is presently professor of Literature, Languages and Linguistics at the University of the South Pacific, Fiji.

## RED BUTTON

455

take time out  
to watch the sun go down  
on an evening  
not like a coin  
slid nonchalantly  
into a pocket  
but like a button  
come off  
a favorite shirt  
and found  
implausibly  
on the windowsill  
the very next day

## HANUMAN

when pressed  
for proof of his allegiance,  
the langur  
tore into his breast  
as if tearing  
into a despised fruit  
and drew aside  
burst ribs and ligaments  
that his lord  
might see an example  
of what he lacked.

## MUSTARD SEEDS

O  
bottled  
droppings  
of a sly grammarian  
without your blessing  
this verse  
(spare as it is)  
must outshoot  
the point of itself...

## X

In her eyes a sky so intense  
It presages storm  
Which, when it breaks,  
Breaks fabulously  
In a chiasma of wings  
Before crossing over  
To flock in her lover's iris.

## AN EPICURE

no allusions,  
the sea needs no allusions.  
it lives in itself  
like the cockle and the clam  
and needs no metaphor  
to impearl it.  
but here comes the poet  
with his swag  
of tokens and tropes  
which he rams down her throat  
whereupon  
like a fine diner  
she turns green as gangrene  
and throws up.



lines conceived  
in the cool  
of innuendos,  
in the heat  
of non sequiturs

may be likened to  
a gust of sparrows  
inside a red guitar

TRIMURTI

to master  
(through all the mist  
and miasma)  
a being  
tumultuous as the word itself,  
the sufi must see only 3  
of the 222 swans  
tacking across the bay  
a minute  
into foreshadowing  
while blinding himself  
to the after-  
shadow  
of boobs and buttocks.