



Dussehra grandeur

# OUR GREAT PEOPLE



A peasant beauty from Malabar

## PEOPLE'S WAR

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### To Gandhiji And Jinnah Saheb

Not till you have blotted out the scars of hope deferred,  
Not till you have unfurled the banners of rejoicing,  
You have met—be it auspicious, the day of your sitting together!  
Not till you have sung the songs of victory,

Rise.

Rise.

This debate is no debate; it is the sentence of our perdition or salvation.  
Even the air with tremulous bosom pants, for life itself trembles in the balance;  
Whether Autumn shall linger or Spring shall come, the judgment is in your hands.

The restless lightning knows no peace, the drifting dew is intranquil;  
Sometimes the buds are shaken with passion, sometimes the flowers glow with anger.  
In these envious quarrels of the buds and flowers, the garden has turned into a hell;  
Not till you have taken counsel how each may make beautiful his own heaven,

Rise.

In lampless alleys the hoarded treasures of colour and light are being despoiled;  
By evil-doers the flower-bride is despoiled of her proud innocence;  
Among vile thorns the sum of all beauty is despoiled.  
The breath of growing life is choked, the heart-beats of the garden are sinking,  
Plants sapless, flowerets parched, faces pallid, life at the last extremity.

From the day when half the singing-birds were caged,  
Autumn has held sway over the garden.  
In the name of this ravished garden!—  
Not till you have shaken the gates of captivity,

Rise.

Today the living world stares with changed eyes, bright with revolution;  
From the horizon rays of light float, shedding the lustre of triumph;  
A new dawn is seeking entrance into the drowsy Hall of Dreams.

How long, this too much darkness? How long, this tide of despair?  
How long shall this dead rule of enmity and languor be licensed to survive?  
How long shall Indians lie in bonds? How long shall India be a slave?

—Only when you have struggled till the noose slips down from throat to foot,  
Rise!

[We offer the above poem by Kaifi (original in Urdu) as our Dussehra greetings to Gandhiji and Mr. Jinnah.—Editor.]



Photos by Sunil Janah

Bengali children smiled thus—before the famine.



Grand Sikh kisans—they make Punjab, India's granary.