

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Johnny Cordova: Two Poems

Johnny Cordova · Tuesday, July 15th, 2025

The Young Man on the Train

—*from Kerala to Mumbai*

The young man on the train has been making noise
since he boarded the 4:30 stop at Goa,
keeps the light on when all around
are trying to sleep, plays music
on his cell phone, walks up and down the aisle
spying women in their bunks.
He's worked hard to cultivate his style:
sideburns, mustache, slicked-back hair,
tight-fit jeans, green button-down shirt—
surely the best his modest rupee can buy.
He talks to anyone who will listen.
He wants to live a good life.
As I study him, I am filled
with sorrow.

*

The Mountain and the Monk

Every morning I sit on this mountain
and watch my thoughts swirl and disappear
into the great river of mind.
I've given up my robes.
I've given up my seat in the temple.
I've given up my name.
None of those things could save me.

I have been a thoughtless man,
banished from the company of others
because for too long I sought my own
pleasure and gain at the expense

of ones who needed me.

Now I sit alone on this mountain,
through wind and sun and snow,
in this second life
and I pray for the seasons
to break me down.

This mountain has gotten inside me.
I hear it rumbling through my hollow bones.
It rises in me like a dark sun, sure
and devastating,
slower than the slowest time,
until I no longer know
if what remains is me
or the mountain.

*

(Featured image from [Pexels](#))

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