



# Munnar

*Vasanthi Vasudev*

Hills, cropped lush in green  
Grow lofty poplars atop.  
Jersey cows nibble tea leaf?  
The air inebriates with pure cheer.

The murky Munnar river  
Slips by in surreal serendipity  
Embracing cardamom mounds  
In her crystal gridle.



Misty pyramids melt into skies  
The jacaranda and honey suckle  
Frill emerald blankets  
That cloak sun-tipped hills.

Tea shrubs hug contours tight  
Wying nature in immaculate symmetry  
The whiff of tea and eucalyptus  
Tint the fragrant air.

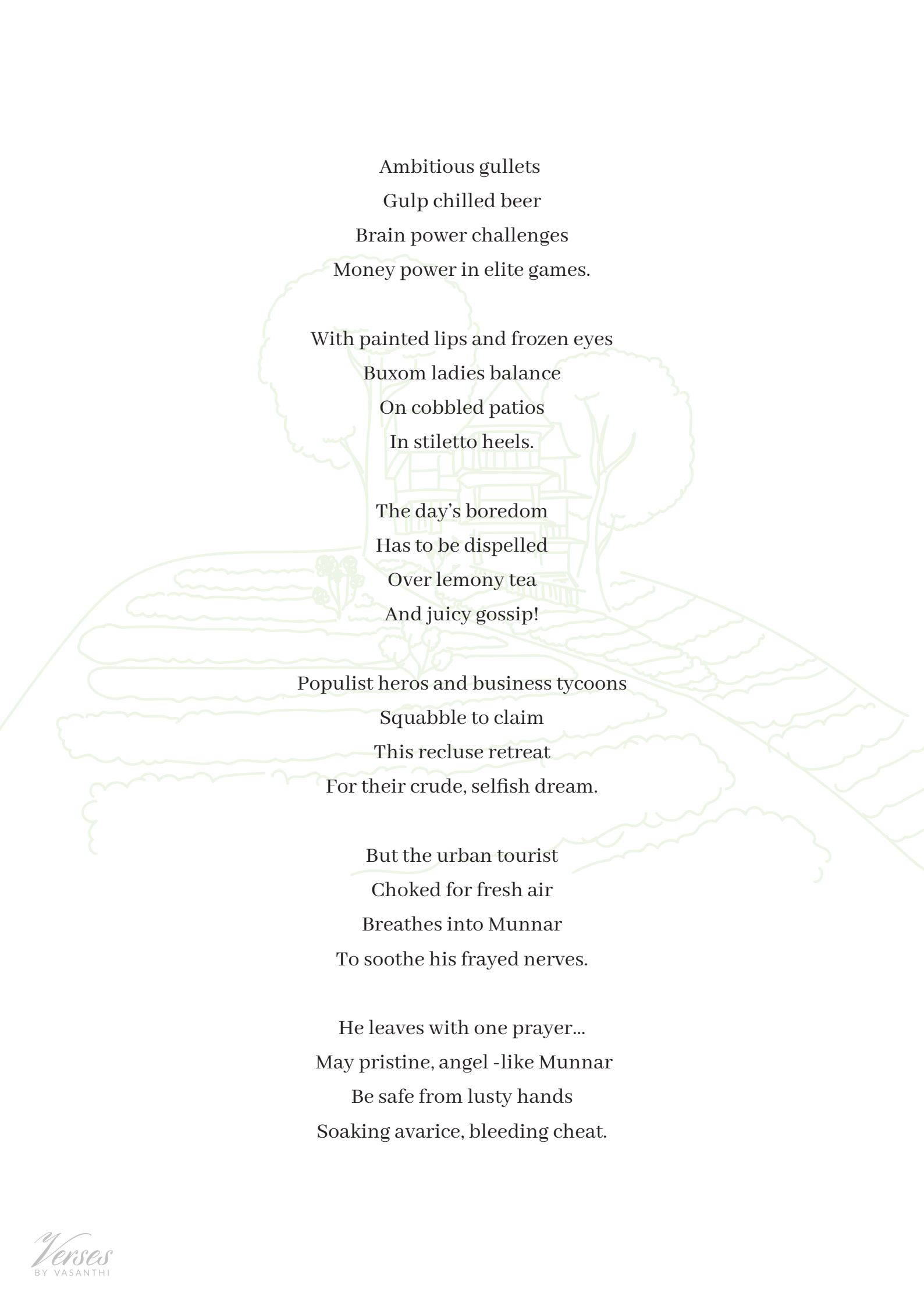
Someone found this fertile land  
Buried in nature's secret lap;  
He stole into its heart  
And carved out an empire.

Tar roads criss-cross elephant paths  
Have elephants now, changed their path?  
Man toiled and moiled on virgin hills  
And stuffed his ever-bulging purse.

High above,  
Behind the range  
The sleepy sun  
Climbs over indigo hills...

The deft tea picker.  
Hanging poles on bony arms,  
Tiptoes on steep roads  
To start her day's work.

Down below  
At the colonial club,  
Bone china steams  
With amber tea.



Ambitious gullets  
Gulp chilled beer  
Brain power challenges  
Money power in elite games.


With painted lips and frozen eyes  
Buxom ladies balance  
On cobbled patios  
In stiletto heels.

The day's boredom  
Has to be dispelled  
Over lemony tea  
And juicy gossip!

Populist heros and business tycoons  
Squabble to claim  
This recluse retreat  
For their crude, selfish dream.

But the urban tourist  
Choked for fresh air  
Breathes into Munnar  
To soothe his frayed nerves.

He leaves with one prayer...  
May pristine, angel-like Munnar  
Be safe from lusty hands  
Soaking avarice, bleeding cheat.



May her silver streams  
And green gold crests  
Gleam into blazing horizons  
Many hills and skies pristine!

Let not her emerald green  
Be lost to his greed, so mean!  
And never with shanty, seedy, sprawl  
A ravaged Man- nar she, ever become!

*Verses*  
BY VASANTHI