Life Journey

Juginder Luthra

Many situations and persons have helped to complete the journey of writing this book. They encouraged me by labeling my rhyming words as poems. Without their help and encouragement, this project would not have been possible.

Dr. Svivvaran Singh Raghuvanshi is the catalyst for encouraging me to compile poems into a book. My wife, Dolly, patiently listened, read the poems and adorned them. Our children— Namita, Anil, Rohini, Shiv, Rashmi and Oliver motivated me to complete this book. Prem Luthra, my brother, noticed my capability of writing poetry.

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I dedicate this book to our Guru Ji, family, our parents and above all, our grandchildren— Amartya, Jaya, Amaya, Ilan, Arjan and Shyam.

Spiritual

            Atheist

Atheist sees a fluttering leaf

Does't see what moves it

Scientist says it’s

Invisible air

And his mind believes it

He asks what moves the air

Who made it, why everywhere

Who figured its elements

Why silent at times

Why it roars in currents

“It is nature” says the scientist

Atheist believes but still wonders

Asks his inquisitive mind

What made nature and its powers

Scientist hesitates, deeply ponders

A bright light flashes thunder roars

A voice declares “It is God”

“Prove to me show to me,” says atheist

He questions, doesn't believe unseen voice

He trusts knowledge of visible scientist

Voice whispers,"Isn't it a wonder

You believe the scientist

But not the One who

Made water fire earth and sky

Who made you, scientist and air

Have faith in the Word of God

You will experience yourself.”

Light vanishes thunder recedes

Atheist joins scientist in prayer

Focus on breath, minds ceased

Tears roll, heart flutters

Like leaf fluttered by air

They can then perceive

Who makes, moves the air

God

Guests don’t enter home without invitation

I am forever ready, you refuse invocation

Welcome me with devoted heart

Veiled God appears, becomes your part

Eagerly, I wait for your call

Spring, summer, winter, and fall

When will you awaken from sleep

Wasted many lives in slumber deep

Don’t adorn me with money or jewels

I seek your true perseverance

Your status, fame, money and power

I grant based on your karmic tower

A leaf can’t move without my consent

Resist greed, pride, anger, lament

Your karmas decide what you are sent

Feed me with love, I’ll happily eat stale bread

Bow to my feet, I will lift, embrace you instead

You are my particle, how can I part from you

Shed your ego, I’ll happily reveal myself to you

Shed your ego, I will happily reveal myself to you

Source

Seek the source from where all flows

Why place hope in mere dust and clay

The Seed Word dwells within you

Which runs whole universe in right way

Some are called great by wealth and gold

Some called mighty by strength they hold

Beautiful body called lifeless frame

Without God it even loses its name

God is wealth, God is strength

God will carry you across the mirage

Seek the source from where all flows

Why place hope in mere dust and clay?

Life is a fleeting gust of wind

Rises today, vanishes tomorrow

“This is mine, that is mine,” you say

They will remain as you fade away

God was always here

God will forever stay

Eternities will pass

Seek the source from

Where all flows today

Why place hope in mere dust and clay?

Go where the treasure chest

Is always full and free

Sun,air, fire, water and tree

Abundance was here

Abundance will remain

Unless you bring it pain

Seek the source from where all flows

Why place hope in mere dust and clay?

Seed Word is embedded within you

Which runs whole universe in right way

Omnipresent

Everywhere I gaze I see you

Whenever I meditate upon you

Witnessing your divine play

I sing your praises, fold my hands

And bow down to you

Some call you Ram

Some Hari or Waheguru

Jesus, Allah—all are you

By any name I call

In a moment I see you

Everywhere I gaze I see you

Whenever I meditate upon you

Witnessing your divine play

I sing your praises, fold my hands

And bow down to you

Whoever receives your grace

Receives your divine embrace

Allow me to rest at your feet

I left home and worldly race

Everywhere I gaze I see you

Whenever I meditate upon you

Witnessing your divine play

I sing your praises, fold my hands

And bow down to you

I carried bundle of my sins

Brought only what I earned

Give me support, O my God

I will take back slate cleaned

Everywhere I gaze I see you

Whenever I meditate upon you

Witnessing your divine play

I sing your praises, fold my hands

And bow down to you

Self Realization

Deep darkness fills the heart

Light the lamp, awaken dawn

Close eyes, meditate and realize

Your body is temple of Ram

Deep darkness fills the heart

Temple, mosque, gurdwara, church

All reside within the mind

Why wander from door to door

When the divine is in every kind

Merge, flow in the river of breath

Observe—

Every cell, every particle

Is sacred home of Shri Ram

Deep darkness fills the heart

Light the lamp awakens dawn

Open Sushmana, wake up Kundlini

Mind and body appear as brittle threads

Unite and align through Pranayam

With One that is your Real self

Deep darkness fills the heart

Light the lamp, awaken dawn

Close eyes, meditate and realize

Your body is temple of Ram

Salvation

Life ends in the blink of eye

The bird of soul will soon fly

My friends, relatives or strangers

Will soon bid their goodbye

It is just a stay of a few days

Life ends…

Childhood fades as youth arrives

In lively season flowers thrive

Death, a silent watcher on the way

Life is fleeting brief, it won’t stay

Unite your mind with Ram divine

Body will have to stay behind

Life ends…

Those you cling to were never yours

The one who is yours birth after birth

Why have you forgotten God so near

Needs called with mind sincere

Life ends…

The body—a myth, wealth—fleeting mirage

Ram-shaped golden bird

Not seen by mortal eye

Dwells not in the dust outside

But within the mind a treasure resides

Life ends…

Lust, anger, pride, and greed

Will become shackles indeed

Parents, children, spouse, siblings

Will not go along with you

Truthful acts and name of Ram

Will walk the final path with you

Life ends…

Know the glory of Guru and the Word

They are reflections of God

Guru’s grace lights lamps

Shows path to the seekers

Pray with the body

Meditate beyond mind

Merge with the eternal soul

Life end…

Guru has led you to meet Ram

Meditate on His name night and day

Ride in the Ram’s boat

Cross the sea from illusion to truth

End the cycle of birth and death

The time for salvation is now

Life ends…

Life ends in blink of eye

Bird of soul will soon fly

Who is mine or stranger

Will soon bid their goodbye

It is a just a stay of couple of days

Life ends…

Ego

Let ego die before you do

Then feel the joy of living

See image of God everywhere

Why wander from here to there

Same God dwells in you as in me

Why different names for One entity

Beliefs and religions are human-made

The Real needs no titles or foundations

Wherever you look, it is His creation

Unveil the truth embedded within

His thoughts surpass yours

Only His will shall come to pass

He creates, sustains, erases, recreates

Surrender thread of your life to the One

He controls the whole universe

Ego has no place in human heart

Let ego die before you do

Then feel the joy of living

Guest

You are a guest for merely two days

Recognize your true self

Arrived yesterday, departing tomorrow

Why carry the burden of pride?

You are a guest…

What you call a home

Is a temporary rest house

No one lives here throughout

One checks in; one checks out

Seek refuge in God

Meditate and focus only there

You are a guest…

Penny by penny millions amassed

Still poor, greed knows no bounds

Money’s poison starts the divide

Fractures relations held with pride

We all leave empty handed

Why create wealth not needed

You are a guest…

Earth which created you

You’ll merge into that dust

As long as you live in this world

Doing selfless works is a must

Share grief of sufferers, their strife

This will improve your own life

You are a guest for merely two days

Recognize your true self

Arrived yesterday, departing tomorrow

Why carry the burden of pride?

You are a guest…

Thankless

My counting skills end

When I count your blessings

Eyes cast down in shame

When I beg for even more

By chanting your name

Forgetful, lost, thankless, greedy

Once again become a beggar

Forgot your gifts, health, toys

Seek novel ways to seek joy

What I gained was through my toil

What I lost, You were the one to spoil

Feel jealous, gazing at those above

Forgot all that you bestowed

I believed sufferings, disease, death

God made for others

I thought I would live forever

Hospital, crematoriums made for others

Then one day it strikes—

Cancer or heart attack

I am a bubble in the ocean

Fragile, fleeting — clearly visualize

Then I realize how much

You gave me, which I overlooked

Ignored spouse, children, siblings

Forgot health, even You

Drank poison of money, fame

With closed eyes at life’s end

Such vivid thoughts descend

Fortunate ones with your grace

Get wisdom early as they transcend

What?

My counting skills end

When I count your blessings

Eyes cast down in shame

When I beg for even more

By chanting your name

Y Junction

At the Y junction in life two paths await

Why did you ignore the righteous gate

Why did you ignore the righteous gate

Forgot who created you

You roam in his creation

World is a mirage, oh innocent

Why run after the transient image

Why did you ignore the righteous gate

He who bestows light to the sun

One who runs the whole universe

From that lamp, from that power

Why did you turn your face away

Why ignore the righteous way

At the Y junction in life, two paths await

Why did you ignore the righteous gate

Why did you ignore the righteous gate

Loneliness Aloneness

Know the difference between

*Loneliness* *and* *aloneness:*

In one dwell worries, anxieties

In other we realize presence of God

We arrive alone, alone we depart

In the river of life, drift from the start

Grasping at straws for support

Mistaking them for anchor and comfort

In glittering life all walk along

Dusk sets in and they depart

Those I presume to be mine

Leave like shadows in the dark

What we see in crowd is coal

Inside us dwells diamond mine

Showing right path to live are

Gita, Ramayan, Bible, Quran

Evolved ones find no pleasure outside

Nor joy in glittering shops at festivals

They silently merge deep in the self

Their world becomes vibrant colorful

Live in life like lotus in muddy water

Overcome surroundings with your power

Live in life like the bright sun

Sustaining the world with its fire

Know the difference between

*Loneliness* *and* *aloneness:*

In one dwell worries, anxieties

In other we realize presence of God

One God Many Names

I wonder why and who chopped God,

Into thousands of pieces

Giving countless names

Some call Him Krishan, Khuda, Ram

Others name Him Jesus, Satnam

God dwells in every particle

Unseen, and beyond names

Silently conducts symphony

of universe

Purpose of Life

For centuries the question remains:

Why did nature create humans?

In Gita, Arjun questioned Krishan

Today, devotees turn to Gurus

God made you treasure of love,

Let go of your sorrows

Spread smiles to others

All are our own; no one unrelated

For centuries the question remains:

Why did nature create humans?

Write destiny with your own hands

Reap only the fruit

Of the seeds you have sown

Quieten your mind

Reflect with wisdom,

God is always with you

You are never alone

On the journey of life—

God is your eternal companion

For centuries the question remains:

Why did nature create humans?

Family

House Number 2

Come together

Let’s sing ballad of

House number 2

Risking his life in 1950

He bid for the house

Hail to Mata Pita Ji\*

Hail to Mata Pita Ji

Lala Ji got prize of 10 acres land

Son Kundan would be a doctor

And son Karam would tend the land

But the colors of nature, luck flipped—

Karam merged with God

Dream of becoming doctor faded

Kundan became a farmer

With no complaints or grief

Always had smile on his face

Come together

Let’s sing ballad of

House Number 2

Risking his life in 50

He bid for the house

Hail to Mata Pita Ji

Hail to Mata Pita Ji

From Sargodha couple started

Arrived in Khanewal

Pita Ji was twenty-two

Mata Ji mere sixteen

Pita Ji hit a sixer on first ball

Cricket team captain Suraj

Arrived in the very first year

Destined to be an officer in Railways

Pride of Hindustan

Come together

Let’s sing ballad of

House Number 2

Risking his life in 50

He bid for the house

Hail to Mata Pita Ji

Hail to Mata Pita Ji

Sudesh Mahinder failed to

Cross wall of childhood

Prem Kanta Kanchan Virinder

Gave beauty to the world

Krishan Gindi Shoki

Completed the long line

Mata Pita tended flower bed

By giving all their love

Stream of life flowing gently

There was no news of Pakistan

Come together

Let’s sing ballad of

House number 2

Risking his life in 50

He bid for the house

Hail to Mata Pita Ji

Hail to Mata Pita Ji

Khanewal was hot from sun

And burning fires of hatred

Far-sighted Hindus, Sikhs

Fled, deserted home of centuries

Pitaji, Narang, Thakkar

Hid buds and flowers of their hearts

Found refuge in cool shade of Sabathu far

Saved their lives in May 47

Found a place to rest

Come together

Let’s sing ballad of

House number 2

Risking his life in 50

He bid for the house

Hail to Mata Pita Ji

Hail to Mata Pita Ji

Everywhere, dead bodies in sight

Holi played with blood and fight

Full of chaos, fire and smoke

Saw noisy groups of killer mobs

Brothers sisters for centuries

Now blurted language of hate

We snatched an abandoned house

Vacated by terrified Musalman

Come together

Let’s sing ballad of

House number 2

Risking his life in 50

He bid for the house

Hail to Mata Pita Ji

Hail to Mata Pita Ji

Wherever the eyes could gaze

Saw tents beyond tents, then more

Scared refugees seeking a home

Across rail lines was a golden sight

A house under open skies, bathed in light

Pita Ji’s eyes noticed number 2

Wife children will bloom here anew

Under bright sun in greenery

Mata ji pleaded, “No, for God’s sake!”

With no money in pocket but full of grit

Fearless, he made his stride

A bold bid with hope his guide

Come together

Let’s sing ballad of

House number 2

Risking his life in 50

He bid for the house

Hail to Mata Pita Ji

Hail to Mata Pita Ji

On bullock carts, foot, and rickshaw

Switched occupied house to our own

Three generations limped, walked, ran

Pale yellow palace welcomed caravan

Family orchards of all kinds bloomed

Diwali of 50 saw kids, trees groomed

Love, laughter, study, play, non-stop life

All safe, happy parents, kids and wife

One man’s courage altered generations

Pitaji’s bid created many celebrations

Come together

Let’s sing ballad of

House number 2

Risking his life in 50

He bid for the house

Hail to Mata Pita Ji

Hail to Mata Pita Ji

Hail to Mata Pita Ji

* Mata Ji—Mother

Pita Ji—Father

Lala Ji—Grandfather

First Meeting

Remember when we met first time

I held your soft moist trembling hand

I brushed your hair from your face with gentle fingers

Your eyes lowered as I said, “You speak so well”

A spark ignited, spread through us both

Lips trembled, heart beat faster, words lingered in the air

We sulked over trivial issues

Lost night’s sleep, peace of day

During day planned vibrant dreams

Imagined palaces, colorful schemes

Many times worker your name on my hand

Merged yours with mine making designs grand

No burden of relatives to carry

No actions of the past to worry

Happy between us, no complaint

Yet, heart was anxious, fear of unknown

Remember when we met first time

Remember when we met first time

Love

Love defies description in words

Reality not verbalized with tongue

Fragrance of flower merges in the air

A subtle smile conquers the heart

Heart’s feelings stay unspoken

Bent eyes trembling lips

Silently let out all it’s secrets

Pink cheeks trembling lips

Feel shy from oneself

Why a veil with your own?

Nothing hidden from loving heart

It needs no wealth or famous name

It is a grace bestowed by God

Can’t be earned by wealth

Heart reads language of heart

No need to say, no point to hear

Lowered eyes say it all

Lips stay tightly sealed

Spirit talks to spirit’s core

Need to speak words no more

Love can’t be described in words

Reality not verbalized with tongue

Dance with Glee

Day and Night I dance with glee

I have found my true love

My friend and my soul-mate

Day and Night I dance with glee

Ever since I grew

My heart desired, wanted you

When stumbled or not ready

You held my arm, made me steady

Whatever I sought from God

I got more than that

Day and Night I dance with glee

Excitement stirs within my heart

Songs on my lips, a fresh start

Dreams awaken clear and bright

Flowers bloom, fragrance delight

Spring has erupted all around

Days of opening buds arrived

How can I blame the weather

Day and Night I dance with glee

Day and Night I dance with glee

I have found my true love

My friend and my soul-mate

Day and Night I dance with glee

Feels Like I Have Come Home

(I dedicate this poem to India, my motherland. Those who have left motherland, let’s go home.)

Here’s a refined version of your lines:

Chasing dreams, seeking prosperity, I left my land,For

Bonds once cherished slipped from my hand.

Parents, siblings, ties I broke,

In selfish pursuits, no words we spoke.

Now golden memories flood my mind,

Of love and roots I left behind.

Stepping off the plane, my heart takes flight,

Home embraces me, a long-lost light.

Let me know if this resonates or needs further refinement!Selfish seeking prosperity I left my country

For selfish gain, to seek prosperity

I left behind my home, my family tree

Severed ties with parents and siblings

I revive those golden memories

When I step out of the plane

Feels like I’ve come home

I see my father’s shadow in immigration clerk

In the covered head mother re-emerges a spark

I look for myself in children playing carefree

I seek long-lost noisy childhood under the tree

Coming out I see such scenes

Feels like I’ve come home

Neighbor sends no invitation

“You are here, stay for tea

We’ll make more *rotis*

Sharedinner with us too”

I hear such loving words

Feels like I’ve come home

Where elders are still respected with care

Not left alone near end of time in despair

Where children support them with grace

Bowing head, receive blessings and embrace

When I see such old traditions

Feels like I’ve come home

Neighbor may knock at the door anytime

No need for appointment, reason or rhyme

The distances between houses fade

When boundaries of walls erased

Feels like I’ve come home

Elder men lovingly called uncles

Women are aunts, reassuring circles

Every child is son or daughter

Where differences in relationships blur

See everyone lives as one large family

Feels like I’ve come home

Sharp cries of “hot tea” echo in the train

Out come from pouch warm *pranthe,*mango pickle

Mouth waters—“Should I ask?” The thought persists

“Have couple of bites,” stranger co-traveler insists

I eat two rotis in the train

Feels like I’ve come home

Early morning, God’s songs fill the air

Loud speakers echo praises everywhere

Recite hymns of Ram, Wahe Guru and Allah

Melodious sound of Koyal wakes me from dreams

In sweet sounds I get hugs from parents, siblings

Feels like I’ve come home

Country glows brilliant at Diwali

Bursting with seven colors at Holi

Sundar mundriye sounds fill the air at Lohri

Sisters tie threads to brothers at Rakhi

Navratre, Kanjaken, Dussehra’s delight

I see tapestry of festivals, joyous sight

Feels like I’ve come home

The flying kites, tangled strings in the sky

Earthen lamps on walls, roofs catch the eye

Gulli danda, piththu, sounds of marbles

Cawing of crows is welcoming noise

Drawing cold water by hand pumps near

Bathing, shivering in chills, jumping with cheer

Walking outside, these scenes I embrace

A treasure of memories, mind can’t erase

Feels like I’ve come home

Fragrant air wakes sleeping memories

Eye-watering swirls, dust from earth

Mingled with love, best wishes of parents

Fragrance of khas khas sheets

Aroma of cool breeze after first rain

Walls of homes washed clean again

Feels like I’ve come home

Stories of mother, father

Grandparents are retold

Struggles of brothers and sisters unfold

Life’s ups and downs, a treasure to hold

As I turn pages, an open book I see

From childhood to today, it’s all part of me

Feels like I’ve come home

And then

At moment of separation time, imprisoned tears

Thoughts of never meeting again, unspoken fears

That holding hands, then unwilling to let go

Gently rubbing shoulders, emotions overflow

Long love-filled hugs silently console

I ponder through dripping red tears of soul

Feels like I am leaving home

I promise myself, will soon repeat

Feels like I’ve come home

Desolate streets, no human voices remain

Strange faces, instruments I can’t explain

Don’t know neighbors as they drift apart

Many shun immigrants with hardened heart

Have lived with them for decades

Still they seem strangers

Daily, without reason bullets fly

Innocent children and grown-ups die

From such place when I return every year

A place so far, yet so near

It feels like I’ve come home

Back to my Motherland where roots are deep

Merged with my Fatherland, memories to keep

I have come back to my own home

Feels like I’ve come home

Feels like I’ve come home

Wonder Where Did I Get Stuck

(When I wrote the above poem, my brother, Prem said “Brother, I love your poem and feel happy for you. But you must have seen things, faced difficulties which made you suffer and sad. Keeping those in mind, write another poem.”

I wrote this poem over 20 years ago. Many things are still the same. However, India has improved so much now that I couldn’t write this poem today. Observing these improvements fills me with joy and pride, yet feel sad about many issues which are still unresolved.)

Dengue Typhoid and Malaria reign

A kingdom of flies, mosquitoes’ domain

More water in milk than faucet’s flow

Trash piles in streets, a king’s crown on a show

Open sewers, the heavy air stinks

Old streets remain same, as memory links

When I see ugly signs of the past

Wonder where did I get stuck

On the roads is same unruly crowd

Where trucks rule, their horns too loud

Their backside gives familiar advice—

Evil-eyed, may your face turn black

Mother Devi blesses, they proclaim

Dipper at night, OK Tata—signs are same

Children run, pull sugar cane from truck

Feels like childhood has come back

While riding metro, I protect my pockets

When I see food, do I eat or chuck it?

Raw food guarantees tummy ache for sure

Hope don’t end up at doctor’s door

Hospitals are money-making schemes

Empty bank balance, get scary dreams

Wonder where did I get stuck

Body shivers from freezing cold

Lungs shut from dust and smoke

Thievery, robbery, rapes, and crime

Heart trembles in corrupt time

Friends, to whom can I complain

Fears of khaki uniform still remain

When I see such sad conditions

Wonder where did I get stuck

For the sake of chair, the game goes on

‘Aaya Ram Gaya Ram’—same old song

Names have changed, yet deeds persist

Corruption lingers, impossible to resist

Darkness engulfs nation’s plight

Politicians’ houses are lit bright

Law applies to common man

Politicians loot what they can

When I see new faces but old politics

Wonder where did I get stuck

To get a job, bring connections or bribe

Eat and feed others, custom of the tribe

From clerk to minister, money is the key

Yet they shout slogans of ‘honesty’

‘Remove corruption’ they loudly proclaim

Decades-old schemes, play same game

Wonder where did I get stuck

While walking, if I look ahead

I slip on spit or dog’s gift instead

If I look down, a car comes too near

Each step gets wrapped in fear

When I leave home, I begin to think

Do I save myself from front or under

Wonder where did I get stuck

It is written “Donkey is peeing,”

But a man is standing unseeing

Pack of dogs starts marches, no reason in sight

A scooter drives wrong way, forgets what’s right

At red light, driver fearlessly zips through

Watching strange scenes, what am I to do

Wonder where did I get stuck

Had a confirmed ticket for train and flight

But they cancelled it, dismissed my plight

A minister demanded my seat with disdain

Leaving me to endure insult and pain

A cherished journey becomes suffering

Stay in India becomes distressing

Wonder where did I get stuck

Travel to India seems endlessly long

TSA, terrorist, thrombosis, fears strong

Jet lag of seven days here and there too

Trip of two weeks becomes suffering of four

When I curse misery-filled stay

Wonder where did I get stuck

Now I count days to return home

Eat salad without a care

Have grandchildren sit in my lap

East or west, home is best on the map

To seek new pastures, birds made new home

Every place has flowers thorns of its own

Decorate the path that was chosen by me

Where dreams realized, tapestry of life woven

Engrossed in such thoughts, I sit on the plane

Feels like I am leaving one,

Going to the other again

This is mine, that is mine too

No matter where I go

Feels like I have come home

Feels like I have come home

My Soil

It’s been fifty years since I left my land

Yet its soil seems mine, like my own hand

Earlier people called me son or brother

Now they call me Uncle, like any other

Whichever the word, it brings me delight

Their sweet voice makes everything right

The air, the scenes, the customs, the people—

All feel like mine, as if we never parted

The sweet melody of koyal’s song

Even dog’s bark feels like it belongs

Hidden memories awaken my eyes

Tree shade protected from hot summer skies

Not a penny was in the pocket

Still never felt poor

A love-filled life made us need no more

It’s been fifty years since I left my land

Yet its soil seems mine, like my own hand

Our Childhood

We were eight, bicycle only one

Our happiness overflowed the rim

One knicker, a shirt, pair of slippers

They were my entire treasure

Festivals celebrated with pomp and cheer

Love filled the home— joy sincere

Mother father smiled

Quietly drank poison, fed us honey

Staying hungry themselves

Fed butter-topped pranthe to us

From life of king and queen

They had become gypsies

Put us sit on royal throne of dreams

From the trees, it wasn’t mangoes we plucked

But the sweetness of pure nectar

The clay oven didn’t erupt with fire

It glowed with soft nurturing loving warmth

With not a paisa in possession

Our home felt like a glass palace

Fountains of laughter did erupt

Filled our lives with carefree joy and comfort

The name was Panipat

Often, faucets without water were dry

Two hand pumps were our exercise

There were no complaints or cries

Appeared occasional, mostly not

Electricity played hide and seek

Hand fans, candles were our life-savers

If there was any lack we were not aware

Sometimes gulli danda, piththu

Then came cricket’s turn

Played marbles, hide n seek

Fired stones with sling shot

Didn’t care much about studies

Hardly gave it a thought

Childhood was meant for play and enjoy

A lifetime ahead for reading and writing

Kites painted colors across the sky

Flowers fruits adorned the earth

We cared little for what others had

Our pot of joy was always full

The yard was playground during day

In mosquito nets, beneath the stars

It turned to our bedroom at night

When I open album of my heart

Pictures of priceless childhood erupt

No overwhelming sorrows, no lofty dreams

The present was enough within our means

Blessings of Swami Ji, Shakuntla

Ma, Darshi Behan Ji showered

Lucky ones get such beautiful childhood

Like fragrance in the air,

Lotus flowers bloom in ponds

Lucky ones get such beautiful

childhood

Lucky ones get such beautiful

childhood

Heart Desires

Heart desires to soar and fly

To spend few moments with you nearby

Ganga of love flows night and day

Wish to come, quench my thirst away

Heart desire…

Those who have departed

Wish they were still here

I would string flowers of love

Engraved in heart, how can I forget

Mother, father, brothers, sisters

Heart desires…

Let’s recall memories of childhood

Sing old forgotten songs

Clinging to those cherished memories

I journey through life all along

Heart desires…

Beneath the veil of happiness, sorrows hide

Everyone carries their burden inside

Alone, one will stumble, get tired

I come to give a helping hand

Heart desires…

We are together from birth to death

Life is but a dream of four days

Come let’s fill dreams with vibrant hues

Spread flowers of joy over morning dew

Heart desires…

Heart desires to soar and fly

To spend few moments with you nearby

Ganga of love flows night and day

Wish to come, quench my thirst away

Heart desires to soar and fly

Business Person’s Honor

I am selling goods, not my honor

Bowing low, don’t think have no self esteem

Poor in wealth, but I’m rich in honesty

I earn through hard work, not from robbery

It is duty to nurture children and home

But not to endure abuse, or harsh tone

Talk to me with respect

Don’t measure me with your wallet

A smile won’t diminish your wealth

A loud voice doesn’t elevate one’s self

Cool breeze gives comfort, not the storm

Don’t look at me with suspicion

Don’t throw money, place it in hand

I work with dignity, I am not a beggar

I am selling goods, not my honor

Bowing low, don’t think I have no self esteem

Mother

Message has come from my home

Mother’s eyes long to see me

Last spring she had whispered to me

“A bier will leave from the house for me.”

Message…

Fed me her own milk of her body

Stayed hungry, but nurtured me

Erased her desires, fulfilled my dreams

Never uttered a word of complaints

Love always showered from eyes

Message…

In her heart she was anxious

Old age will descend soon

Her doctor son will be a boon

Will take care of them when in need

Her dreams shattered when

I stepped out of the house

Message…

I cast my net for wealth and fame

Lost myself in the trap of my own game

I deserted my mother and father

Shadow of time dimmed their memories

The palace of memories stands empty now

It’s owners have departed from the home

Message has come from my home

Mother’s eyes long to see me

Last spring she had whispered to me

“A bier will leave from the house for me.”

Message has come from my home

Urmil’s Story

Hear the long tail of a little girl

A unique sweet Nani in the whole world

Hear the long tail of a little girl

Ram was the father, Sarla her mother

A young Nandi Bhapa, her dear brother

Received endless love from Nani Nana

When eyes opened, didn’t see shadow of father

Seven days after her birth

He merged with the Ganga’s waters

Hear…

Played with dolls, learnt to play violin

Left Pakistan, settled in Ludhiana

Faced sugar shortage, learnt to share

In youth, got engaged with Suraj

After nine long years, drank Panipat’s water

Hear…

Face like moon, eyes like stars

She shone with glow of her dear Suraj

First came Nishi, then Arati arrived

While she pursued B.Ed. with a drive

No crown adorned head, yet Suraj called her Rani

Hear…

A heart like wax, a head like stone

Washed hair clean, dripping oil shone

Savored mangoes, loved lime pickle bite

In house number thirty, had guests day and night

Amid this chatter, noise, and play

Quietly, her youth slipped away

Hear…

After leaving Jodhpur, she made Delhi her home

First Railway Colony, then Anand Vihar to roam

Bridge was her rival, second wife in jest

Yet badminton was the game she loved best

To ensure her daughters achieve their goal

Became teacher in Modern School, a new role

Hear…

First in the Railway Colony, then Anand Vihar to roam.

The bridge was her rival, a second wife in jest,After leaving Jodhpur, she made Delhi her home,.

Yet badminton was the game she loved best.

To ensure her daughters achieved their goals,

She became a teacher in Model School, fulfilling her role.Hear…

Then what happened Arati?

Parkinson fell in love with her

Surmil’s strength tried to fight it

Her body faltered, but her spirit stayed

An inner resolve that never swayed

Love and family stood by her side

Strength which medicine couldn’t provide

In the end, all suffering was done

When the disease had finally won

Hear the long tail of a little girl

A unique sweet Nani in the whole world

Hear the long tail of a little girl

(This tribute to Urmil Bhabi was written by help from Arati)

Tribute To Prem Luthra

Old bones have become brittle and frail

Joints which served me lifetime, now fail

Heart kept me alive, though tired now

Strong breath is a whisper now

Old bones, brittle and frail,

Joints stiffen, start to fail.

The heart, after its endless beat,

Grows weary, skips its steady feat.

Breath now pauses, short and thin,

Life’s fire fading from within.

Scorched beneath life’s blazing sun,

Soft flesh burned, strength undone.

Limbs weaken, struggle to rise,

Purpose lost beneath dim skies.

From deep within, exhaustion seeps,

A tired soul that barely sleeps.Struggled in sun of life Soft body is scorched

Body is weak, hard to bear my own weight

I see no purpose of living on

From within and out, I am tired

Cancer has made me it’s home

Sneaked in like a thief

I tried countless medicines and prayers

Even then, victory I could not declare

Two swords can’t fit in one sheath

Enemies can’t coexist in peace

I fought ferociously in battle ground

The killer enemy remained unbound

Now the heart desires to sleep

I never wake up from, such sleep

I am not afraid of my demise

Hope I don’t burden others’ lives

I am not sorry for my departure

Afraid of watching you hide and cry

Cruel world will label you a bad omen

Carrying burden all alone, help denied

At times I wish to live a bit longer

Never content spending time with my own

Wish I stay with you bit more

To hug you, hold you tight longer

“Will meet tomorrow—what’s the rush”

Wish such thoughts had not come

I wish I had courage to embraced life more

Not given grief to those I hurt

Had not panicked in problems or despair

My name, my identity is love

I wish I had expressed more to loved ones

Had caressed the world with more attention

We are relatives, friends for few days

Like arriving and departing guests

Now I am lying on bed of flowers

Tomorrow my identity—a photo on the wall

Days are long, but life is short

Each moment, especially painful, felt long

Yet, this ends in two moments

Only yesterday was childhood, youth

Today I say goodbye to the world

There will be my talk for a few days

Then on a paper or someone’s heart

I stay drowned in such thoughts

I can’t express with my mouth

Let my thoughts go with me

Others won’t understand, nor will try

Those who do, I tell them with eyes

I must have done something right

When I see love all around so bright

What I gave to others, see it coming back

So many come to just convey thank

Some come to say last goodbye

I see some dying with me

Knead flour with tears then roti burns

Make for two, eat alone as others spurn

My eyes moisten when I imagine your life

To protect you I push close door of death

What do I do?

To this day no one has won against death

We had joyous fifty five years, with that thought

Eat my share of food, spread my love too

Till yesterday we were co-travelers

Now all the time I am in you

Not body, but soul always with you

Stay happy in every situation

Whatever days you are granted

Spend them laughing

This is my prayer and request from Ram

I completed my innings of life

Scored as many runs as destined

If score meant number of joys spread

Then I scored many centuries

Some got clean bowled or caught out

I am glad I happily got run out

I am grateful for my mother and father

For Ram and Ram Sharnam’s guiding light

Shashi, Ashit, Jyoti, Disha, Tanuj and all

My companions through journey of this life

Now, with love, I bid goodbye to all

This, fondly, is the last letter from your Prem

\*F G T Died

No news, no mention anywhere

Perhaps she died, not seen here

For a few days her tales will echo

In noisy chants of Zindabad will glow

 In the history of

Luthra family it will find its place

Read by one or two generations with grace

Yet a quiet worry will linger in their mind

Of loosing its sweetness with passage of time

Now meetings on screens and taps

Who wants to leave home, endure travel’s traps

Now what’s app echoes a muted Zindabad

Lost are loud voices, raised hands—Zindabad

 Forgot joy of hugs caress with hands

Forgot the thrill of playing on our land

In Between, Teen Patti, Bridge, and Cricket

Moments once cherished now rarely visit

Laugh, and make others laugh too

Meet one another with a smile so true.

Share the joys, the sorrows, the tears,

Bridge the gaps of distant years

Time doesn’t stop, world keeps changing

Some good remains, most keeps fading

All busy in their own lives so robust

Hill of family slowly crumbles to dust

FGT drowned in the darkness of time

Forgotten songs—heart’s desire to fly, come home

To spend a few moments with you on the swing

Sharing stories of 2 Number, sweets from Bosa Ram’s tin

Hum Bekhudi Mein Tum playing softly,

Days and nights of togetherness, eating freely.

Chilled beer beneath the shade of a mango tree

Fountains of laughter erupting endlessly.

As I dig the mines of my memories

Many players of the golden stage emerge

Some have bid goodbye, made us cry and left

Many suffering in heat of sun, struggles of life

 Those who have received gift of the stage

Four generation are still here

Young ones can write their own page

Revive FGT for whoever can attend

Have them taste the nectar

 Death, especially of one of us

Will make the heart cry

When I think of FGT

Scenes of its movie play in the mind

From my eyelashes few pearls escape

From my eyelashes few pearls escape

\*Family Get Together

Life

Time

Time is a bird—soaring and swaying

Until it folds its wings and falls—powerless

Time is river—rising, flowing and flaunting

Only to lose its name, as it merges in ocean

Time is wind—moving, shaking and breaking

Until it fades into quiet silence

Time is voice—speaking and thundering

Until it fades into silent stillness

Time is flower—vibrant, colorful and blooming

Wilts softly into dusk of life, then falling

Time is breath, I call it mine today

Only to belong to another tomorrow

I am bird, river, voice, breath

Merely a gust of wind

Claiming kingdom of this moment

In ignorance, considered it mine

Ownership will change tomorrow

Time was here

And will remain here

My existence fading into sunset

Then lingering as memory

A new sun will arise glowing hot

Will act as if it is beginning of time

Time or Money

What is lacking in life

Time or money?

Lost money can be earned again

Lost time is precious pearl, you never regain

Pillar of relatives, friends and mutual support

Is built on the bedrock of time

Money is a hollow display of pride

Relationships empty without shared time

Sit together—share joy and grief

It only happens by investing time

Money is a necessity

We all understand

But time is a treasure

Full of pearls, diamond band

Even after death money breaks bonds

Shatters sturdy wall of relatives, friends

Conversation of fragrant time, sweet memories

Are lovingly woven by generations to come

Objects can be bought with money

Not laughter, joy or health

Holding hands and intimate hugs

Happen only when we give our time

Time is a fast-flowing current

Unstoppable and forever moving

Money is means to live, not life itself

River of time drowns all wealth

Spent whole life hoarding money

Didn’t care for precious time

Now to prolong time

Gave money impossible challenge

Stop, money may speak, stand arrogant

It has to accept defeat against time

Happy Life

Bury yesterday’s sorrows, torments

Gather memories of sweet moments

Accept new color the life spreads

Forget yesterday’s broken threads

Some remain drowned in past

Some learn from its mistakes

True steps only move ahead

Eyes open only look forward

Setting sun brings darkness

Swallowing one day of life

Morning’s rays unveil new dawn

As we awake with refreshing yawn

God, in his divine way

Allocates fixed days to all

Fill them with joys or sorrows

Happiness of now or

Bitter memories of past

Wipe a child’s tears

Lend support to frail and old

Joy in giving outweighs receiving

In making others happy

Our own sorrows quietly flee

Desires, cravings have no ends

Kill one, another one ascends

It is best to keep them at bay

Let flame of wisdom show the way

Life

Life has brought me to a crossroad

No grievance, regret of any kind

Peaceful smile has descended in mind

Whom I nurtured nine months within me

Lost peace of days, sleep of nights

Didn’t whine, bestowed body mind

Now support and strength in them I find

They lighten burden of old age plight

They are with me day and night

I looked for a single flower

Instead, found a garden in full bloom

Whatever our time is allotted

Will spend it with joy, laughter

Yesterday’s sorrows, mistakes now past

Removed my shackles, free at last

Life has brought me to such a crossing

No grievance, regret of any kind

Peaceful smile has descended in mind

﻿

Happiness is Within

Joy, peace, luck not found outside

Lotus flowers need no clean tide

Determined, bloom in dirty water deep

With inner strength, their colors keep

Often recited my miseries to others

Some judged me guilty some fake sympathy

Don’t lean on brittle walls for support

Joy, peace, serenity are inner resort

When you share sorrows with others

Half won’t listen, hide in their covers

Others say, “Keep these to yourself

My house is already full of my own

It’s not empty to store your trash.”

If you want life to be joyous, hide your pain

Drink your tears, dry others’ eyes for no gain

Listen to others’ sad stories

Find solutions, help resolve them

Light up others’ homes

God will sparkle your house with lights

Celebrate Diwali with God in your home

Talk

Talk isn’t spoken—its heart to heart

The heart speaks without a doubt

The tongue masters lies and deceit

Heart reveals truth, no one can beat

I’have seen gentle hands plunge swords

And warm hugs turn to choking cords

The heart whispers prayers from afar

Talk isn’t spoken—its heart to heart

Eyes deceive with false tears they shed

Smile conceals selfishness honey-fed

Truth resides and seen only in heart

Talk isn’t spoken—its heart to heart

Bodies may be seven seas apart

Heart connects instantly with heart

Thousands of miles can’t keep’m apart

Boundaries of nations dissolve

When its heart to heart

Talk isn’t spoken—its felt in heart

Heart talks to heart in silence

Through actions, silent quivering lips

A book of feelings can be written in silence

Talk isn’t spoken—its heart to heart incense

Close eyes and watch wiith heart’s vision

True talk needs no vocal expression

Talk is not spoken—its heart to heart

It is heart to heart

New Birds

New birds, to create a new nest

We have arrived at your door

Leaving behind a home of decades

Nervous, anxious—arrived at your door

Left behind companions and friends

A job, memories etched in every brick

Each tree, plant, flower planted by hand

Now all wilt and cry, unable to withstand

Shedding memories of self and children

We have arrived at a new crossing

To create new friendships

New desires, new life beginning

New birds to weave new nest

Have arrived at your shelter

We’ll take colors from your rainbow

And bring along hues of our own

It is the fourth innings of cricket

Plan century with joy and laughter

New birds, ready to create new nest

Have arrived at your door

Accept us as we are

With hopes and dreams from afar

We have arrived, seeking rest

New birds to create new nest

Have arrived at your door

Respect of Light

Respect for light truly happens

After living in the dark

The absence of companion deeply felt

When the loved ones depart

Children’s childhood is like a floating cloud

Once the nest is empty, silence feels loud

The heartache and tears veil the eye

Remembering times quickly passed by

The euphoria of lively youth

Sways for fleeting moments

It melts like wax in the flame

As old age arrives to lay its claim

Be not proud of destructible form

It shatters when hit by sickness storm

Mother father are but guests

Here for only few more days

After they’re gone, their love will stay

Remembered in photo day after day

Yesterday got burnt In life’s path

Left sweet and bitter aftermath

Fill today with joy and cheer

It vanishes when tomorrow is here

The respect for light truly happens

After living in the dark

The absence of companions deeply felt

Only when the loved ones depart

Respect of Person

People are respected

When they are needed

In that moment they are

Elevated above God

If you have power of wealth

Friends appear in endless lines

You are seldom recognized

When you fall on hard times

In tough times, they say,

Even a donkey is called ‘father’

Yet, when adversity is overcome

Old helpless father is deemed a donkey

A mother nurtures for nine months

Gives her all to help her child grow

Yet, in her old age, she becomes a burden

Hearing sarcastic remarks

“They all do—what’s so special about you.”

People are respected

When they are needed

In that moment they are

Elevated above God

Friends

Friends are like old, dried flowers

Tucked away in the book of heart

New friends arrive in life

With whom we play, laugh, cry

And play our part

Old memories are fragrance of flowers

Unseen, but deeply felt

New friends bloom with vibrant colors

Creating a lively garden of life

Everyone brings their color

Together, we make a beautiful garland

The necklace of friendship is our heartbeat

Bound together with a single thread

They give warm sunshine during the day

Brighten night as moon and stars

In life’s play of shade and light

Hold each other’s hands tight

Friends are like old, dried flowers

Tucked away in the book of heart

New friends arrive in life

With whom we play, laugh, cry

And play our part

Fake Friends

Do a hundred things right

Listen, obey, agree they’re right

You will be called a friend

But one mistake or misunderstood

They’ll crush and forget you for good

Seeing your pockets full

They flock to you as friends

Butterflies hovering blooming buds

They’ll clean your pockets

Then move onto a new prey

Drop you as strangers in a day

Those who judge you

Can never be your friends

They don’t let you live in peace

Even curse you at the end

Pick a hundred flowers

One thorn will surely pinch

Do much, speak your mind

Not everyone will appreciate

How can I please them all?

My thoughts, and my work

Always weighed on their scale

When I needed support

Fake friends smiled from the shore

Watched me drown

They turned away with a yawn

Brittle threads of fake friends

Snap at the first jolt

They drop you like a severed kite

Drift away, leaving you alone

They will cut you like dead flowers

Avoid even thought of meeting you

They change their path, turn gaze

If they see you coming their ways

They praise you to your face

Smile and laugh with ease

But the moment you turn away

They thrust a sword into your back

Now even the mention of

Friendship evokes fear

A storm gentler than breeze so near

A whirlpool safer than a calm river

Now I find solace in solitude

Even afraid of people’s shadow

Everyone lost in their own world

Unmoved whether others live or die

Tired of wearing a fake smile

Now time has come to say goodbye

I’ll pray for your happiness

As I quietly walk away

I *am* thankful to you

Whom I considered a true friend

You opened my eyes before too late

Otherwise I might have spent

A lifetime lost in misunderstanding

Backbiter

Backbiting is their duty, gossip their caste

Discuss what others wear, did, said or not

In your presence, they utter praise

With words sweeter than honey

They slice you with their tongue

Slash your back in your absence

Backbiter has two ears

Four mouths to babble on

Changing, adding words they hear

Blurt out double of what they heard

A snakebite may spare a life

But their bite leaves one lifeless

We are mere mortal beings

Even God accepts defeat before them

Some friends hide their true face

Wolves in sheep skin, with grace

They’re not what they claim to be

Guard your wallet, tread carefully

Enemies are better than such friends

Attack from front, their intent clear

Easily spotted from afar

No pretense or fake love to fear

Backbiting is their creed

Daily they commit sinful deed

Spice coated words they feed

Hushed gossip about others to you

Fill others’ ears with gossip about you

Add negative vibes, avoid at any cost

Their venom knows no bounds

Stay away from backbiters’ torrents

Heartless, don’t even spare their parents

Ghosts of Past

Ghosts of past walk along

Bring less joy, misery they prolong

Hundreds of joyous laughter-filled days

Get shrouded under one wrong

Forgiveness is a word alien to them

Whole world is perceived against them

They forget other’s many good deeds

Cry and make others cry for one blunder

They forget their own flaws

Shift blame to only others

Yesterday’s moments are long gone

The unlucky stay drowned in them

Knowingly unknowingly,

Those who hurt you—forgive them

Learn from yesterday, live in the now

Where golden seeds of tomorrow grow

Ghosts of past walk along

Bring less joy, misery they prolong

Hundreds of joyous laughter-filled days

Get shrouded under one wrong

Morning

Some get grief by cruel fate

Some seek it, bring it to their gate

With precious treasures at their feet

Knowingly or not, they ignore them

Sun spreads sunshine for all to gain

Some summon clouds, untimely rain

Drenched in sorrow, now cry in vain

Wishing for Sun to return again

Children blessed with smiles and cheer

Filling the house with joy sincere

But anger, lust, pride and greed

Converts the joy to tears indeed

Some lose wealth, some grieve health

Others weep from children’s loss

Forgetting bad days soon will fade

They see only flaws in moon displayed

Forgetting their own faults and flaws

Point finger at others, use own laws

In proving themselves to be right

They burn their own and children’s light

The fire of time burns all too fast

Turns nest to ashes, dreams don’t last

Vibrant body comes to final rest

Proud persons forget reality, fail final test

The present devours some

While others destroy the presents

Scrapes old wounds of past

Newly growing skin can’t last

Same thing will happen again

Same injury will return again

Haunted by past memories

Which swirl like ghosts of past

New seeds of hope can’t last

Why drown in past’s endless whirlpool

Wake up, fully live while alive

Live, laugh, love, you have only one life

Look at the bounty, open your eyes

The fortunate awaken in time

By grace they get blessings

Forgive and forget the past

Not for others but for oneself

Even if you wake up late

It is never too late

Morning begins when eyes open

A new dawn begins when eyes open

Simmering in fire

Simmering on woods of errors, faults—singe in fire

Day and night drowned in thoughts

Scorched by flames of memories

Time once passed time does not return

What is done cannot be undone

Mother father will live forever

“Will sit with them tomorrow”, I thought

But that tomorrow came never

Turn by turn all left, a signal for me to wake up

Still I remained oblivious to nature’s shake up

While living, we hold grudges, as if we’ll make up later Didn’t talk or meet, kept waiting for that elusive later

Colorful youth won’t be always there

This truth confronted me

When old age, diseases and death

Revealed their scary faces

Whatever time remains, if possible

Acknowledge your mistakes

Those who love you, hug them

Whole heartedly quench their thirst

Hold those who you once spurned

And seek forgiveness with sincerity

Forgive those who hurt you, with mind and heart

They may not change, you will have done your part

Raw Clay Pots

Shape raw clay pots with care

Marks of hand remain etched forever

Innocent children, like soft clay

Absorb effects of touch, words and display

Marks affect intellect and mind

Gentle ones bring comfort kind

Harsh and cruel ones leave a trace

A lifetime torture hard to erase

Imprints of tender age create a world view

That becomes the scale to measure events new

The glasses through which situations they perceive

Be careful which scale, glasses young pots receive

A love-filled hand converts clump to elegant pot

Creates a world—peaceful, loving, like giving well

Harsh hand leaves behind a crooked ugly form

Unfolds fights, anger, addiction— foundation of hell

Shape raw clay pots with care

Marks of hand remain etched forever

Innocent children, like soft clay

Absorb effects of touch, words and display

Children

In children's laughter, light of life I see

Shrieks like thunder, lightening set free

Laughing erupts from heart and soul

Spill pearls from lips, dancing—nature’s goal

No regrets of past, no worry of the future

In every moment, blessings of God I see

Their smiles make flowers turn pale and weak

Birds learn to sing, butterflies learn to fly, so sleek

Small fingers grasp, tender hands touch the heart

Hard hearts melt like wax, I see callousness depart

They find joy in little things, sway and smile

Discover treasures of joy in Lego and lolly pops

Relish the mouthwatering joy of ice creams

Simple acts of sitting, standing are joyous dreams

They give smiles to all, hugging lovingly tight

Very fragile are these delicate dolls

The color of their face fades by harsh tone, I see

No conniving schemes, no lies or double talk

No discrimination of color, creed or caste

Entire creation painted unicolor in their eyes

No thievery, no stealing, no selfish fake trickery

Nature's whole treasure in every innocent child, I see

In children's laughter, light of life I see

Shrieks like thunder, lightening set free

Laughing erupts from heart and soul

Spill pearls from lips, dancing—nature’s goal

Six Feet Distance

No one embraces, no one shakes hand

No hugs, touching feet or blessing hand

Humans get nervous facing own brand

Distance of six feet changed everything

What we sorely lacked, now we cannot spend

Alone, time in four walls seems to never end

Distance of six feet changed everything

Humans imprisoned within their homes

Afraid to take deep breath in company

While birds, animals roam carefree

Chirping, grazing earth with glee

Distance of six feet changed everything

Air is clean, sky blue, moon shines brighter

Dustless leaves breathe freely, feel lighter

Distance of six feet changed everything.

Didn’t have time to meet our own

Now plenty, but cannot meet at home

Now connect by telephone, Skype, Zoom

Talk across street, wave and walks resume

Distance of six feet changed everything

Joy comes from within, not from without

Finally we realized, without a doubt

We don’t need outer glitter to be happy

Life may end any moment, we realized

Distance of six feet changed everything.

Nature, to protect itself in self defense

Launched its assaults, crossing every fence

It preyed on the greedy, the haughty, flawed

A strong reminder for all, how weak they are

Distance of six feet changed everything

When the pot of sins overflows

God reincarnates, as history shows

Not always in human form it appears

Sometimes veiled as a virus it comes near

It lays down its stakes, its power it shows

The humble human prostrates and bows

Distance of six feet changed everything

Distance of six feet changed everything.

Companion

You are, therefore I am

Without you, I am alone—lonely,

enclosed in the four walls

No laughter, no astonishment

No joy in watching setting sun

Or its first ray

Holding hands, loving hugging

Smiling without a reason

Life is with companion, otherwise

Only inhaling, exhaling of breath

Upset with companion, tears may fall

But making up is better than being alone

Sharing life's joys and sorrows together

Is far superior to drinking nectar alone

Companion sick or invalid

Becomes a purpose for life

Their faintest smile better than

Boundless laughter alone

With a companion world glitters

If alone, in a crowd get jitters

Blessed are ones, with grace of God

Who walk with those they used to play

Everything seeks a companion

Plants, trees, birds, animals and humans

If alone, empty forest, barren desert

With companion life is festivals of joy

With companion life is festivals of joy

Robbed House

If you want your house robbed

Let it be done by your own

Wretched enemies will rob it anyway

I was aware of enemies’ tricks

But now I recognize reality of my own

Always avoided embracing the enemies

Yet breathed my last on my own’s shoulder

A peaceful death—thre only benefit of relatives

The pain goes deeper if brother stabs brother

Still it is better to end life by own

Than live a pretense filled, sugar coated life

Happy, even this wish

of enemies was not filled

Happy even this wish

of enemies was not filled

Woman

The cruel world’s eyes pierce like arrows

Each time I step out of the house

The body that gave them birth

The one whose milk they drank

I hide it from their shameless gaze

Always afraid of men’s actions

I keep my eyes fixed to the ground

Shield my body from drooling lips

And groping, grasping hands

From head to toe, every part is scrutinized

Through the lust of their dark, evil eyes

In their mind, I get imagined, seen undraped

I hear remarks on my body

My walk, clothes, my looks

The fault lies in wicked men’s lust

Yet, I am labeled Draupadi

“To get something you have to

Lose something,” I am told

A rule that applies to women alone

A path that I am forced to follow

The world belongs to men

It’s rules, laws made by them

I lose my image, my identity

And still, I go out and try my luck

Silently, I walk, shrinking within

Make no eye contact with their gaze

The world twists its meaning

They label me as haughty, proud

Some brush their filthy hands

Others touch, squeeze front and back

Vultures consider it their right

Reducing me to a toy for their delight

The cruel world’s eyes pierce like arrows

Each time I step out of the house

The body that gave them birth

The one whose milk they drank

I hide from their shameless gaze

Wish We Had Not Met

I wish we had never met

Never planted those poisonous seeds

Thorn-filled flowers have now bloomed

Where a beautiful life was meant to be groomed

Darkness in day, tears at night

Grievances, complaints always in sight

Such harsh penalty for a single mistake

A foundation built that was doomed to break

Decisions of others dried the roots

Otherwise tree’s stem wouldn’t have swayed

The hungry past became termite infestation

The house walls wouldn’t have crumbled

Money, youth, children—everything was ours

If only we had not ignored our mistake

No one can fight the hand of fate

Wish both had learnt to compromise

Now near the end of life

As I look back, my heart aches and cries

We and children wouldn’t have suffered

Tears wouldn’t have spilled from the eyes

Wish We Had Not Parted

I wish we had never parted

Wouldn’t have to suffer alone

Had you not given infinite love

Your passing wouldn’t hurt as much

That magic of your first sight

Eyes looked down in sheer delight

When they looked up, I forgot to blink

It was hard to peel gaze from your face

Age has altered the body

Sunshine of memories still fresh

Dark clouds envelop the heart

It is still gloomy at mid day

Had I not seen that face

I wouldn’t remember nor suffer

Recalling makes eyes trickle tears

My heart can’t forget you my dear

Life’s nature is to move on

Time doesn’t stop for anyone

In the remaining days, I laugh on outside

But my heart silently weeps for you inside

My open laughter feels hollow and muted

Because you are not with me

In crowded gatherings I feel alone

Because you are not with me

All try to offer their emotional support

Some share a few encouraging words

Your absence left a deep wound

I’m happy you live in every cell as mine

Wherever I look, I see

Your image etched in time

Your glance casts a cool shadow

I am not alone, you are with me

Silently, you hold my hand

Unseen, but you walk with me

If this is the price I must bear

For all our golden memories shared

I will gladly drink poison without delay

For the moments we had everyday

Now you tell me what should I do

I know you are not here, it’s true

Yet my restless heart cries at night

And whispers softly in plight

“I Wish we had never parted

Wouldn’t have to suffer alone

Had you not given infinite love

Your passing wouldn’t hurt as much.”

Path of Life

If you stop at every obstacle

Your goal will remain out of reach

Fearful of thorns in the path of life

You won’t gather the flowers you seek

To spread its wings and soar high

The colorful butterfly

Adapts a painful path

To give birth to new life

Mother endures countless sufferings

River doesn’t stop at an obstacle

With force, it creates a new path

When its supporting base slips away

It transforms into a beautiful waterfall

If you stop because of a barking dog

You wont even reach your own house

If you fear criticism

You will never realize cherished dreams

A child falls and then gets up

Stands, walks and eventually runs

But one who is afraid of falling

Traps oneself in self-made cage

If you stop at every obstacle

Your goal will remain out of reach

Fearful of thorns in the path of life

You won’t gather the flowers you seek

Fire and Tears

Fire burns, light dazzles

Smoke rises, flame crackles

The heart conceals silent cries

While tears fall as rain from eyes

Fire’s nature is to burn

Be it for prayer or pyre in turn

Culprit who broke the heart is unaware

As the bleeding heart

Becomes its own urn

A dry thirsty leaf burns

Lit by flame of fellow leaves

Silently it turns to ash

The heart burns from deeds of kin

Can’t display to the world its pain

Fire burns, light dazzles bright

Smoke rises, flame crackles at night

Heart broken, but without a sound

Seeks help, but no one comes around

Water douses the shining flame

Smoke and ashes still remain

Tears flow, try washing away the pain

Heartache lingers, hurt stays the same

Fire burns, light dazzles

Smoke rises, flame crackles

The heart conceals silent cries

While tears fall as rain from eyes

Anger

A person becomes erupting volcano

Possessed by anger with blinding glow

Sizzling red lava erupts from the lips

Demolishes all that comes in its trips

Anger is the enemy of intellect,

A veil that shrouds clear thinking.

In a single moment, a lifelong bond

Can crumble like a fragile wall.

Anger is enemy of intellect

A veil covers rational thought

Lifelong relation In a single moment

Shake, tremble like a crumbling wall

Fueled by intoxication of wealth,

Jealousy, revenge or effect of booze

Lave burns itself in the flame

Ashes becomes victim’s frame

Sharp arrows of cruel harsh words

Create wound sharper than swords

New tender sapling afraid to grow

Rootless in the barren land below

The fire’s dazzle withered, tranquil

Its thunderous spectacle now silent

Branches charred, leaves crumbled to ash

Names fade away, fame and feelings vanish

The lava now seeks forgiveness

But it comes far too late

Victim charred by its fire

Has yielded to their ill fate

Eyes silently absorb their own tears

Heart quietly fades and disappears

A person becomes erupting volcano

Possessed by anger with blinding glow

Sizzling red lava erupts from the lips

Demolishes all that comes in its way

One Hand Clap

People say one hand can’t create a clap

I say—Wrong

One hand can create clap

But this time it is called slap

One rejoices joy of festivities

Whole community joins activities

Another, in a bout of anger

Strikes an unlucky cheek in danger

The meek receiver, hurt humiliated

Sobs alone, falls in their own eyes

In the presence of quiet family, friends

Innocent children receive wound

Which hurt at the time but never mends

A single-handed clap

Leaves wounds that last lifetime

Unopened bud gets crushed

Unable to open as flower in prime time

Two hands clap echos for few moments

Then air becomes tranquil

Memories linger in heart a few days

Before fading away in mind’s haze

One handed clap thunders

Imprints red marks on cheek

Indelible sound, pain in heart

Tears of memories linger forever

People say one hand can’t create a clap

I say—Wrong

One hand can create clap

But this time it is called slap

Cob Web

Trapped in my own cobweb

Spun with joy and fleeting glee

Planned to gather possessions

To become materially free

I created endless amount of threads

Became hard to keep, manage, let go

Spent lifetime collecting wealth

Now I realize it was never mine

Neglected health, family and friends

Even forgot the gift of sleep

Neither thought of God nor thanked

List, wandering in my own ways

Mother, father who gave me life

Raised me, nurtured me to grow

Lost in myself, I failed to see their tears

Each neglect deepening their silent fears

I never paused to ask if we needed

A lonely palace or a lively happy home

I woke up from dream when they all left

And wept staring at my own shadow

Time flows, never stops for anyone

Shattering all I created or stolen

I regret now why I chose to ignore

The wisdom elders had shared before

Only my web seemed indestructible

Neither storms or rain could destroy

I continued to live in this false hope

Until I fell into earth’s lap, repenting

Trapped forever in my own cobweb

Politicians

Politicians plunder the country

Blatant, brazen, without any shame

Before election they pose as our servants

After victory, all promises forgotten

Now they reign as kings, we as slaves

Politicians plunder the country…

Adorned in spotless white attire

They hide a heart full of dark desires

Conceal a dagger behind their back

While a rosary moves in their hand

Snakes with two mouths

They bite people every moment

Politicians plunder the country…

Whether they win or lose

All parties plunder the public

Who can we blame

We are destined for broken dreams

Politicians plunder the country…

Diamonds, pearls fill leaders’ house

While the poor public craves even dry bread

Cry as much as they can

There is no dearth of tears

Politicians plunder the country…

Politicians plunder the country

Blatant, brazen, without any shame

Reunion

Yesterday’s children are now seniors

No one feels or is called old

Oh, what a strident walk it was

Once overflowing hair, air blew

Now have to search for remaining few

Makkarh Makar, Madan Dan

Juginder is now called Jay

Outer appearance has aged

Now, real names taken away

The glitter of dreams once lit my eyes

Now cataracts cover open skies

We grew up in majestic, towering halls

Now they’re ruins of crumbling walls

Yesterday, we were blank pages

Only education, no material possessions

What will the pen of life write

Clueless, will future be dark or bright

We wrote some lines, others wrote too

Most penned by destiny, we never knew

In the book of life, we found some joys

Some pages spilled tears from our eyes

We left home with an empty clay pot

Hoping to fill it with cool, sweet water

Had dreams of service, name and fame

Money and high status in society’s frame

In path of life, may meet bride or groom

Where fragrant multi-color flowers will bloom

The lucky ones filled their sac with care

The unlucky, untimely met their maker

Some, thoughtful, planners and wise

Chiseled their own path under open skies

Others drifted like leaves in a stream

Carried by current to unknown dream

Some lost a little, discovered much more

Blessings they had never dreamt before

Some mindless of cost of their actions

In wrong company, later faced reactions

Some, by luck, others by hard work

Maintained a healthy lifestyle, never sick

Diseases, by many names, symptoms

Invaded and occupied others’ homes

After fifty years, will meet once more

A reunion never dreamt before

Through hard work of Jasbir and Madan

Revived many memories, once forgotten

Dormant are more memories, fewer dreams

We will revive, relive them once again

We are still alive, with zeal to enjoy

Met again, will sing songs of joy

Met again, will sing songs of joy

**(Happy Reunion— Class of 1966)**

Attitude

If our attitude is right

Life becomes beautiful

The life which began, will surely end

Some early, some late my friend

Moments granted between two ends

Cry or laugh, on attitude it’ll depend

Dawn arrived, eyes open, all parts working

Blessed are ones who awaken this way

Welcome them with humility, gratitude

With divine grace keep positive attitude

What we receive is matter of chance

Fill every moment with free will—sulk or dance

We are instruments of power beyond

Pull down others or rejoice as they advance

Person becomes poor by hoarding

Grows wealthy through sharing

Relieve pain of other’s suffering

Watch your own disappearing

What you have received in life

People yearn to get less than half

Don’t count blessings by other’s scales

Glittering lives may hide many sad tales

If our attitude is right

Life becomes beautiful

If our attitude is right

Life becomes beautiful

Shared Things

Shared thing becomes even sweeter

Yet, it loses nothing or make it lesser

It’s value becomes twofold, fourfold

Earns respect, leaves memories forever

All decorate their homes with plant and flowers

Those who adorn neighbor’s house

Both find joy and create bond forever

It’s easy to spend money on oneself

While the same money, by gifting

Can lift thousands of children from poverty

Dry their tears, never go to sleep hungry

Fruit ripens, makes itself sweet

Others eat, take seeds afar

Even in self-interest

Good can be done for others

I received more than needed

Was considered capable

Thousands drowned in sorrows of life

By sharing wealth God’s grace can be felt

Shared thing becomes even sweeter

Yet, it loses nothing or make it lesser

It’s value becomes twofold, fourfold

Earns respect, leaves memories forever

Jigsaw Puzzle

A thousand piece jigsaw puzzle

Put together, is colorful and complete

It looks unfinished and improper

If even one piece we delete

Nine hundred ninety-nine incomplete

Until the last one they meet

Each piece as essential as all the rest

Equally important—none better or best

Pieces can’t complete the picture

Until they all join hand in hand

A single player can’t alone create

A symphony or a melodious band

When someone cares and calls

Someone thinks of you and recalls

Their piece of puzzle is being missed

They’re concerned, you are safe and well

You are in their thoughts, want to tell

Each piece feels important and needed

Valued if someone unites all, puzzle completed

Don’t become haughty or too proud

Existence is transient—fragile floating cloud

Lucky Wealthy

By God’s grace, lucky wealthy

Can perceive sufferings of the world

What they received, give away

With an open heart, in selfless way

Such rare diamonds are born in this world

I often ask them the secret

They simply say, “What we’ve received by grace,

One lifetime is not enough to give back.”

He considered me capable

To fulfill His work through my hands

No desire for fame, no need for a prize

Quietly serve, improve downtrodden’s lives

Ignore the honors, medals or praise

Thank God endlessly all their days

By God’s grace, lucky wealthy

Can perceive sufferings of the world

What they received, give away

With an open heart, in selfless way

Summary of Ramayan

Father conceded to wife

Son conceded to father

Mareech became the golden deer

Ravan abducted Sita, held near

Filled his sack of sins, with no fear

Ram ate *ber* fed by Shabri with love

Monkey scorched Lanka with tail

Family traitor crumbled Lanka

Ram Lakhan brought Sita home

Bharat removed clogs from throne

Public lit oil lamps with joy

A washerman’s word caused her disgrace

Ram made her walk through fire

To retrieve her honorable place

Luv Kush born in Valmiki’s retreat

For twelve years Sita lived there, discreet

Sita suffered, earth swallowed her

Janaki lost her life

Ram preserved the family honor

Since then the world chants

“Victory to Sita Ram

Victory to Sita Ram”

Summary of Mahabharat

Kauravs Pandav paternal cousins

Fought for disputed piece of land

One picked Krishna for guide and wisdom

Other chose his army, force to win kingdom

When Arjun saw his own relatives as enemies

His mind and body became limp

After listening to Gita from Krishan

He grasped the truth

Clashed with teachers, family and friends

Sanjay with the divine eye

Recited events to blind Dhritrashtra

Hearing about death of hundred sons

Blind eyes filled with tears

Eighteen days of Kurukhyetra war

Thousands of soldiers got killed

Pandavs won, Kauravs lost

Pre-ordained play finished

Come all let’s chant

Victory to Bal Gopal

Victory to Kanahiya Lal

Victory to Lord Krishan

Hope of Loyalty

How can I talk about hope of

Loyalty from others

I myself never looked back

To see them

Din’t see overflowing tears, sobbing

Drooped, sagging shoulders

Flying birds did not even

See the last waving goodbye

Hurricane

Mistakes are made not only by humans

God does it repeatedly

Otherwise why the flooding

And the killer storm?

Ocean overtook the earth

Roaring clouds in the sky burst

Children, frail old drowned

As did youth after struggles

To bring the sea to land

Why such a mistake God?

Clock

Tic tic of the clock

Makes announcement every second

Wake up sleepy semi-comatose

Love God and His creation

Only a few moments remain

To display your love and be loved

Poets

Poets are a different breed

They live beyond color, race and creed

Mind shut, words spill from beyond brain

From silent void, gems appear, they claim

Every moment pregnant with unborn poetry

Nature’s limitless bounty stored in its pantry

Shut the mind, deeply feel the moment

Thoughts numb, mind still, words come in torrent

They see creation in a novel way

In their own sphere, aloof they stay

Fingers move by a higher crown

They’re not ruled by their mind

They accept no praise or accolades

Didn’t do anything of special kind

Just a conduit to transport here from beyond

Whose treasures anyone could have found

Goodbye Welcome

Perched on the wall of childhood, pondering

Time has come to stay, goodbye or welcome

Separation from one’s own is painful, full of sorrow

How to leave ones who are mine, my own shadow

Only yesterday I had arrived in this home

Learnt to cry, laugh, talk and walk alone

Blip of time between holding, slipping finger

In a blink of eye, courtyard will become alien

Sweet childhood, carefree night and day

Rising youth swallowed in a few moments

Aspirations, dreams, thinking have changed

New life, new goals and a world of my own

My future, wide open with choices says “welcome”

Bird learnt to fly, spreads its wings

Then pauses, wobbles and wonders

Move forward or cling to safe childhood

In such thoughts, anxious mind is drowned

Perched on the wall of childhood, pondering

Time has come to stay, goodbye or welcome

Time has come to stay goodbye or welcome

(Dedicated to Amartya, Jaya, Amaya and others as they turn 18, ready to go to college.)

Whisper

Leaves quiver as a whisper

Deer looked up, ignored it

Hidden lion leaped in a flash

Easy dinner without a clash

Drank much, began driving

Friends pleaded and objected

Youth oblivious of death

Crying father lit fire to pyre.

While playing tennis

Friend called in ball as out

Whisper ignored, joined business

Neither have money nor friend

I don’t smoke, thus refused

“Have one for me,” said friend

Didn’t recognize faint whisper

Died young, made family cry

God imbeds right voice in all

Dust of anger, pride, lust, greed settles

Voice of childhood swallowed by youth

Now it seems like shadow of whisper

If you want to choose right path

Focus on breath, uncover real self

Shake off the dust, awaken mind

Be aware, hear whisper again

Be aware, hear whisper again

Spring

Summer grants abundant leaves, fruits

Buds bloom flowers blossom

Pearly dew covers fresh shoots

What life gives

In time it snatches away

Autumn hits us all

Bad times, like winter

Sometimes hit us all

Bare branches suffer deadly ice

Burden of heavy snow

Earth spins around the sun

Gets back the life it bestows

Ice n snow accept defeat

Meekly melt, drip away

Have faith in God

When ups downs come your way

Have no doubt, bad times will pass as they came

Spring will arrive for sure

Buds will bloom again

What was taken away mercilessly

Will soon return again

Bad times, like winter, hit us all

Stay sturdy, hang in like brown branches

Spring will arrive, again, yet again

A Flower's Story By the Flower

In open air, proudly I frolicked, swayed

From colorful lips sweet fragrance sprayed

Multi-hued relatives, friends surrounded me

Butterflies sucked nectar, with a rare bumble bee

Having kissed one flower

They hopped onto the next

To please me, they played

Seven notes, sang happy songs

I used new ways to look prettier than others

Seeing reflection in water felt proud, shy, happy

Excessive beauty is good and bad too

Colorful fragrant youth is good and bad too

I relished passionate kissing, loving caress

Alas, my pretty face admired by flower vendor too

Seeking young color loaded flowers

His eyes picked me, but I was oblivious

Pretty flower will look lovely in flower vase

His evil eye saw fame and money in my face

In his mind, slayer had greedy thoughts and plans

Unaware innocent me, saw a lover in soon-to-be assassin

Wretched man pulled bright scissors from his bag

Grasped my neck, split me from my mom and dad

One swoop inflicted pain, shattered thousands dreams

For momentary pleasure, bundled my fellows and me

Heartless, he tied us with rope

Made us cry in a glass palace

To celebrate marriage, displayed my friends and me

For the couple we spilled blood, lost lives

Glued lovers swayed on the dance floor

Not even once they looked at me or my sacrifice x2

Evening gave way to night

My ears perked when someone mentioned me

"Very pretty is this big flower.

Must be very expensive!”

Heart cried hearing my life my dreams measured in money

No one heard my sobs or understood my suffering

Food dessert finished, no one even once thanked me

Some lucky ones went with guests, decorated homes

Unlucky ones like me ended up in trash can

I had imagined many dreams in my heart

Will have colorful life, will bloom for weeks

Will have my own world, seeds and lovely kids

No one can fight hand of destiny

Can’t prevent what is pre-destined

Had dreamt open sky, gentle cool breeze

Now gasping for last breath in rotted trash

My tears mingled with water

Yet I send blessings to the lovers

May they be happy and healthy

For whom I bled, got murdered

May they have a long life

May no one cut them

Before a full productive life

With half closed eyes in near coma

I send blessings their way

May no one cut them before full life

May no one cut them before full life

Color Blind

Sat a man of color in the doctor's waiting room

Looking neat and trim

A family chose to stand

Rather than sit next to him.

Family saw bad omen in this young man

Nurse called "Doctor will see you to discuss plan”

"Successful transplant!

Your daughter will live normal life."

End of grief!

Relieved, hugged each other and their daughter

A great sigh of relief!

Doctor called in the neat trim man

The donor of bone marrow

“Because of him your daughter is alive

She will see many a tomorrow.

Color of skin is different

Color of the blood and the marrow same.”

Full of guilt, they bowed down to him

Tears-filled eyes couldn’t look up in shame

A Moment

Agony of hours-long labor finally ends

Welcome cry in the air, laughter it sends

It's a girl, a boy, fingers, toes—set of fives

In a moment, miracle changes many lives

Non-stop actions, much laughter

Children convert house to a home

Days seem long, childhood flies fast

In a moment, they’re gone to college dorm

At the right time, with right person

A momentary smile

Changes their lives forever

Shaping generations to come

A moment of anger is scar for ever

Arrow once shot, returns to bow never

Moment of anger, greed, a moment of lust

Can crush life to a pile of dust

In a moment, vibrant world gets dark forever

His eye’s protective cells clumped together

No more sunrise, moon, family to be seen ever

With vision lost, eyes only shed tears of despair

A blind eye, a paralyzed limb, slurred speech

Immobile heap of mass, a helpless stare

In a moment, arrival of wheelchair and walker

Stroke paralyzed vocal cords of constant talker

A plane soaring safely touching the sky

In a moment, in the mountain its ashes lie

A cabin filled with people, bubbling with life

In a moment, unexpectedly they are lifeless

A hurried wrong cut nicks a bleeder

Turns successful surgery to fatal disaster

Wrong sequence of four elements, in a moment

Transforms perfect gene to a recipe of cancer

Eye turned down for text or phone chime

Switch radio station or check the time

One extra drink, a pill or drug, in a moment

End the circle of life for passengers innocent

Momentary flash of insight leads to discovery

In a flash, Hiroshima Nagasaki were history

Earth moves for a few moments

Houses tumble, bridges break down

Crushes all, whether poor or wear a crown

A moment, an innocent blip in endless time’s stream

Yet a moment can pierce a bullet to life full of dreams

A moment of imbalance on top of a cliff

Brings down summit’s victor as a fallen, lifeless leaf

A moment of yes or a moment of no

To a drug offered by a friend or a foe

A “yes” assures a path of misery, strife

A “no ” predicts a beautiful fruitful life

Think for a moment before throwing a stone

An insult, a harsh glance or degrading tone

In a moment, you can break a bubbly, lively heart

Can't mend broken thread without leaving a knot

A moment is transient, never to be seized again

A moment is a priceless, free treasure chest

Use it wisely, with careful intent

Once it is gone, it’s forever spent

Make most of what destiny has sent

Give a moment of your time to ones you love

Share a moment with friend or unknown

A hug to loved ones, caring glance to child, grandchild

Change world forever by giving a moment of your life

Life is long, but moment is short, yet potent

No one knows how to a measure a moment

Yet moment often defines essence of life

Powerful enough to alter forever many a life

With possibilities, moment is pregnant

Unleash it, move ahead or stay stagnant

Love the moment, watch the moment

Live in the moment, spend it wisely

With body, mind, spirit and love

A glance, a gentle touch, blessing from above

Seize the moment, get rewards for life

Miss the moment, leads to endless strife

Be A Sun

💥

Illuminate whatever you touch

Be a giver—receivers seek much

Your light is free for all, expect nothing back

Recipients circle spin, follow your track

Give light to others, unaffected by them

They use or misuse, not for you to judge

Others may take you for granted

Keep glowing even if you feel unwanted

You were born to shine, stay detached

Spend days giving, no strings attached

Be not proud of your bright rays

One who made you, gave limited days

So my daughter and my son

Stay bright, giving like a sun

Be a sun

Moon

🌕

Facing red-hot glow of the sun

Moon's face became pale, faded

Stars abandoned and deserted

Moonlight got jaded, then vanished

Moon hangs lonely in the sky

Nervous, alone, it felt ill-fated

Everyone prays to the rising sun

In hard times, friends turn and run

They had promised support forever

Now alone, no one ready to come

Where they see glitter of gold

Make new friends, forget the old

Brothers, sisters, friends forgotten

They discard me as if I am rotten

Yesterday, kith and kin were dear

Avoid my shadow, nor come near

"Watch your status before you appear"

Such piercing taunts now I hear

I too used to have good days,

Now life has torn my inside

Have to carry my own burden

My own have departed my side

Complain not O dear moon

It’s matter of few hours

Sun's heat will burn off

Red hot hue will fade with time

You will reign the sky once more

Your night will glitter as before

Fresh moonlight will return

Departed stars will come home

Sheets of joy will softly billow

Will engulf you in their dome

After dark moments, comes the light

After sad days, peace and joy alight

With faith, strength within the heart

Clouds vanish, moonlight, stars are bright

Moon once again shines bright

Happy moon again glows at night

Word Power

Thousands of words in the market

Come, let’s pick up what we want

Some are attached with briers

Some like colorful flowers fragrant

Some spread laughter and hope

Others hurt worse than sharp thorns

Some double the weight of sorrow

While a few divide misery in half

Gentle words dry tears of destitute, sad

Cruel words make happy ones cry or mad

Two words of hope make fallen walk again

Discouraging ones kill the will to move again

Burning lava erupts, turns friend to foe

Sweet words change stranger to lover and grow

Unwise words in anger erect lasting wall

Kind ones soak us like a gentle waterfall

Harsh words said behind back, when reach the prey

Beautiful relationships of years, in a moment fray

Some words better said by eyes with lips closed

Some when uttered, eyes look down in shame

Some words I want to say, but listeners are no more here

They become prisoners in heart, then flow out in tears

Untimely harsh words tear people apart

Speaker unaware, listener crumbles in heart

“Sunken cheeks, lost weight, grown weak”

Depressing words make recovering patient sick again

A word of encouragement to someone down and out

A shelled talent in a seed awakens, makes it sprout

Words are mighty powerful

Even one can change the world

Weigh the words before they are expressed

They don’t return, like an arrow leaving the bow

They don’t return like an arrow leaving the bow

Taken For Granted

From our balcony, views of Pittsburgh

Awesome, breathtaking, out of the world

Tall varied textured buildings lit bright

Some days soaked in golden sunshine

At nights embraced by fog or moon light

Like at birth, a newborn draws gasps

Same feelings spurted; our jaw drops.

What man did to enhance miracle of nature

How lucky to be living in such a treasure

People throng the Viewpoints

Fill benches, line walking trail

Lip-locked lovers, walkers, bikers

Zippy kids, occasional old and frail

See, hear oos and aahs, cameras click

Come hooded, bundled in winter thick

In rain ponchos, covered head to toe

In summer, half-naked bodies they show

Limos on Grand View Avenue for special occasion

Celebrate parties for birthdays, weddings, just fun

Sunrise shimmers on windy river

On glass buildings sunset quivers

Best view of the city of bridges

Glorified scenes of valleys and ridges

Two beautiful rivers, like two lovers

Eager to meet where Point ends

They merge into the mighty One

Fountain witnesses new life just begun

With every passing day

Thrill of the view got dim and jaded

Starry lights not as bright

Nights same old dull-n-faded

Some wish for a higher floor

For better views of open sky

Some with acrophobia

Nervous, wish it was not so high

I hate PPG building with its high towers

Blocks views of sky, where fireworks shower

It’s shining glass is no longer a mirror

Buildings blocks view of Allegheny River

Monongahela no longer shiny blue

Its water dull, murky brown

Train's whistle ear-piercing noise

Causes conversations to drown

Roaring cars and bikes are pain in ears

Black soot covers windows, tables and chairs

The Point is a sticking finger of land

Jutted between two rivers, third began

Days and nights roll by

We don’t open drapes to have a peek

Nothing special is happening

Monongahela seems like another creek

Similarly—life gets taken for granted

Our breath, vision of eyes, beating of heart

Trillion cells work smoothly, doing their part

Only shortcomings, faults, defects are highlighted

Regrets, worries of past, anxiety of future are noted

Even makers of our body, our parents are forgotten

Often cursed many a time, wrong gene or action

Among thousands perfect ones, become actors in crime

Nature or God, not thanked or acknowledged

Everything, with time, gets taken for granted

Only pitfalls highlighted to grumble and whine

Complaints take front stage, get rubbed to shine

Views of the Burgh and miracles of life

They all, with time, get taken for granted

They all, with time, get taken for granted

Mountain Cries

Many have shed tears of love and joy on my shoulders

Snow, rain, tears soak me, trees roll down as boulders

My shrieks and tears display my deep sorrow

I go to sleep, wonder if I'll see sun of tomorrow

Outwardly healthy but suffering silently inside

I look mighty, but bleed, weak hollow inside

I support mansions, tolerate deep cuts, tunnels in me

Pieces of flesh detach from my body, helpless I see

Millions get across—over, through cuts in my body

Thousands live on me, I happily carry everybody

I give golden views of the Burgh, best in the nation

Platform where millions pledge to live their imagination

Nothing stays young forever, I get old as we all

Land slides, bit by bit making me feeble and small

Many a mama tell children "Don't cry, you are a big boy"

I am mighty and big, but I must seek help as a little boy

My tears erupting rolling down my cheek

Watch landslides, open gashes you can peak

Not for long I can carry people, buildings and roads

Stop my bleeding mudslides, the ground it erodes

Give me grass, creepers, strong rooted many a tree

They will hold me together, please do it for you and me

Don't litter me with plastic, paper, cans and glass

They don't let plants grow, kill my precious grass

Help, hold, support me like I have done for ever

Without help, future generations will see me never

Come see my tears as desperately in public I cry

I know, with your love, you will heal me, make my eyes dry

I know, with your love, you will heal me, make my eyes dry

If Not Now, When?

Pace of life is same for all

Neither fast nor slow for anyone

King or pauper, big or small,

Destination same, known to all

Life is short, many dreams in heart

Draw them, paint them, give them life

Tomorrow's sun may or may not rise

Dreams of night may stay unfulfilled

What you want to achieve, do it now

If not now, when?

Greed of name, wealth eclipsed children, wife

Busy every moment earning fame in life

Face of death waiting at the next crossing

Children swiftly leave home on to their path

Play, laugh, make them laugh and think

If not now, when?

Before disease claims you as its home

Joints freeze, breath falters, mouth emits wails

Water the flowers before they wither

Save the iron before it rusts and ruins

Time, once gone, never returns

Preserve the body before it shrivels

If not now, when?

Fulfill heart’s every desires

Open sky showers gifts, fill your tote

With luck, some time is still left

Harm no one, then do what needs done

In not now, when ?

Friends and family are advising

Brother—stop, listen, wake up

If not now, when?

If not now, when?

**Where Did Our Old USA GOWhere Did Our Old USA GO**

Had dreams of a country where rivers flowing milk, roads were glittery gold

Where Homeless

Homeless

I am jobless, moneyless, homeless

Can’t raise eyes, I am not shameless

Don’t pity my torn clothes, the sign

Look at my eyes, I am not faceless

Like you, I had family, friends, home

Sunshine of parents stars of my own

Don’t know when, how all got eclipsed

Life’s colors faded, became dreamless

I ask, plead, beg but never steal

Famished, looking for next meal

Hunger pain rarely felt by most

Wish my condition they can feel

Jobless, moneyless, homeless, hopeless

Traffic lights, intersections are hope but mirage

Painful steps I take when pacing the floor

A look, smile, a dollar make me briefly painless

But then again—

Jobless, moneyless, homeless, hopeless

Cant raise eyes, I am not shameless

Cant raise eyes, I am not shameless

Where a raised thumb stopped a car to carry weary needy traveler on the road

Where Did Our America GO

I had dreams of a country

Where milk flowed in the rivers

Roads were painted with shiny gold

American dreams had no bounds

With ambition, goals and grit bold

Where a raised thumb, story untold

Stopped a car to kindly carry

Weary, safe traveler on the road

Where neighbors brought welcome baskets

For new arrivals from home and abroad

Where people, properties were respected

Young ones honored, who cared for the old

Forever, a country of legal immigrants

Not seen as criminals or dissidents

New faces were wrapped in residents’ fold

Where they helped the needy and the bold

Where police were respected, esteemed

They were parents, brothers for ones in need

Who cared for white, black, brown and all

Whether people were at home or on the road

Where kids walked alone safely to school

Within ear shot, in dark nights, giggles roared

Where teachers were respected

Schools a sanctuary for students

A safe place to learn and play

Where doors were open, with no lock

Neighbors were one family on the block

Alarm systems, security cameras

Were not part of schools or homes

Where guns were used to hunt

Machine guns only in war zones

Children needed no gun drills

In the schools or at their homes

Where drugs were medicines

People could afford

Now people skip meals for medicine

While drugs kill teens in hoards

Where word of mouth equaled notarized paper

Over coffee or a meal

A handshake enough to seal the deal

Where ideas, viewpoints and opinions

Didn't make others enemy of the land

Agreed or not, we all were

One Nation as one family

Solving problems at hand

Unity in diversity, all lived in peace

As united as rainbow bright

Together they created common light

It was not too long ago

Where proud Americans

Lived, laughed, played ball

With dreams of equality

There was justice for all

*That was not too long ago*

Where did *that* old America go

Where did our old America go

Where neighbors sent welcome baskets to new arrivals Where Did Our Old USA GO

from home and abroad

People,

Let There Be No Next Time

Let there be no next time

Children victims of gun crime

Youth slain before their prime

Buds crushed in springtime

Prayers come from the clergy

Politicians vow hollow energy

Vigil flames flicker transient unity

Blame insane mind no one can see

Let love displace angry hate

Let peace replace inner rage

Let’s all live in one image

Free from recurring rampage

Let there be no next time

Children victims of gun crime

*And again*, wailing sirens chime

It’s old familiar dreaded time

Parents rush to scene of crime

Broken hearts cry, *Why* *mine*?

In lifeless children, I sadly see

Blood-stained daughters, sons

They may not be my own

But they are fellow Americans

*In place of wreaths and flowers*

*Lay down once and forever*

*AR-15 rifles*

*AK-47 rifles*

Let there be no next time

Please, please

Let there be no next time

properties respected; young ones respected, cared for the old

Country of immigrants didn’t see criminals in news faces but took them in their fold

Where Americans reached out to needy at home or abroad

Where police were respected and police cared for white black or brown on the road

Where kids walked alone to school, played outside till dark, giggles in air roared

Where teachers were respected, schools a sanctuary for students, safe places to learn

Where doors were not locked, alarm systems, security cameras not part of homes

Where guns were used to hunt, machine guns only in war zones

Kids needed no gun drills in schools or homes

Where drugs were medicines people could afford

Now people skip meals for medicine

Drugs killing teens in hoards

Where a word of mouth was good as a notarized paper, a shake of hand

Where we had problems, issues and opinions not making others enemy of the land

Agree or not we were one Nation together solving problems at hand

Unity in diversity, white light emitting colors of rainbow in full free display

Where lived proud Americans

with dreams of equality, justice for all

Not too long ago

Where did that old USA go

Where did our old USA go

Had dreams of a country where rivers flowing milk, roads were glittery gold

Where American dreams had no bounds with ambition, grit, hard work, goals bold

Where a raised thumb stopped a car to carry weary needy traveler on the road

Where neighbors sent welcome baskets to new arrivals from home and abroad

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Where did our old USA gLaughterLaughter

Laughter

Poker

If you plan to convert

Truth to lie and lie to winning

Bring other’s wealth

To your home

Brother, learn Poker

If with luck, cards are good

And you win

You believe you are super smart

Brother, learn Poker

In life not everyone wins

By lack of just one card

House comes tumbling down

Brother, learn Poker

Your success is

Someone else’s loss

If you make them cry

To feel happy

Brother, learn Poker

Cards may be weak or strong

Happens due to luck

Learn to be happy in

What life serves

Brother, learn Poker

Happy in victory

Cry in loss

It’s a matter of two days

New card will bring new hope

Brother, learn Poker

By Grace of God

Got a chance to play

Game of poker or life

If you want to win in both

Choose means to happiness

Don’t blame luck

Brother, learn Poker

Brother, learn Poker

Wife

I wish to have such a wife

Who stays as my slave

Whether it’s morning or night

Height should be

Five feet three inches

Whose jeans are tight

Hair are like dark clouds

Is fair white colored

Face always shows a smile

She never has a fight with me

I wish to have such a wife…

She has a job away from house

At home she serves my mom and dad

Keeps house shining like a mirror

Makes fresh food everyday

When I return after playing golf

She gives me a refreshing massage

I wish to have such a wife…

She gives us a dozen kids

Our cricket team grows at home

Noisy Carnival becomes our home

She manages the whole army

Gives a chilled beer in my hand

I wish to have such a wife…

I wish to have such a wife

Who stays as my slave

Whether it’s morning or night

Husband

Oh God, give me a such a husband

Wakes up at dawn, touches my feet

Brings me biscuits and tea

Wakes me up with tender love

“Open your eyes my beloved”

Oh God, give me a such a husband

Before waking me up

He gets children ready for school

Prepares healthy breakfast too

To keep up with my expenses

Works outside for sixteen hours

Oh God, give me a such a husband…

All the money which he earns

Puts all of it in my hand

Gets me five Visa cards

Takes me for shopping in the mall

Gifts me shoes, gold, clothes, jewels

Oh God, give me a such a husband

He irons my clothes

Polishes my nails with a smile

Shines my shoes till they gleam

He dresses me for parties

Opens door of my Bentleys

Oh God, give me a such a husband

His smile mimicks Aamir Khan

Has hair-style like Dev Anand

His cheeks glow red

He is tall like Amitabh

And walks like Salman Khan

Oh God, give me a such a husband

Oh God, give me a such a husband

Wakes up at dawn, touches my feet

Brings me biscuits and tea

Wakes me up with tender love

“Open your eyes my beloved”

Oh God, give me a such a husband

Playful Quarrel of Husband Wife

A musical skit

Curtain rises.

A man wearing white doctor’s coat is sitting on a sofa.

On a side table close to him there is a stethoscope and picture of Goddess Lakshmi. He is reading Wall Steet Journal with bold words of Wall Street facing the audience.

He puts down the paper.

He addresses Goddess Lakshami—Om, Om, Om Lakshmi Mata, please give us your blessings today. Stocks have been sinking for so many days. Our portfolio is shrinking. Intel, Boeing, Cisco, they all keep dropping like dominos. They are all in deep sleep. Pleasewake them up. Please! For two days I have been fasting. Please shower us with prosperity.

Om, Om, Om

He picks up the paper and starts scanning the paper.

Wife enters the stage from the right side. She has a glittering, expensive looking red Sari on her outstretched left forearm. She looks at it from different angles.

She says—Oh, you have arrived! Why so late?

Again falling into traps of stocks and bonds!

(Husband folds the paper, puts it on the table.)

Playfully says—Done. As ordered.

Now what can I do for you?

Wife’s eyes are still on the sari—Do you remember what day it is today?

Husband thinks and says—Today…today is Saturday.

I work six days every week. I am so tired.

Wife—No, today is our 25th anniversary!

(Husband nervously gets up.

Puts his hand on her shoulder.)—

Oh, I forgot! Forgive me.

I didn’t even bring a gift for you.

It is already so late. First thing in the

morning…

Wife interrupts—Before the wedding you brought roses everyday day, took me to movies. Sometimes brought gifts beyond your means. Got married and all is forgotten !

Husband—I am really sorry.

Wife—I knew that you are busy. That’s why I brought a sari from your side.

Look, isn’t it gorgeous?

It has diamonds and pearls stitched in it.

Husband touches it —This is beautiful. It will look perfect on you. Hope it’s not too expensive.

Wife—I am a doctor’s wife. If I wear a cheap sari, people will think that you are not a good doctor!

That’s why I spent only twenty five thousands.

Husband—Twenty five thousand rupees?

Wife—You are such a simpleton.

You live in America and spend in rupees!

It is *only* twenty five thousand.

(Husband acts like he might faint. Holds edge of chair.)

Husband—What?

Wife—Mrs. Verma doesn’t even look at

saris less than fifty thousand.

I spent only twenty five thousand.

That also when it was on sale.

(Husband plops down on the sofa.

Holds his head between his hands.

Wife slowly moves toward him.

Husband stands up. In anger he sings—)

Husband—you keep spending, I keep earning

As if the money comes free x 2

Wife—you buy stocks, thousands of bonds

Don’t like if I buy a sari x2

Don’t like if I buy only one sari

You buy thousands of stocks

Husband—Managed care has tortured me

HMO snubs me

Lawyers have stolen my sleep

Medicare parted their ways

Before sunrise, after moon rise

Your husband finally comes home

You keep spending

Wife—You are always mistaken

You work all day and I keep sleeping

It’s not easy to run household

I scrub your dishes, wash the clothes

Make food for all

Raise your children

Whole day is tiring and non-stop

You keep buying stocks…

(They look at each other lovingly, embrace, hold hands.)

Husband—Had no idea you are in this shape

Wife—Now I know why you are distressed

Both—Hold my hand my love

You hold me and I support you

Whether we pass our days crying or laughing

Time of life zips by either way

Wife teases him—You keep earning I keep spending

Life is much more fun

Husband pointing finder—You keep spending

Wife—You buy stocks

Both leave stage pointing finger of one hand while holding the other, and laugh

Two Aspects of Money

Cursed money, Cursed money

What a disease did I get

Made my parents cry

Made me forget my country

Cursed money, cursed money

Wow money, Wow money

Never saw anything like you

You make high palaces

You get me diamonds and pearls

Wow money, wow money

Money blinds the eyes

Makes the ears deaf

Puts lock on the mind

Makes us do works of illegal kind

Cursed money, cursed money

People bend over to me, do salutation

Leaders do my bidding

Gets me big name in society

It fixes all failed tasks

Wow Money, wow money

Creates animosity in brothers, sisters

Makes our own become strangers

Shatters relationships of friends

Scale of money becomes heavier

Cursed money, cursed money

I buy most expensive cars

Diamond studded saris

Buy whatever I want

I even buy my friends

Wow money, wow money

Did not see kid’s childhood

Saw only path of money

Worked sixteen hours a day

Sacrificed home for money

Cursed money, cursed money

Helps me travel the whole world

Brings the stars, moon to earth

Money is gold mine of joy

Wow money, wow money

Money is transient mirage

It may come and go

It is not going to go with us

Why forgot wealth of Ram’s name?

Why forgot your real self?

Cursed money, cursed money

Can’t get Ram with money

Can’t get Shyam with money

Wherever the money is king

There is no love, peaceful living

Recognize this truth today

Recognize this truth today

Cursed money, cursed money

(Person who loves the money wrings his hands.

He cannot come up with an answer.

He bows down to touch Swami Ji’s feet and says)

You are blessed and have blessed me with the truth of life. You have shown me path of joy and peace

For that I thank you thousand fold.

(This can be a skit. One actor tapes or pins fake currency notes on shirt or jacket. A colorful handkerchief shows in upper pocket. He wears fancy sunglasses which he takes off after singing couple of lines. Other character wears orange clothes, wooden sandals and has a peaceful smile.

Drunkard

Drunkard’s mouth is made for alcohol

Drunkard’s mouth is made for alcohol

India’s Johnny Walker lives in Bombay

His Johnny has home in Scotland

Evening arrives, gulps start

Friends render full support

Drunkard’s mouth is made for alcohol

Single malt but peg is double

He has fun but wife has trouble

Got beaten with a shoe

Even then his mouth glued to the bottle

Drunkard’s mouth is made for alcohol

First peg makes them lion

Second converts to monkey

His face resembles face of pig

When the third one goes in

Become relative of Kumbhkaran

Snores, let no one else sleep

Drunkard’ mouth is made for alcohol

Drunkard’ mouth is made for alcohol

Modern Diwali

No flowers, no platter for prayer

No one recites name of Ram

Movie songs are now hymns

Holy water is now whiskey drink

No bell rang in the temple

No sound of holy conch

Clinking glasses are

The beats beat of songs

Offerings is not on the idol

It is on the game of poker

Didn’t ask God for peace and joy

Mind is fixed on a full house

No incense stick or black cone

Saw swirling rings of smoke

When cigarette lit, with sniff of coke

Didn’t read Sundarkand

No one read Hanuman Chalisa

Naughty group tells dirty jokes

Leaning in like the tower of Pisa

Feet stumble, lips tremble

Alcohol shows it’s real form

Prostrating—not due to devotion

Whiskey knocked him down

In loud noise, everyone screams

No one listens to other’s talk

Everyone greets with Happy Diwali

No one hears other’s problem

Arriving guests walked in erect

For Diwali with friends to celebrate

After dinner— few conscious, most not

Started driving their car

Lamps have vanished

Strings made in China

Light up the house

How will children ever know

The Diwali of our childhood

Oh my brothers and sisters

What have we all done

We have bankrupted Diwali

Have made it faded and distressed

Stop the outer glitter and glow

Light up our inner lamp

Stop the modern Diwali

Revive the Diwali of childhood

Stop the modern Diwali

Revive the Diwali of childhood

Johnny’s Headache

Curtain rises.

There is a sofa on the stage, side tables on both sides.

A telephone is placed on left one.

A table lamp sits on each table.

Johnny’s wife, Mary is dusting the

right lamp.

Johnny enters from the same side.

He has his hand on the head and

expression showing intense

headache.

He starts to sing—Mary O Mary

Irritated Mary says—What now!

Johnny—My head is splitting with pain

And heart is sinking again

Before my soul departs

Call a doctor right away

Call a doctor right away

( He sits on the sofa.)

(Mary picks up phone and dials

family doctor’s number)

Mary—Doctor, hurry, don’t delay

My husband is sick, come right away

Who else will help, who else will mend

Without your help, this might be the end

(Doctor enters from right side.

He is wearing a white doctor’s coat

and has a stethoscope hanging around his neck.)

Doctor—Who is the patient in need?

Who do I need to save with speed?

Who do I need to save

Keep away from the grave

Johnny-—My headache is getting much worse

I can feel it grow

It may a big stoke

(He slides down from the sofa and sits on floor)

Johnny—Leaving the party

Soon I’ll be gone

If you remember me…

(Lies down on the floor, stops breathing with eyes closed)

Mary—On no! Wish you had completed the song!

(Johnny gets up and sings.)

—If you remember me, don’t cry too long

( Again lies down, eyes close and there is no breathing. Doctor checks his pulse. Puts stethoscope on the chest, then smiles.)

Doctor—Johnny’s number was called

God pulled his spring

Mary—*String*, not *spring*

Doctor—God pulled his spring

Mary—Not *spring. It is string, string*!!

Doctor—God pulled his string

Mary—Yes! Doctor

Let’s dance like it is spring

Doctor—Mary, let’s dance like it is spring

Mary—Yes Doctor!,

Now let’s dance like it is spring

Both sing together —Let’s dance like it is spring

(They hold hands, look and smile at each other.

They walk off the stage out as they keep repeating the duet)

Lights dim and curtain falls.

Circle of Life

They get married with pomp and show

Children appear before they know

Cheers to the children

They are Mom Dad’s ornaments

Excited, they go on honeymoon

But got into accident soon

Two had gone, three returned

Hard times arrived, they learned

Mother endured nine months pain

Papa nervous night and day

House too small, money is tight

Hair will get grey or shed outright

They cry all night

And sleep all day

Sleeping face looks like God

When awake change to ghost

Forgot difficulties of day and night

When eyes open they go to school

Learn two words of English, they proclaim

“Mom Dad are ignorant and plain”

In two moments they become teenagers

We become soldiers while they majors

Now they own all intelligence

Complain about everything relentless

They enter our home like birds

Season changes they fly away

Guests for fleeting two days

Truth is they stay part of our lives

Even when they follow their ways

Whatever they do

Wherever they live

They are pieces of our hearts

Always live in our hearts

(Before we know, these pieces grow up. What do they do?)

They get married with pomp and show

Children appear before they know

Cheers to the children

They are Mom Dad’s ornaments

(Circle of life starts again and goes on for ever)

Covid

(One man is sitting on a rocking chair. He is wearing gloves on hands, mask on his face. On the center table are books, plastic-wrapped TV remote. On a side table he has box of Lysol wipes, disposable gloves, alcohol, hand sanitizer, and pulse oximeter. There is a big sign on the wall near the front door—Jail.

Sings a song—

Where do I go and hide

No matter where I look

I see Corona by my side

Cover mouth wash my hands

Heart thumps, sinks, still scared

Wondering where it may hide

Someone coughs ahead

Someone sneezes behind

A hidden virus, hard to escape

Keep distance of six feet

Where can I go and hide.

House has become jail

Freedom feels distant and over

Shops are closed

Doomsday is here

Leaders are clashing

Public is shattered

Where do I go and hide

Where do I go and hide

No matter where I look

I see Corona by my side

Expensive Onions

Tired, defeated I returned from office

Found my wife unconscious

On the kitchen floor

Hearing my voice

She opened her eyes

Showed the empty bag on the floor

“I went to the market to buy onions

Hearing its price my body went cold

He asked hundred rupees for only half kilo

My legs shook violently, pulse became zero

Sweat on the face, my breath became tight

It all got dark like moonless night

Wobbling, falling I reached my door

Too weak to sit, I laid down on the floor

Now you know reason of fainting

Onions are more expensive than gold

Humble onions cost much more

Than glittering gold.”

Stocks

Buyer of stocks

Wonder what clouded your mind

Lost all your money

You lost even the last dime

Money which blistered your feet

Gave ulcers in stomach, endangered life

Money blocked arteries of heart

Yet, you are squandering it all

Why gamble away hard earned money

Buyer of stocks

Wonder what clouded your mind

Lost all your money

You lost even the last dime

The day you learnt how to spell “stock”

You crown yourself as Peter Lynch

If,by chance, your stock climbs up

You sing happy songs in gatherings

What you claim to be your money

Soon it will be in a different hand

Lost all your money

Buyer of stocks

Wonder what clouded your mind

Lost all your money

You lost even the last dime

All night sleep slips away

Haunted by stock you had one day

Dead ones do not return

Why shed tears for them

Buy municipal bonds—safe and sound

Dolly taught you with wisdom profound

Lost all your money

Buyer of stocks

Wonder what clouded your mind

Lost all your money

You lost even the last dime

Few Colors of America

(Wherever you live, there will be flowers and thorns. America has innumerable flowers. There are some associated thorns. After flying to the USA, a dialogue happens between husband and wife.)

Wife—Where are you taking me co-traveler

What is this place beyond the stars?

Husband—Dreams of stars didn’t realize

Reached America, luck was not on our side

Some of weird ones reached Weirton

It’s not the dark monsoon cloud

It’s a ball of smoke from mills around

Here you are helper, servant, gardener

You are washerman and chauffeur

It’s impossible to sit even two minutes

Why cry or regret now

You get what is destined

Palaces here rise wide and tall

But hearts are small in all

Money rules first, love may come later

One who gives business and dough

Is the best person to whom they bow

Buy friendship, buy love

Dollar is mightier than relatives

Had heard dollars grow on trees

Pockets are full, empty are hearts

Life is trapped in a golden cage

Buy diamonds, stocks or bonds

Day and night stories stay

Chasing wealth in endless way

In this country, night and day

Bullets are showered every day

Curse of religion, racial divide prevail

Children become prisoners, schools are jails

Neighbors look as strange as when met first

Loneliness numbs the mind, home a silent grave

Dreams of stars didn’t realize

Reached America, luck was not on our side

Seventeenth Birthday

Yesterday’s boy is now old

Considers himself young and bold

He runs two yards

Pants for breath, hands get cold

More on face, less on head

It’s season of falling hair

Eyes don’t see, ears hear not

Whichever part you touch is soft

Flirts with girls around him

He is still young at heart

He runs two yards

Pants for breath

Looking at lines on the face

Hand depressed with shame

Has dyed the hair

How hide hair on chest

Get face lift

Shave the chest

So, no one can recognize

Runs two yards

Pants for breath, hands get cold

Those who know Piki Madan

Consider yourself lucky

They always have songs on their lips

Slaps of life, no one knows

Silently they hide all in their hearts

Conceal their sorrows make people laugh

Yesterday’s boy is now old

Considers himself young and bold

Runs two yards

Pants for breath, hands get cold

Pants for breath, hands get cold look

( This parody was written for our good friends. By changing names it can be sung at any old person’s birthday.)

Phone

Save us, a thief has entered our house

Help, help! Please save us

Forgot the world, ignored sleep

Fell in love with my phone

Forgot relatives and friends

Now my near and dear seem strangers

I see shadow of small shiny phone

This is the rival, this is co-wife

It has snatched away serenity

A playing laughing family

Is full of tears as they cry

Cancer has cure but it has defeated all

Thief is the small shiny phone

Eyes glued, hands caress it

No one ever talks

It has become the companion

During our nature walks

Tongue replaced by finger tips

A strange new era has arrived

Sleep with it at night

Attached during day

If goes misplaced, hidden from eyes

Heart skips a beat

How do we kick it out

It’s now the master

Old tools vanished

It has swallowed all

Camera,GPS, calculator faded

This small object enslaved us all

We follow its ways and means

Lovers locked in embrace

Eyes glued on their screens

Eyes and neck are bent down

As if Mughal Raj has resurfaced

Thief has entered our house

We see shadow of shiny phone

Help, help

Please save us

Old age, Disease and Death

Get Older but Not Old

Be grateful—you are healthy, alive

Millions are not so lucky

Not every night is blessed with sunrise

Be happy, grateful—always

Times could’ve be worse

Count your blessings;

It’s easy to count what’s missing

I asked astrologer

“How many days left for me to live”

“As many as people you serve

God will double them and give”

Stay fully alive as long as

Breath flows in and out

If you are useful to the needy

Flowers will bloom in desert’s drought

With life, number of years will increase

Not essential, number of youth will decrease

All of us will meet death some day

Not necessary before dying to decay

It’is natural with age to get older

Not necessary with age to get old

My Age

My children have grown old

Grandchildren now adults

Yet I remain robust and young

My mind forgot to age

Don’t recognize image in the mirror

From where did this old man appear?

Get discount without showing senior card

What kind of world have I entered?

People call me uncle

I question their sanity

My siblings grew frail and old

But I am still the young kid

Such feelings stir in the mind

I still run fingers on my head

Even if it’s flat empty land there

How did it become dry and barren

Lush black waving field was there

To save ink and thereby money

Newspapers print small, faded words

To avoid getting throat ache

People speak in hushed whispers

Children read news on TV, teach me!

A strange world is here

My doctor looks like a school-kid

Age of Kali is definitely near

Wrinkles, joint pains, breath is short

Belong to someone else’s lot

How did they enter my body

Wrong address, the sender got

Sibling’s faces show senile decay

A faint thought crosses my brain

Tomorrow it may be *my* turn

Can’t believe I will not exist

Now friends, family start tumbling

Make many trips to crematorium

See myself wrapped in white sheet

I hear people talking about me

Don’t know where the years have gone

Now I start schemes to stretch them

List of medicines keeps growing

Hear talks of operations and dying

I had received innumerable days

Enough to fulfill desires my way

Dreams and wishes bright and clear

What’s the rush, tomorrow is near

Dusk arrived but tomorrow failed

Tell me, my friends, is this fair?

My sun is setting beyond the line

It will become dark—never shine

Teach the new crop of tomorrow

Let go bitter memories and sorrow

Cherish sweet moments you have

Live fully, spread joy to those in need

Even though age appears long

It is fleeting, short, then gone

Forget complaints, regrets and strife

Light up this moment and vibrant life

Light up this moment and vibrant life

New Photos of Old Friends

When I see new photos of my old friends

I search for colorful palaces in the ruins

Half-bloomed goals, desire for stars

See lifeless pieces of broken dreams

Behind worry lines, wrinkles

Sagged shoulders, a shuffling walk

I look for signs of youth on tired faces

See remnants of stumbles and blows

I don’t know when the clouds

Covered their shiny glitter

Thick hair blew away

Few survivors lost their color

Slaps of life deformed straight waists

Walkers, wheel chairs appear

I see all signs of frail old age

I notice a flicker of hope in faint smile

Less dreams or wishes of the future

Loneliness creates a dark cocoon

Waiting eyes moist, then tears unseen

I see weak, tired, defeated frames

Some have become home to diseases

Some faces untimely swallowed by time

In my own fading memories

When I see new photos of old friends

I search for colorful palaces in the ruins

Shade of Old Age

Children have not seen old age

It feels like someone else’s disease

Death, or even its faint shadow not known

They drift intoxicated in youth of their own

Oh God, grant them

A taste of old age for a few days

Then return their youth

Perhaps then they will understand

Difficult roads of coming days

What do they know about

Griefs, sufferings of old age

The suffocation within four closed walls

The silent deserted loneliness

Circling of death all around

Burial of partner in the ground

Hard to stand with one crutch

Miss souse, his supporting touch

Hard of hearing, fear of blindness

Wake up at night, chase elusive sleep

If half dozed, feel fear of not waking up

Wet pillow haunts, full of memories deep

I get new gift on every birthday

Wrapped as frozen joints or cancer

Lung disease, gasping for breath

Heart disease and finally death

Rising youth took a sudden turn

I hear words behind thin walls

“Why don’t they leave, go across?

They’re sitting as burden on all

They’re serving no purpose at all

Arrived at the border, why not cross?

They have become obstacle

In the path of life as we grow

Like boulders in a river’s flow

Hopefully it’s their last breath”

I hear it in their suppressed tone

Children forgot, drunk in youth

These hands taught them to walk

This voice taught them to talk

On these shoulders they saw the world

Crossed line of dependant to independent

In a blink of eye they moved

From childhood to adults

Don’t know when—I moved

From vibrant youth to old

Bent waist, wrinkled face is my guise

Unaware, glowing face bid goodbyes

Then I think—I had done the same

When they needed me, I deserted them

I had turned around my face

Will care of them tomorrow

They will always be here

Neither wrote letters nor even talk

Was lost in my colorful path

What you sow, you reap in field of life

Flowers don’t bloom in dry barren sand

Now I realize children’s helplessness

They beautify their own patch and sing

They have also received just one garden

They celebrate joys, watch it blooming

Relish children’s bubbling dreams

Or care for fading, dying stars?

We get one innings in play of life

One way traffic is walk of life

Time, people once passed never returns

Balance parents, yourself and children

In this beautiful play of life

Whatever God granted me

Is more than I deserved or expected

After full childhood, youth and family

My sorrows of old age are minuscule

Yes, my sorrows of old age are minuscule

Time Vanished

Don’t know where time vanished

Had just learnt how to live

Vanquished anger, pride, ego, and greed

Learnt to drink nectar of love so sweet

Busy today, will do it tomorrow

Will contact loved ones when free

Finally begun sharing joys and sorrows

Had just learnt to hug all with glee

Don’t know…

Planted flowers—fruits just bloomed

Learnt to cherish fragrance so sweet

Learnt to think, walk the right path

Live fully happy, laugh with open heart

Don’t know…

Game began yesterday, already over today

Won’t see morning suns or many a moon

Floating cloud, setting sun is my life

Never dreamt it’ll happen so soon

Don’t know…

Drunk in pride, river rose, smashed banks away

Crushed, drowned whatever came in its way

Never feared it will lose swift flow, become empty

It vanished, nameless, water entered the sea

Don’t know…

Small issues irked, fought for no reason

Brought nothing, will take nothing

Filled home with stuff for many seasons

Had just emptied my house and mind

Learnt to fly free like a coasting bird

Don’t know …

Forgave myself, forgave others

Sought forgiveness from others

A bubble in water bursts in a moment

Thorn of time is sharp and swift

Don’t know…

Drop of rain merges with dirt

Name or signs will not exist

Watching, studying others

Had learnt selfless way to live

Don’t know where time vanished

Had just learned how to live

Had just learned how to live

Had just learned how to live

Young Person Inside Old Body

Inside every old man there is

A young person

Wondering, what happened

Etched in mind, sees floating loving Mom and Dad

Love, laughter, siblings fill home; not a single soul sad

Still remembers memorable childhood, cute little face

School, college, friends, teachers on demand resurface

Vividly remembers, feels electric current run through

When touched love of life, yesterday hardly knew

Remembers every vow, and rings

The kiss witnessed by family, friends

Young person sees, relishes little ones.

Life richer, joyous, knowing no ends

Kids grew fast, got married, left his hold

Yet, the young person did never grow old

Then one day, suddenly out of the blue

Without warning, a hint or a clue

Hospital bed, wheel chair, nursing home

Appeared for him to receive

They were for *him,* the young person

Inside the old body did not believe

But a look in the mirror

Dim eyes, cheeks sans hue

Paralysis, immobility, helplessness

Proved it to be true

Now alone, teary and sad

Love of life had vanished

Children, friends abandoned

Inside every old man there is

A young person

Wondering what happened

Wondering what happened

(This poem was inspired by the first 12 words written by 88 years old Doctor Ray Greco at Weirton Medical Center, Weirton, West Virginia, USA.

It can be written as a woman by changing words.)

Lost Youth

Searching for the lost youth

After it escaped from hand

Didn't notice its absence

Till I couldn’t easily stand

Life is a flowing waterfall

Plunged waters never return

Body’s strength once lost

Disease writes rule of no-return

Addictions, laziness, ate junk food

Workaholic, party animal not good

False hope of everlasting youth galore

Vanished when old age knocked the door

From buds to bloom, to flowers

Then wither, fall and scatter

They live longer if given sun

Love, water and organic matter

Body, mind, spirit seek exercise

Get active, painless, thoughts wise

Add years of independent life

Improve own and children’s life

Wisdom arrived late, but did stay

Invoked God, exercised every day

With dedication set positive goals

To get healthy, keep diseases away

Joined gym, slept early at night

Ate oil-free veggies, butter-free bite

Read labels, broke up with fat

Egg-yellow, candy eating a crime

Once it was beer, whiskey, wine

Now Metamucil every night

Effortless baby misses mother's milk

Nor much-needed movement of breath

Discard laziness, embrace liveliness

Come, let's live a healthy life

Come, let's live a healthy life

Alzheimer's

(Old person talking to a young adult)

Remember I kept cold cloth

All night on your forehead

With your head in my lap

Stroked fingers through your hair

Wished I get your disease, you my age

To hear your breath I would hold mine

You got hurt I felt the pain

My heart cried many a night

Pearls of your happy moments

I threaded, saved them as treasures

Hiding my pains, I searched

Ways to create your happy life

World's poisonous, sad news

Kept away from your innocent ears

Swept sharp briers from your path

Spread soft smooth silky petals

No one dare give you sorrow

I fought with the whole world

When someone broke your heart

My heart wilted too

Seeing your life-partner, lover

My heart smiled in silence

Watching your garden of family

My heart bloomed too

Every moment, supported by your memories

I passed my days and nights

Don't know why, when, how

Dark clouds started eclipsing memories

Who am I, where am I?

My friends family started receding

What happened years ago

Seems like it occurred yesterday

What happened yesterday

Is like moonless sad dark night

Whatever shape I am in, I am happy

Perhaps you don't know

My beautiful past is my world

Perhaps you don't know

Neither I know nor recognize you

Your memories are alive in my heart

With this thought, stay happy my child

You and only you live in my heart

You and only you live in my heart

Candle

A bright lit flame dances

Is happy, gets jealous glances

Ignores it will extinguish one day

By its ending wax

Or accident on the way

Flame glows bright, proud

Thinks, “I will shine for ever

Others will weaken, get dark

It’ll happen to me never

Wind will blow out other flames

Or their wax will end

Mine immune from slaps of time,

Mighty hurricane or vicious storm

New candles sprout around me

I see new faces grow

Afraid my innings may be ending

Wax puddles form, candle shrinking

Flame dimming, is tired and slow

Suddenly I flicker more

Shine brighter than ever before

Despite my fluttering struggle

My wax ends, silent wind blows

Flickering bright light no more.”

Became Is to Was

Don’t know when I became

‘is to was’

Sunny day eclipsed by cloud

My body covered by shroud

Yesterday I was young handsome

It was a new world of my own

Spring painted nature, birds flying free

Cruel fall stripped leaves from the trees

Ice felt proud of its dazzling shine

Ignorant of power of the time

The harsh, hot, cruel sun

Melted it into water, easily undone

Waves rose in the ocean

Yearning to touch the sky

Crashed in few moments

Nameless existence died

Name, fame, body, wealth

Mere labels for few days

Time, the mighty force

Swallowed them as they decay

Live in the moment before it’s called past

Embrace it, relish it, be here

Don’t burn today with

Worries of future, regrets of past

Millions like me walked this path

Have come and gone

Don’t know when I became

‘is to was’

Sunny day eclipsed by cloud

My body covered by shroud

Play of Life

Players change, yet the play goes on

One exits the field, their purpose gone

Another enters, takes on the role

Same ambition, similar zeal and goal

Players, teams, faces, names

Games, rules, regulations change

All try hard to halt time’s chime

No one escapes hand of time

Argued, fought to win the game

Won some, stole some, felt no shame

Greedy, worried to move ahead

Forgot to enjoy the game instead

Told lies, devised schemes

Turned selfish, pushed others down

This is just a game, my friend

There are no winners in the end

Every player thinks, they are the very first—

The play was created just for them

Entered field, jumped and played

Shrieked and yelled to untold height

As clouds thundered, lightening bright

Then a waterfall of tears flowed

Quietly collapsed, regrets in heart

Removed from field, with unfinished part

Seeing empty spot, the next player

Jumped, moved, stepped ahead

Didn’t thank ones who came before

Made the field plain for him—a treat

Slowly fatigue set in, hard to lift feet

Thought of end of game so near

Struggled for balance, fighting fear

With no mercy, the next player

Shoved him, stepped on him

Started the same old game again

Oblivious of his fate, the play began

Players change, yet the play goes on

One exits the field, their purpose gone

Another enters, takes on the role

Same ambition, similar zeal and goal

Too Late

He came to my funeral, shed a tear

Placed two flowers then disappear

Recited my countless virtues

Forgave all my faults

He had pointed when I was alive

Didn’t meet me for years or embrace

Now he came for showing the face

Wish we had spent time together

Had sent gifts while I was well

Wished he wiped my tears when I fell

Eyes longed for him, got moist

Watching pathway for him

Then they got tired and crusty

But he came too late

When I was no more

On my lips was his name

But sealed when he came

Puppets of Wax

I wonder when this wax will fade

Melt into air, elements degrade

Frame gets burnt by fire’s embrace

We’re all guests for just few days

Door opened but no one came

Stepped out for a moments

Told me, will return home again

Fistful ash dissolved in water

Yesterday walked beside me

Today, not even a shadow to see

Left memories but never returned

We recited his songs as days turned

Put flowers on the photo everyday

Vowed to remember come what may

Then we walked our own way

Lost in life’s busy day

Names and memories faded

Forgot the ones who passed away

No one has time or desire

To ease the widow’s lonely plight

All tangled In their own web so tight

Have come to funeral, mourn for one

Who wept at another’s yesterday

I came today to say final goodbye

For me, tomorrow someone will cry

I wonder when this wax will fade

Melt into air, elements degrade

Frame gets burnt by fire’s embrace

We’re all guests for just few days

Birth Death

When butterflies of snow melt

Leaf bids farewell to its tree

Particle from star leaves home

Shines for few moments

Then turns to dust

Rapid noisy water of river rises, free

Quietly merges into the sea

Spouse, kin, friend, snap away

Leave this world

Those who grew and laughed together

Die in front of crying eyes

Feeling of one’s own death

Thoughts erupts in the heart

In the casket I gaze

Other’s body, but see my face

Is this all that life is meant to be

For its sake people struggle and fight

Chase fading possessions day and night

Wish, had rested underneath a tree

Spent time with those dear to me

Company of parents, siblings

Spouse, children, friends

Only wise lucky ones receive

Half bloomed, unfulfilled dreams

Clouds of memories rise

For few days person stabilizes

Then slips on the false path

Slowly becomes prisoner of

Greed, anger, lust and pride

Wise ones recognize the reality

Walk the right path early

Enjoy a full purposeful life

Neither arrival nor departure

Time is in our hand

Nature’s play of birth and death

Continues, following its own laws

Nature’s play of birth and death

Continues, following its own laws

Death

I have seen death from up close

Now it is familiar, like a friend

Its image seen in the mirror

Every beginning’s natural end

Since it is familiar and known

It creates no worry, it is my own

The first word in the book of life

Is beginning of the last page

Body is perishable, had, seen and read

It hit hard when I saw close ones dead

Some were my ingrained integral part

I die with them but they live in my heart

The same fate awaits me

Game will be over tomorrow

In the casket, draped white

I see my family cry in sorrow

Struggles and worries will fade

Line between life and death will erase

Heat of the sun will lose its flame

The world will go on just the same

Fame, money, body, ego

Came home like transit guests

In blink of an eye they will depart

Bird’s wings open then they fly

Let go pride, worries, greed

They burn with body in a moment

Shared wealth lives forever, improves lives

Hoarded money sparks fights and strife

Fulfill your dreams, spread love

Learn from yesterday, let go, move on

Laugh more often, make others laugh

Live happily in this transient life

Flow of breath is a gift and a blessing

Who knows when the flow will stop

Who knows when the flow will stop

Ruins of Memories

House is full of people

But is empty for me

Every item has your name engraved

Gardner of every plant

See your features in children, image in grandkids

See your hand in their thoughts and deeds

Nani Nana dad mom friend

Will remember you by different names

One by one they go away

Only your memories will stay

Wherever I look I perceive you near

No one replies when I call you here

Nobody can win against death’s grip

Helpless eyes shed tears drip by drip

It happened to other, heard it many times

Loss will be this hard, had never imagined

Since now I know, want to bring you back

Hundreds of thoughts cross my mind

Want to hear you talk, fulfill your dreams

Wish I could realize your silent screams

That was not you

It was your sickness

Wish understood your thoughts

You showed through tears

Who will interfere, stop me tomorrow

I stay drowned in such thoughts

Sitting alone life long bound in sorrow

Whenever there is a sound

Think you have come back

Now alone for life

Will have to suffer punishment

Time is cruel, flies away like a bird

Hands of clock never reversed

Look at my helplessness

My sorrow my tears his death

If you want to learn from me

Live life for them before they leave

This is *the* moment in life

Spread joy to loved ones

Erase your ego for their sake

You will hold your head and cry

Alone, thread rosary of memories

Prisoner of ruins of memories

Days and nights are dark for me

House is full of people

But it’s empty for me

Prayer

(Wrote after seeing a deceased friend in open casket and crying family)

Breath stopped as did my heart

Even then I can see the scene

Can’t bear your crying

Unable to rise, wipe your tears

See children tormented sob bitterly

They hold my hands sprinkle flowers

In heavy rain or hot sun

Can’t stay forever their umbrella

I found usalvation

Did all there was to see and do

Got your companionship

Drank much nectar of life

Neither imagined nor wished

Yet luck overfilled my bag

From earth, I touched the sky

God blessedly us abundant

All the breaths you are allotted

Spend them laughing, playing

Live fully my partner

Live my share too

Always spread joys twice

Wipe twice the other’s tears

Draw support from memories

Become crutch for others

One day it will be your turn

You will be lying here still

Ones you birthed, raised

Holding you will be our daughters

I pray *for that day* comes after long time

I will wait for you

We will happily meet in our next birth

Reincarnation

Relations are like seasons

Changing every moment, every day

Once spent days and nights together

Now following their separate way

Buds yesterday, then flowers in bloom

Scorching sun wilted the well groomed

Burning heat terrified the big and small

Meekly surrendered, arrived the Fall

Greens in fear turned pale yellow jaded

Carefree vibrant colors of youth got faded

Trembling leaves wrinkled colorless, even then

Afraid, folded, stayed clung to the mother

When a gust of whistling cold wind blew

Bonds once strong got weak broke the glue

Some sooner, some later lost their hold

Got shaken, detached drifted, pain untold

Body of garden got adorned

With swirling faded colored leaves

Above them branches weep and grieve

Their tears borrowed from morning dew

At dawn with the first ray of sun

Tree shed blessings drip by drip

How sweet is was, a joy we did feel

When all of you were still with me

I please to God for your joy

May you stay healthy forever

Change is a tradition of life

This you must forget never

This beautiful healthy body bright

Burn in fire which age will ignite

Slowly, quietly colors will change

After each day there must be night

One day garden’s keeper will arrive

When you are all dry, no longer alive

He will gather you, stack so high

And set you ablaze before my eyes

Whom I concealed and protected

Will end as pile of ashes after fire

As black clouds in form of rain

My tears will soothe your remains

Don’t become desolate

Don’t weep my children

My roots will watch your paths

Mixed with rain water

I will hide you in my heart

After severe winter

Surely we will meet again

New spring, in new shape

Together we'll bloom again

For centuries this amazing

Play of nature will go on

Those who came before have departed

Will return after changing attire

Don’t be too happy in spring

Don’t cry in the season of Fall

Don’t forget from your heart

You are my integral part

Sometimes close sometimes apart

Every moment you are in my heart

Life and Death

Gust of wind, a bubble proud

Shadow of a floating cloud

Life is a dream that fades fast

A golden mirage that doesn’t last

In drunken youth they failed to see

Destructible body’s destiny

For which they stole, lied and schemed

Hurt family and friend, no one dreamed

The covers—Birth and Death contain

A tale of joys sprinkled with pain

I wrote life story myself, yet here and there

Chance and others added their share

Not sure about the next breath

Gathered stuff for many lives

Anger, lust, pride, greed—are illusion

Misguided mind strayed in confusion

When I was alive, people stayed away

Behind my back, they had much to say

When my eyes closed, make long line

Build bridges of praises, made me shine

Sheepishly, even those stayed

Who had not met for decades

Once I had no place in their space

Now stay whole day to show face

After death, so many flowers, fruits arrive

Never seen the treasure when I was alive

Praise now showered by many a friend

Words I never heard till after my end

When I was living they saw mistakes

Criticized the paths I would take

After my silence and last breath

They speak good words after my death

Except for my spouse or dearest few

The rest just act, their hearts not true

Some silently hide tears of blood felt deep

Some others fake their tears as they weep

Someone’s life in a moment small

From sky to earth they instantly fall

In times of need, some didn’t hold my hand

Now give shoulder to casket, lovingly stand

Alive one moment, then breath departs

The final silence as heart beat halts

One may fight with all the might

Yet death victorious—the final rite

Seeing a corpse, they ponder their end

It won’t happen to them they pretend

The truth of life is forgotten fast

Once again they let false story start

Gust of wind, a bubble proud

Shadow of a floating cloud

Life is a dream that fades fast

A golden mirage that doesn’t last

End of Life

Life moves in a strange way

In a few years I will fade away

My name won’t be there

Be grateful

Two generations may remember

Our dreams and stories, rise and fall

Joys and struggles will be lost to all

Built home with love and pride

Will be a heap of dirt, caste aside

Our struggles our hard work

No one will remember

Who was I, why what I did

They won’t even pause to ask

If asked about my life’s journey

People will be perplexed

“From which world have you come?”

Though players have changed

But the game will be same

Stories of lives before

No one will recall

Strange is the way of life

In few years

My name won’t even be there

Be grateful

If two generations will remember

Dust of Time

Dust of time thick without a gap

Covers many centuries in its lap

Ocean waves rise and spread

Drown castles to ocean bed

Walking, talking life—aging fast

Turns to silent body as breaths halt

Photos, memories, names and fame

Merge into thirsty dust as drops of rain

Emperors crowned with many a name

Become nameless at end of the game

Next in line rush to the stage

Busy living life, forget their heritage

Green shiny leaves of spring

Turn weak and pale, get blown away

By blustery cruel winds of fall

Kings, emperors, paupers—all

Swept away by the river of time

The proud higher cast turn to dust

Bag of ash carried by untouchables

Signs stay for one generation or two

Then they sleep in lap of time like dew

Dust of time thick without a gap

Covers many centuries in its lap

Ocean waves rise and spread

Drown castles to ocean bed