मेरे नाटक...

शनिवार, 18 फ़रवरी 2017

Colourblind

Characters:

Tagore/Man in the café

Victoria Ocampo/Girl in the café

Mrityu (Death)

Bachcha (Child Tagore)

The following Hindi speaking characters are characters written by Tagore in his stories/novels or himself as his characters:

Robi 1 (Young Tagore)

Robi 2 (Young Tagore)

Woh 1 (She 1)

Woh 2 (She 1)

Woh 3 (She 1)

Mashi/Mausi (Aunt)

Scene 1

Sujon Majhi re , kaun ghaate lagaiba tomar naav (traditional Baul song sung off stage)

Café girl sits in a chair, she is busy writing. Old Tagore (Tagore), young Tagore (Robi) and child Tagore (Bachcha) are on stage. So is Mrityu. Mrityu rings a bell loudly.

Tagore: Kaun? (Who is it?)

Mrityu/Death (while making a paper boat): Main mrityu..tumhaare liye kalam laaya hoon. (It is I, Death....I have a pen for you.)

Robi: Tumhaare aate hi lagta hai jaise yeh kissi kavita ki shuruaat hai, jabki tum ant ho. (Your arrival seems like the begining of a poem, but you are, in fact, the end)

Mrityu: Yeh shuruaat hi hai….naatak ki shuruaat. (This is the beginning....the beginning of this play)

Robi: Tum kabhi syaahi nahi laate ho…kyon? (How come you never bring any ink?)

Mrityu: Main sirf instrument hoon…syaahi tumhaare paas hai.. (I am just an instrument....you already have the ink)

Robi: Agar syaahi khatm ho gayi toh? (what if the ink runs out?)

Mrityu: Toh woh naatak ka ant hoga….tab main tumhein lene aoonga. (that will be the end of the play...and I will come to fetch you)

Robi: Jaise tum mere apno ko meri godi se uthakar le gaye the… (The way you had taken my near and dear ones from me...)

Mrityu: Uss waqt bhi tum kavita hi likh rahe the. (You were busy writing poems even then)

Tagore: Aakaash Bhora, shurjo taara, bisha bhora praan, tahaari majh khaane, aami pechchi, aami pechchi mor sthaan bishyoye tai jaage jaage amaar gaan….(Tagore's poem when his son passed away, at a very young age)

Mrityu: Tumse bohat rashk hota hai…tum jiss tarah se mujhse badla lete ho…mujhe bohat pasand hai..warna log apne pran de dete hain ro ro kar. (I am very envious of you....the way you take revenge on me...I really like that...most people cry their hearts out)

Robi: Kissne kaha ki main nahi roya? (What makes you think I didn't cry?)

Mrityu: Maine nahi dekha…main har baar dekhna chahta tha… (I didn't see...I always wanted to see...)

Robi: Jab main chhota tha toh hamaare ghar mein kaam karne waale log hamaare rote hi hamaara sar paani ki balti mein daal dete the.. (when i was a child the servants in our house used to dunk our heads in a bucket of water as soon as we began to cry...)

Mrityu laughs.

Robi: Tum hans rahe ho? (You are laughing?)

Mrityu: Sorry…aisa kyon karte the woh? (Sorry...why did they do that?)

Robi: Taaki koi hamaara rona sun na paaye. (So that no one would hear our cries)

Café girl gets up and gives a piece of paper to Mrityu and takes a paper boat from his hand. Mrityu reads the note.

Mrityu: Jeevan mein agar kuchch rang na dikhein toh woh kitne mahatvpoorn ho jaate hain jo dikhte hain. (When you can't see some colours in life, the ones that you can see, become that much more important)

Café girl goes and ties the paper boat to Bachcha’s ankle. She looks at him.

Café girl: Robi…..start.

Café girl exits. Ocampo goes and stands like a portrait near Tagore.

Scene 2

Bachcha (child Tagore) plays around on his knees in the circle. The paper boat remains tied to his ankle.

Bachcha: Ma..Ma…! Aap kidhar ho? Main soch raha tha…agar raat barah baje ho sakti hai toh barah baje raat kyon nahi ho sakti? Dopahar ko, jab mujhe padhna padta hai….Main kahin gol gol toh nahi ghoom raha? Ma! Woh Kamal hai na woh mere charon or yun chalk se gola bana deta hai… aur kehta hai ki ek kadam bhi baahar gaya toh buri sazaa milegi. Mujhe toh lagta hai Ma, main ab hamesha hi gol gol chalne laga hoon. Aap yahaan so rahi ho? Baba kidhar hai? Arre maine aapko dikhaya kya? Maine ek badhiya cheez banayi hai…yeh dekho…(shows  her the boat) achchi hai na? Haan? Nahi nahi…daantna mat…daantna mat. Wahaan baba apne kamre mein baithe chitiyaan banaate rehte hain dher saare kaagazon par…unhein aap kuchch nahi kehti hai…main ek naav banaata hoon aur aap…..shshshs! shshshsh! Koi hai…kaun hai? (picks up a lantern) Kaun hai?Arre yeh toh main hi hoon….yeh toh meri parchchai hai!

(Ma...ma...Where are you? I was thinking...if it can be night at twelve o clock, why can't twelve o clock be night, in the afternoon, when I have to study? I hope I am not running around in circles. Ma! You know, that Kamal, he draws a circle with chalk around me and says...if I step out of it, I will be severely punished. I get a feeling Ma, that I am always running around in circles now. Ma...ma....you are sleeping here? Where is father? Have I shown you yet? I have made something really wonderful. Look...(shows her the boat) Isn't it nice? What? No...no...you said you wouldn't scold me....Father sits in his room and makes tiny ants on numerous sheets of paper, you never scold him. I make one boat and you ..........shshshshsh...Someone is there...who is it? (picks up a lantern) who is it? Oh, it is I....that is my shadow!

Scene 3

Song starts

Main Gurudev main Thakur Jogi,

Main Baul ektaara.

Main mrityu, main janm praan Bramhaand hoon main, main taara.

Iss paar main, uss paar main,

Main Madhya ki vichlit dhaara.

Main bhoot hoon, main vartmaan,

Main hi bhavishya hoon saara.

(I am Gurudev, I am the thakur yogi,

I am the Baul's iktara.

I am death, I am the life soul,

I am the universe, I am the star.

I am on this bank of the river, and on that

I am the current in between.

I am the past, the present,

I am also the entire future.)

During the song, Tagore gets up from the chair, O Campo looks at Tagore. Tagore removes his beard and mustache and gives it to Robi.

BLACK OUT

Scene 4

Café sounds are heard in the background.

Voice 1: Excuse me, may I have a cappucino please. That will be all. Thank you.

Voice 2: And then the let the laughing gas out into the ballroom and the king and the queen start laughing! (laughs)

Voice 3: Yes Ma’am, here is your cappacino. Can I get you something else?

Voice 4: First tell me wht you want to have, chai or coffee. Nabbe rupay ki coffee. Yeh toh bohat zyada hai. (Rs 90 for a coffee, that’s a lot.)

Voice 5: (laughs) Oh my god, this guy is taking so long to bring the coffee. Tell me what you were saying.

While the offstage voices are heard stage right, offstage left we hear an argument between two people, the café voices respond to the argument. The argument ends with the Café girl being pushed on to stage.

Girl stumbles on to stage with books, folders and in a mess. Notices audience.

Oh, you’re all here. Good evening. I’m sorry I’m late, I know, I know, you’ve all probably been through traffic, stood in line for tickets and you’re waiting to see Colourblind…but…I haven’t finished it. I haven’t finished writing the play. I don’t know where to start, I don’t know where to end. The more I know about Tagore the less I can write.

She addresses one person in the audience

I mean do you have any idea how much this man has written? What he’s gone through? What he’s lived? Wait. Are you Bengali? No, because then you know everything about Tagore, right?

She gets up, talks to different members of the audience.

At 8 he wrote his first poem.

At 13 his mother died.

He didn’t know what to do, so…

He kept writing.

At 22, on the day of his wedding, his sister’s husband died.

One year later, Kadambari Devi, his sister in law, committed suicide.

A few years later his father died.

He didn’t know what to do so…

He kept writing.

In 1902, his wife died.

He kept writing.

In 1903 his daughter died.

He kept writing.

Four years later his youngest son died.

What did he do?

He kept writing.

Then, finally, in 1913 he won a nobel prize for his book of poems Gitanjali.

One year later a young woman in Argentina, Victoria Ocampo, read the French translation and cried – I said cried, not died.

In 1918 however, his eldest daughter… died.

In 1924 Tagore visited Argentina and met this same Victoria Ocampo. The one who cried?

She was now 33 and he was 63.

Suddenly he cancelled his remaining trip to Peru. He cancelled all his appointments and engagements. He cancelled saying he was too unwell to travel.

He was just well enough however to spend two months with Ocampo in her villa,

And there…

There he started painting! At 63 the man has to start painting!

He left Argentine and guess what? He kept painting.

One year later he dedicated Ocampo a book called Purabi, it had about 400 poems in it, so clearly he also kept writing.

They kept writing, letters to each other and he kept painting.

In 1927- they planned to meet in villa in Italy. But – at the last moment she did not make it. She was busy, you see, paving her way as a writer, feminist, intellectual.

She did not reply for 3 years.

So, he kept painting.

In 1932 his only grandson died.

He kept writing.

He kept writing, he kept painting.

He kept painting, he kept writing.

Until in 1941

The writing stopped

And the painting stopped

Because in 1941, Tagore stopped.

Do you ever feel like you haven’t done enough in life, like you ever wake up and think I expected to have reached further by this point in my life. Do you? Well, you should. Because in his lifetime Tagore wrote a few plays, 4 novellas, 8 novels, over 80 short stories, hundreds of poems, roughly 2,230 songs, made one film, but that was not enough, so he painted, some 2000 paintings, though nobody actually knows, because they keep finding more.

Phhffhhhh… Now you know what I mean? Where do I start? Where do I end? I have chaper one, chaper two, chapter three…I don’t have a chapter four. And there’s this guy…he’s going to be here any minute now. He’s something else…anyway he’s a scholar, an encyclopedia on Tagore, Bengali of course, and I know he’s just going to take one look at this and laugh in my f-

She turns and sees café guy. He has an amused look on his face. She’s embarrassed.

G: Oh, you’re here… Hi. You’re, are you early?

She checks her watch.

Oh no you’re bang on time, or my watch is fast, or time, you know, just seems to fli-

T: -Who were you talking to?

G: Me? Was I? Oh just to myself, just talking to myself.

Please sit sit sit.

You want something? To eat? Drink? It’s self service here, so I can get get it for you.

He starts taking his pill.

Are you? How are you?

T: Good.

G: Good? Good. You look good. And how’s your son?

T: Good.

G: And the crazy ex?

He smiles.

G: Sorry, I’m asking too many questions.

Silence.

I’ve finished it. Well…almost, practically, there’s just a little tweaking to do here and there, but you know…

When, when was it we last met? It’s been such a long time. At least a couple months right?

He nods.

Well you look better than I remember you. I mean you looked good then too. But you seem calmer.

Silence.

Well here’s chapter one.

She hands it to him. Takes it back immediately.

I just want to say it’s not linear. If you’re looking for something like that, you won’t find. I mean it goes from his childhood to his later years, to him as a young writer, it’s all rolled into one and and it might feel like a lot to take in at first but stick with it, I mean it’s Tagore. You know what I mean? Ok don’t don’t answer that. Just read.

She puts the paper in front of him. He starts reading when she interrupts.

I just want to say thank you so much for meeting me like this at the last minute. I mean I know you said you’re off to santaniketan tomorrow and you must have a lot to arrange last minute.

She is rummaging through her bag. He gets up with the paper.

Wh, where are you going.

T: I’m just going to get some tea…

Girl: I can order it myself- …. I want it with milk and sugar!

Man goes up to the villa. Mrityu stands there, poker face.

Mrityu: Age –

Tagore: No, time. Time waits like a patient Rottweiler in random crevices.

Girl: What if he hates it. Or he just doesn’t get it, if he doesn’t get it, it’ll just sound absurd…boring, what if he thinks it’s boring.

Mrityu: For the next half an hour –

Tagore: no may be one hour

Mrityu: or maybe many hours –

Tagore: maybe a lifetime –

Mrityu: maybe beyond –

Tagore: this balcony,

Tagore: these blossoming flowers,

Tagore: this quiet refuge,

Mrityu: will be your prison, your cave,

Tagore: my inspiration, my breath and my renewed burst of life.

Mrityu: And Victoria?

Tagore: She will be my light,

Mrityu: Or your hunt, your prey?

Tagore: No, she will be my light, and she will be my revenge on time.

Mrityu: Just for this moment though.

Tagore: Yes just for this moment.

Scene 5

Mrityu: And after that?

Tagore: After that I will turn away and not look back.

Mrityu: Not to see her one last time?

Tagore: Not to find myself desperate and absurd.

Mrityu: You won’t look back?

Tagore: My head unturned I’ll progress on to Peru and busy myself with the daily routine of strangers and intrusions.

Mrityu: You will be Tagore, the Nobel laureate, the celebrity.

Tagore: I will be Tagore, the prisoner.

Victoria enters and looks at Tagore.

Mrityu: And you’re sure you won’t turn around to see her.

Tagore: I will not turn around.

Victoria: I’m late I know. Lo sciento. I was with the doctor and I have your medicines for the next two months. They are in the car. I brought…since you are leaving and I probably won’t see you again, I brought the books I was talking about.

Stillness. Just the clock moving. Tick. Tock.

Victoria: It has really been a pleasure having you stay this week. I hope you were comfortable.

She sees the suitcase.

Victoria: I see you are leaving. The car is waiting. Quiera, I have prepared ah…

Victoria recites.

Quandtum’ordonnes de chanter ilsemblequemoncoeurdoivecreverd’orgueil; et je regardevers ta face et des pleurs me viennent aux yeux.

Tout le rauqueet le dissonant de ma vie fond en uneseule suave harmonie – et mon adoration eploie les ailescomme un joyeuxoiseaudanssafuite a travers la mer.

In the middle she breaks into a song spontaneously to the tune of Tagore’s song More bina uthe kon sure baji...

(Woh 1 and Robi 2 come and take their positions on stage)

Je saisquetuprendsplaisir a mon chant. Je saisquecomme un chanteurseulement je suisadmisdans ta presence.

Mon chant largementeploye touché de l’extremite de son ailetespiedsque je desesperaisd’atteindre.

Ivre de cette joie de chanter, je m’oubliemoi memeet je t’appelleami, toi qui esmon seigneur.

Tagore turns around and looks at Victoria.

She stops abruptly and the books in her hands fall off.

Victoria: It’s by a poet that I really admire, pero era unachapuza,I made a mess...Anyway, I hope you have a safe journey…books.

She leaves.

Tagore: Will you come to Shantiniketan?

She stops in her tracks.

Scene 6

Bachcha plays hopscotch. Woh 3 starts singing a bangla song and enters.

Woh 1/She: Na (No)

(Woh 3 keeps singing)

Robi 2: Ek gaana suna do (Please sing one song)

(Woh 2 enters stage)

Woh 1: Nahi gaoongi. (I won't sing)

Woh 2/She: Nikhilesh…itni raat kahaan ko nikle the? (Nikhilesh....where were you heading out so late at night?)

Robi 2: Who gaana…tum hi gaa rahi thi na? (that song....weren't you singing that song?)

Woh 1: Amaar gaan shunabo….(recites Bengali song)

Robi 2: Yeh gaana ga ke suna do…(Can you please sing this song?)

Woh 2: Ghaate baadha deen gailo re… (sings Bengali song)

Robi 2: Nahi, yeh who gaana nahi hai…suno tum suna do…(No, this isn't the song....why don't you sing...)

Woh 2 exits.

Woh 1: Itni raat kahaan ko nikle the? (Where were you heading out so late at night?)

Robi 2: Tumhaari chinta ho rahi thi. (I was worried about you.)

Woh 1: Meri? Mere ghar toh naukar chaakar hai…akele toh tum ho…so tumhein dekhne chali aayi.. (About me? I have servants at home...it is you who are alone...so I came to see you...)

Robi 2: Kissi naukar se khair khabar puchchwa deti. (You could have sent a message with one of your servants)

Woh 1: Maine bhi socha tha…ka lekin unn tak baat pohanchne ka darr tha. (I thought about it too...but I was worried the news would reach him.)

Robi 2: Tumhaare unko pata hai hamaare bare mein…? (Does he know about us?)

Woh 1: Kya? Ki bachpan mein hamaari shaadi hone waali thi aur tum Kalkatte bhaag gaye ? (What? That we were to be married when we were young but you ran away to Kolkata?)

Robi 2: Nahi…ki tum meri sakha thi…(No...that you were my closest friend)

Woh 3 /She starts singing

Robi 2 goes towards her.

Robi 2: Haan, suno…aisa hi kuchch gaana hai…bol kuchch alag hain…(Yes, the song is something like this....but the words are different)

Woh 1: Khaana kaun banaata hai? (Who does the cooking?)

Robi 2 doesn’t pay attention.

Woh 1: Khaana kaun banaata hai? (Who does the cooking?)

Robi keeps talking to woh 3. Woh 1 leaves. Woh 2 enters.

(Café girl goes and takes her place)

Woh 2: Ghaate baadha deen gailo re… (sings the same song)

Robi 2: Yeh who gaana nahi hai… (This isn't that song)

Woh 3: Rokoge nahi mujhe? (Won't you stop me?)

Woh 2: Kyon? Ab tumhein desh ke gaane pasand nahi hain? Desh kaisa hai tumhaara? (Why? You don't like songs of the country anymore? How is your country doing?)

Robi 2: Issliye jaa rahi ho ki main rokoon tumhein? (Are you leaving so that I stop you?)

Woh 2: Tumhaari aawaaz mein toh kranti hua karti thi…uska kya hua? (There was a certain revolution in your voice...what happened to that?)

Robi 2: Kranti jawaab nahi hai. (Revolution isn't the answer.)

Woh 3: Tum chahte ho rukoon? (You want me to stay?)

Robi 2: Mera adhikaar nahi hai. (I don't have the right.)

Woh 3: Sakha ho tum mere. (You are my closest friend)

Woh 2: Toh jawaab kya hai? (What is the answer, then?)

Robi 2: Jawaab kuchch nahi hai…bas sawaal hi sawaal hai..aur main sakha nahi hoon. (There aren't any answers...only questions...and I am not your closest friend)

Woh 3: toh kya ho? (Then what are you?)

Robi 2: Main who hoon jo sakha se bohat adhik hai. (I am more than a friend)

Woh 2: Waah! Matlab ab tumhaare desh ko kavi chahiye…kranti nahi chahiye..(Great! So now your country needs poets, not revolutionaries)

Robi 2: yeh kya laga rakh hai tumhaara desh tumhaara desh…yeh tumhaara desh nahi hai kya? (Why do you keep going on 'your country' 'your country'...isn't this your country as well?)

Woh 2: Mere desh aur tumhaare desh mein bohat antar hai… (There is a world of a difference between my country and your country)

Robi 2 turns towards Woh 3 and sees that she has gone. He turns around at woh 2.

Woh 2: Ek gaana sunaaon? (Shall I sing you a song?)

Robi 2 exits.

Man in cafe: Kya bola? (What did you say?)

Woh 2: Ek gaana sunaoon? (Shall I sing you a song?)

 Woh 2 stands as a portrait on stage.

Scene 7

Café conversation resumes

Girl is already sitting back down.

Girl: Did you read it?

He gives her the paper.

Girl: Did you like it?

Man: This is an interesting opinion.

Girl: Interesting is a very diplomatic word.

Man: It is daring, though I’m not sure it is correct.

Girl: I’m not trying to be correct, I’m just trying to be honest. I want to know who was this young man Tagore. In his youth itself he was writing so much, and all his characters one after another just go through pain, loss, suffering and it’s incessant and it feels like he’s just sifting through it all as fast as possible in order to reach that one perfect…that…

Robi 2: Song.

Girl: That song. That song he’s searching for so desperately, it’s his need to stop writing. To put an end it all. You know what I mean?

Man: It’s to early for me to say. Can I have the next chapter?

Girl: That’s better. Here.

She hands him the paper. He’s about to read. He looks up.

Man: You do know that Tagore never went to Peru.

Girl: Yes, of course, he stayed back with Ocampo for two months, I know, it’s coming, just read.

Man: Just one more question.

Girl: Yes.

Man: Have you ever been in love?

Girl: What’s that got to do with anything?

Silence.

Girl: There was this guy I was seeing in college. He was crazy about me, he would follow me everywhere, treat me like a princess and at the time I was just like, ok, you know, whatever. It’s only when he left. That’s when I realized I loved him.

Man: I was about fourteen when I first fell in love. Had a crush on my sister in law.

Girl: That’s Tagore. Nice try. (She starts laughing)

Man: No I swear it happened to me too. Puberty had just hit and she would walk around in a t shirt and shorts without a bra. It was too much for a budding young boy.

Girl: Very funny. I know you’re making fun of me. (still laughing)

Man: I’m not!

Girl: Ok, you know what, just read. I’m going for a smoke.

Scene 8

As he is talking G has begun putting up her hair, putting on a hat and heels and started walking to the villa.

Mrityu/Death: You are not supposed to be aroused this easily. She’s just a girl. She doesn’t know what she’s saying. She probably has no idea what she wants.

Man starts walking away

Man: But the sun is hitting her from behind, that morning sun, golden, contouring her silhouette and gently separating the space between her sheer shirt and her breast. I would like so much just to touch her. Do no more than that.

Mrityu: You don’t have the guts to do it though, you’ll never do it.

Man ignores him walks towards villa.

As Victoria says ‘I see you have begun translating..’ Tagore touches her breast.

Humming (tune of More bina uthe kon sure baji…) starts in the background. Then Tagore removes his hand and turns away.

Bachcha is standing with Tagore. Bachcha sings Tagore song.

“Dauhone shauyone taupto ghaurone…..chchinna hoyechche baundhono bondeer”

Victoria: Gurudeb I am happy that you stayed. I was saying how I like the last two lines here.

No response.

Victoria: You seem preoccupied.

No response.

Victoria: I was just leaving anyway.

Bachcha: No. Don’t go.

She waits.

Victoria: I spoke to the doctor this morning. He is very happy with how you’re improving.

Silence.

Victoria: Are you feeling better?

Bachcha: Yes.

Victoria: Good. Good. Fani also is very happy that you’ve got your appetite back.

Bachcha: That’s one person I don’t want to disappoint.

Victoria: Yes, she’s as wild as a horse.

Bachcha: And as strong.

Victoria: It must be difficult travelling so much.

Bachcha: Sometimes.

Victoria: Do you have children?

Bachcha: I’m surrounded by a screaming unruly bunch.Ratan, Charu, Amal, Bella, Mausi, Nikhilesh, Bimla, Gora, Fatik, Lavanya.

Victoria: They are all in Shantiniketan?

Bachcha: Yes.

Victoria: It must be beautiful.

Bachcha: Bejoya.

Tagore puts his hand on Bachcha’s lips.

Silence. He turns around.

Tagore: I’m tired of being Tagore for everyone. I don’t want to be Tagore anymore.

Bachcha leaves.

Tagore: Don’t leave.

Victoria: Ah si. (looks at her watch)

She begins to leave.

Tagore: That is almost funny. I stayed back and you have to leave. Do you have to leave because I stayed back?

Victoria: Non…

He sits. He begins reciting from Purabi.

Tagore: Phiriye Jeo na Shono shono,

              Shurjo Osto Jaayeni ekhono,

              Shomoy royeche baaki,

              Shomoy re diye phaaki,

              Bhabona rekhona mon e kono. (Recites a poem from the book of poems 'Purabi' that Tagore had written for O' Campo)

V: Disculpame. I have to leave.

R: The tea will be here any minute now.

V: I can’t have tea. I’ll get late.Tengosita con algienmuiimportante.

R: Just five minutes, it’ll be here.

V: No tengotiempo.

V: I’m leaving, ya me voyGurudeb.

She walks out and he is left alone. He goes and puts his head in the bucket of water. Humming resumes. Stops as Woh 2 starts speaking.

Scene 9

Woh 2 breaks out of portrait. Robi is sitting next to her and writing. Robi 2 and woh 1 are sitting together at the other end in a classic romantic photo pose.

Woh 2: Kya likh rahe ho? (What are you writing?)

Robi: Ek Ratan naam ki ladki ki kahaani hai…jo postoffice ke chakkar kaatti hai…pratiksha mein..(A story about a girl named Ratan...she keeps hanging around the post office...waiting..)

Woh 2: Postmaster!!

Robi: Nahi…abhi naam nahi rakha hai uss kahaani ka…(No...I haven't named this story yet...)

Robi 2: kuchch sunao. (Sing something)

Woh 1: Tumhein pata hai main kya sunaoongi…phir seedhe kyon nahi bolte…(You know what I will sing...so why don't you just say...'sing that one')

Robi 2: Mat sunao. (don't, then)

Woh 2: Tum yeh kyon kar rahe ho apne saath? (Why are you doing this to yourself?)

Robi: Kya? Main gaana sunna chahta hoon. Usmein galat kya hai? Jo main nahi chahta hoon tum sab mujhe who banaane ki koshish mein kyon lage rehte ho?  (What? I want to listen to a song. What is wrong in that? Why do all of you want to make me into something that I am not?)

Robi 2: Main tumhaara pati nahi hoon jo seedhe kahega ki yeh suna do. (I am not your husband, that I can ask you directly, to sing that song)

Woh 2: Main who baat nahi kar rahi thi. (That is not what I meant)

Robi: Achcha…toh kya keh rahi thi? ( Really...then what did you mean?)

Woh 1: Kyon chahiye who jo kabhi mil nahi sakta? (Why do you want something that you can never get?)

Robi 2: Ajeeb hai yeh sawaal tum poochch rahi ho. (It’s strange that you ask me that question)

Woh 1: Main poochch sakti hoon..(I can ask...)

Woh 2: Kyonki tumne mujhe likha hai. (because you have written me.)

Robi 2: Main tumse kehta hoon…ki yeh jo meri band muththi hai…agar tum isse khologi toh tumhein who milega jisse tum hamesha se paana chahti thi…kyat um isse kholna chahogi? (I tell you...this closed fist of mine...if you open it you will get that which you have always wanted...would you like to open it?)

Woh 1: Tumhein jawaab pata hai. (You know the answer.)

Robi 2: Main tumhaare mooh se sunna chahta hoon. (I want to hear it from you)

Woh 1: Toh suno, haan, main kholna chahti hoon…kyonki main jo chahti hoon who isliye chahti hoon ki use paya ja sake.. (Then listen, yes, I do want to open it....and I want to open it because what I want , I want, so that it can be gotten)

Woh 2: Par tum use who muththi kholne nahi doge…hai na? (But you won't let her open that fist...right?)

Robi: Main kaun hota hoon use rokne waala? (Who am I to stop her?)

Woh 2 starts laughing.

Mausi/Aunt: Ratan ….Ratan!!!

Robi 2: Mausi bula rahi hai. (Mausi is calling)

Woh 2: Par tumhaara naam Ratan nahi hai. (But your name isn't Ratan)

Robi: Yahaan log mujhe Ratan kehte hain. (People call me Ratan, here)

Woh 2: yeh tum har jagah apna naam kyon badal lete ho? (Why do you keep changing your name everywhere ?)

Robi: Likhne mein aasaani hoti hai. (It's easier to write that way)

Woh 2 (to the girl in the cafe): No....changing your name makes you less answerable.

Girl in the cafe: What are you trying to ask?

Woh 2: How are you going to end this story?

Girl in the cafe: It's your exit

Woh 2 exits.

Mausi: Ratan….Ratan!!

Robi 2: Mausi bula rahi hai…mujhe jaana hoga. (Mausi is calling...I will have to leave)

Woh 1: Mat jao…mujhe pata hai mera adhikaar nahi hai…par pehli baar keh rahi hoon…mat jao..(Don't go...I know I don't have the right to ask...but I am asking you just this once...don't go...)

Robi: Tumhein pata hai use jaana hai…phir use rokti kyon ho…tum jaao. (You know very well that he has to leave...then why stop him?...you leave)

Robi 2 leaves. Woh 1 comes to Robi.

Woh 1: Main isliye rok rahi hoon….kyonki main nahi chahti ki tum intezaar karo….kyonki main nahi aoongi…jaaon? Jaaon? ( I was stopping him because I don't want you to wait...because I won't come...shall I leave? Shall I leave?)

Robi: Maine abhi ant likha nahi hai…Mausi ki entry hai. ( I haven't written the end ...now leave...it is Mausi's entry)

Mausi enters.

Mausi: Arre…tum yahaan ? Ratan kahaan hai? (Where is Ratan?)

Woh 1: Ratan ko yeh post office chhod aaye. (There isn't any Ratan anymore. He left Ratan at the post office)

Mausi: Itni baarish mein use akela chhod aaye? (You left him there in this heavy downpour?)

Woh 1: yeh toh waise bhi use chhodne waale the. (He was going to leave him anyway)

Mausi: Kyon? (Why?)

Woh 1: yeh yahaan nahi reh sakta…inki tabiyat kharaab ho jaati hai… (He can't stay in this village...he feels unwell here..)

Mausi: Par yeh toh tumhaare log hain…tumhaare apne log.. tum inke saath jee nahi sakte? (But these are your people...your own people...and you can't stay with them?)

Woh 1: He lives in a fictional world. Yeh itna sach nahi jee sakte (He lives in a fictional world. He cannot live so much truth)

Mausi: isiliye bhaag rahe ho? (Hence you are running away?)

Robi: Haan (yes)

Mausi: Kab tak bhaagte rahoge? (For how long will you run?)

Robi: Jab tak likhta rahunga. (As long as I write)

Mausi: Toh phir Raja Rani ki kahaaniyan hi likhna, bas. (Then keep writing only about Kings and Queens)

Woh 1: Nahi, hamaare bare mein bhi likhna chahte hain….par hamaare saath reh kar nahi.. (No, he wants to write about us too....but not by living amongst us)

Mausi: Toh phir yeh inki baat kaise hui? (Then how would it be there story?)

Robi: Mausi, yeh socho ki yeh mera ghar hai…mera apna ghar…main baar baar isse chhod ke chala jaata hoon taaki apne likhe mein apna ghar paa sakoon. (Mausi, think of it like this..this is my home...I have to leave it time and again so I can discover my home in my writings)

Mausi: Achcha, yeh kaun hai? (Who is she?)

Woh 1: Kaun hoon main? (Who am I?)

Robi: Yeh sakha hai meri. (She is my closest friend)

Woh 1: Naam kya hai? (What's my name?)

Robi is quiet.

Woh 1: Naam nahi rakha hai issne mera. (He hasn't named me yet)

Woh 1 exits.

Robi tears a couple of pages from his diary and gives them to Mausi.

Mausi reads and then looks at him.

Mausi: Tumhaari exit hai. (It's your exit)

Robi exits.

Mausi: Jatin…Jatin

Robi: Ab woh Ratan nahi hai...ab woh Jatin hai. (He isn't Ratan anymore...he is Jatin)

Robi 2 enters.

Mausi: Jatin, Jatin

(Robi 2 enters. Mausi hands him a slip of paper. He begins reading.)

Robi 2: Woh kahaan hai? Woh nahi aayi aapke saath? (Where is she? She didn't come with you?)

Mausi:  Woh aakhri gaana dhoondne gayi hai. Bas aati hi hogi. (She has gone to search for the last song. She will be back soon.)

Robi 2: Mere paas ab waqt nahi hai. (I don't have the time anymore)

Mausi: Bina gaana sune hi chale jaoge? (You will leave without listening to the song?)

Robi 2: Nahi. (No)

Mausi: Bas itna hi likha usne. (That's all he has written)

Robi2: Bas? (That's it?)

Mausi: Meri exit hai. Likha hai. (It's my exit)

(Mausi exits.)

Robi 2 (in Bengali): Eta ki? ER manetar ki? Jai ichche tai likhbe? (What is this? What does this mean? You will write whatever you wish?)

Scene 10

R looks up, he has just finished reading her notebook. He paces to the café and slams the notebook on the café table in front of G.

Man: (He is ranting off in Bangla) Eta ki? Er maaney ta ki? Ja icchhe tai likhbe?

Jaar tar bepare ja icchhe tai likhbe? Kaakey jigesh kore eta likhecho? Eshob kotha kothay porecho tumi? Oshobbho! (What does this mean? You will write whatever you like?Will you write anything about anyone?  Whom did you ask before writing this? Where did you read all this stuff? Ridiculous! ) Absolute rubbish!

 This never happened. This is false. You can’t write stuff like this. And that child that’s crawling around? What is that? Etcetc, ends with… I mean all you’ve basically done is taken some cheap gossip and blown it out of proportion.

Girl: Cheap gos-excuse me? Firstly this is not gossip, this is a well documented fact. Tagore actually did, you know…

Man: What?

Girl: Tagore went and he actually touched Ocampo’s…

Man: Ocampo’s?

Girl: You know what I’m talking about. Page 272, read it!.

Man: Ok, yes, there was a touch, but that doesn’t mean you invent a relationship to the effect of ‘Gone with the Wind’

Girl: Oh come on, I’m hardly…look Ocampo knew her memoirs were going to be published and yet she included this intimate detail. When something is given to us in plain view, we cannot ignore the possibilities. Tagore touched Ocampo in a sexual way, and the man that he was, he certainly did not do it casually. There must have been sparks flying in the villa for weeks for him to arrive at this gesture.

Man: But what purpose does it serve to dwell on it?

Girl: It makes him human! I’m so tired of hearing about the great writer Rabindranath Tagore, and his spiritual relationship with Ocampo. I’m interested in the man, and this little moment between them, it makes him a man. It makes him vulnerable. Naked. I mean, he feels like a real person.

Man: Still I’m not letting you talk your way out of this. There are too many indulgences. I mean, Tagore as a child speaking to Ocampo, come on, he was 63 when he met her.

Girl: To me time and reality are what I make of them. I believe there was a playful side to Tagore, Ocampo brought that out in him and I wanted to-

Overlap in discussion begins…

Man: But it’s so misleading, I mean if this were ever to be published, not that it will ever be published, people will assume that you have no idea what you’re -

Girl: I’m not writing a document for some government. You know, Tagore wrote a poem

A hundred years from now,

Who will you be,

Reading my poem curiously,

A hundred years from now.

I feel like that person. I mean this, all this, is my answer to Tagore, not to you and not to anyone else-

Man: -I just can’t agree with this, talk as much as you want but it’s unclear, it’s muddled, Tagore becoming his own characters, Tagore talking to himself-

Girl: But writers are like that, they lose themselves in their work and become their own characters. In fact, I’m writing this café scene, what you’re saying, what I’m saying, we are characters in my story.

Man: Look at you.

Girl: What?

Man: Getting all worked up about your little piece of fiction.

Girl: Well at least it’s a passionate little piece of fiction and no grumpy old man is going to shut me up with his dry, preconceived reverence for a man who’s been dead for 150 years.

Man: You’re incorrigible.

(Ghaate baadha starts softly in the background. Robi 2 comes out of portrait and starts writing)

Girl: And you’re cute.

Man: bangla…

Girl: Fine, we’ll just sit here and listen to this strange music instead.

She writes.

(Woh 2 enters stage and stands next to Robi 2.)

Man: What are you writing?

Girl: The end.

Man: You’re writing the end now?

G: Shhh..I’m almost done.

Scene 11

Woh 2: Ant likh liya tumne (Have you written the end yet?)

Robi 2: Bas, wohi likh raha hoon. (That's exactly what I was writing)

Woh 2: Ant mein main hoon? (Am I there in the end?)

Robi 2 keeps writing.

Woh 2 : Ghaate baadha deen gaile re… (Bangla song)

Robi 2 gets up and sits on the other end.

Woh 2 goes to him.

Woh 2: Main badal gayi hoon. (I have changed)

Robi 2: Nahi…tum wahi ho.. (No...you are the same)

Woh 2: Main badal gayi hoon…lekin tumhein wahi gaana sunna hai…isliye tum meri taraf dekhna hi nahi chahte… (I have changed...but you just want to hear that song...that is why you won't even look at me...)

Robi 2 keeps writing.

Woh 2: Sunao. (Tell me)

Robi 2: Ant? (the end?)

Woh 2: Haan….sunao… (yes...tell me..)

Robi 2: Mausam bigad raha hai aur mujhe uss paar jaana hai.. (The weather is turning for the worse...and I have to get across)

Woh 3 enters and Robi 2 goes towards her.

Robi 2: Tum jaldi se ek gaana suna do..(why dont you sing that song quickly)

Woh 3 starts singing but Mrityu interrupts.

Woh 2 exits.

Woh 3: Main mrityu nahi gaana chahti. (I don't want to sing death)

Robi 2: Kisne kaha ki tum mrityu gao…tum jeevan gao. (Who asked you to sing death? ... sing life)

Woh 3 starts singing. Mrityu interrupts again.

Woh 3: Tumhaare dimaag mein mrityu hai…main jeevan se shuru karoongi aur tum use mrityu tak pohancha doge.. (Your mind is filled with death...I will begin with life and you will lead it to death..)

Robi 2: Tum prem..prem ga do.. (why don't you sing love, then?)

Woh 3: Prem aur mrityu mein mere liye antar hai…tum antar kho dete ho..(Love and death are two different things for me....you forget that difference)

Robi 2: Jo tumhaari ikchah ho woh suna do. (Sing whatever you like)

Woh 3: Mujhe pata hai ki tum gaana likhte hi chale jaoge..gaane se bhi aur yahaan se bhi..(I know that you will go away as soon as you write that song....from the song...and from here, as well)

Robi 2: Tumhein pata hai ki mujhe jaana hai.. (You know that I have to leave)

Woh 3: Toh jaao. (then leave)

She walks off to the other end. Woh 1 enters.

Woh 1: Main apna sab kuchch chhod kar tumhaare saath chal sakti hoon… abhi...issi waqt(I can leave everything and come with you...right this minute)

Woh 2 : Main apna sab kuchh chhod kar tumhaare saath chal sakti hoon…abhi…issi waqt. ((I can leave everything and come with you...right this minute)

Robi 2: Dekho…(Look)

Woh 1: Soch kar jawaab do…doosra mauka de rahi hoon..(Think before you reply...I am giving you a second chance)

Robi 2: Uss paar mujhe kissi ki zaroorat nahi hai…uss paar ant hai…wahaan se waapasi bhi sambhav nahi hai…(I don't need anyone across the river...across lies the end..there is no return from there )

Mrityu rings a bell loudly.

Robi 2: Jaldi se gaana suna do ab rukna sambhav nahi hai..(please sing quickly ...I can't stay any longer)

Woh 1: Tum rukoge..tumhein rukna padega..tum ziddi ho tum gaana sunne bina jaaoge bhi nahi..(You will stay...you will have to...you are stubborn..you won't leave without listening to the song...)

Woh 1: Tum kyon hamesha likhta rehna chahta ho? (Why do you need to keep writing?)

Woh 3: Main bhi tumse poochchna chahti thi..tumhein ant se bohat darr lagta hai na…pata hai mujhe hamesha lagta hai ki tumhaari kahaniyan koi aur likhta hai..aur unka ant koi aur. (I too wanted to ask you...you are very scared of the end, right?...you know, I always get a feeling that someone else writes your stories...and then someone else the end)

Robi 2: Tum gaana kyon nahi gaa rahi ho? (Why aren't you singing?)

Woh 3: Kyon? Taaki tum uss paar ja sako? Kahaani ka ant likhne? (Why? So that you can go across? To write the end?)

Robi 2: Iss kahaani ka ant main yahin karke jaa raha hoon..isliye kehta hoon gaana suna do aur mujhe jaane do. (I am going to end this story right here...that is why I am asking you to sing a song and let me go.)

Woh 1: Aur ant ke baad mera kya hoga? ( And what will happen to me after the end?)

Robi 2: Ant ke baad kissi ka bhi kya hota hai? (What happens to anyone after the end?)

Woh 1: Main gaa toh paa nahi rahi hoon..tum maar do mujhe iss kahaani mein (I am unable to sing...why don't you kill me in this story?)

Robi 2: Itna saral ant chahti ho? (You want such a simple end?)

Mrityu rings his bell again.

Woh 1: Ek baar mere liye maar do mujhe..waise bhi tum chale jaoge..phir hum kabhi nahi milenge..phir main kyon nadi ke iss paar zinda padi rahoon? (Just kill me once, for my sake...as it is you will leave...and then we will never meet again...then why should I keep waiting for you here, on this side of the river, alive?)

Robi 2: Issliye kyonki kahaaniyan kabhi marti nahi hai…main kahi bhi honga..mujhe pata hoga ki nadi ke uss paar tum ho…iss kahaani mein ab bhi zinda. (because stories never die...wherever I shall be...I will know that you are on this side of the river..still alive in this story..)

Woh 1 stops him.

Woh 1: Tumhaare saath ja kaun raha hai? (Who is going along with you?)

Robi 2: kahaan? (Where?)

Woh 1: uss paar..(to the other side)

Robi 2: Mrityu! (Death)

Woh 1 smiles and leaves. Mrityu enters and sits in the empty space.

Mrityu: Chalo bhai…samay ho gaya hai.. (Let's go, mate..it's time..)

Robi 2: Bas…do minute…main abhi aaya (just two minutes..I'll just come)

Mrityu: Bhai, samay ho gaya hai yahaan sabko Namaste kehne ka (Mate, it's time to bid goodbye to everyone here)

Robi 2: Haan main wahi kar raha hoon…bas ek gaana sunn loon toh chaloon. (That's exactly what I am doing...let me just listen to this song, and then I shall come)

Mrityu: Main jab bhi tumhein lene aata hoon toh tumhein jeevan thoda kam hi lagta hai…tum bas ek aakhiri gaana sunn lena chahte ho..(Whenever I come to fetch you you always find life a little short...you always want to listen to that one last song)

Robi 2: Maar do mujhe..Mai mrityu chahta hu, kaisi hogi mrityu, khoobsoorat hogi naa.(Kill me...I want death...how will death be?...it will be lovely, won't it?)

Woh 3 gets up and Robi 2 walks backwards towards her…

Robi 2 starts singing. (Tagore's song in Maithili language)

“Maran re…..

Tuhuu mama…shyaan samaan

………….maran tu aao re aaao”

Woh 3 and Bachcha join in the song. Bachcha plays hopscotch. So do Tagore, Death and Ocampo.

Scene 12

Tagore goes and sits with Bachcha.

Mrityu speaks.

Tagore: money aachey jokhon tumi prothim eshechiley? Maakey nitey. (Do you remember the first time you had come to take my mother away?)

Mrityu:tokhon robi tumi, ekhaney boshechiley – na na, ekhaney na, okhaney – oi oporey chiley …aar ami eshechilam, maakey nitey. (Robi, you were standing here...no...there...on top...and I had come...to take your mother away)

Bachcha/Child Tagore: Ei! Kothay jacchho? (Hey, where are you going?)

Mrityu: Etar ar ekhon kono proyojon nei, tai exit korchhi. (There is no use of this here, that is why I am exiting with it)

Bachcha:Ami tomar kotha bolchi. Tomaro ki ekhane kono proyojon nei, je exit korchho? (I am talking about you. Is there no need for you too, that you are exiting?)

Mrityu: Na. Ami exit korte shahaajyo kori. Ami abar ashbo. Amake aro koekbar ashte hobe. (No. I just help in making others exit. I will be coming here time and again. )

Bachcha: Keno? Keno ashte hobe? (Why? Why will you have to come?)

Mrityu: Amar shathe onek ke jete hobe je. Koekjon ke shomoy moto, koekjon ke shomoy er agey. (Because a lot of people have to go with me. Some before time and some right on time.)

Bachcha: Acchha, ashar shomoy ekta kalam niye esho. (okay, next time will you bring me a pen?)

Mrityu: Kalam o amii aanbo? Tahole toh tumi amake niyei likhbe. ( You want me to bring you a pen? Then you will end up writing only about me.)

Bachcha: Tumi jodi ek ek kore shobai ke ekhan theke niye jao, tahole toh ekhanta khub phaka hoye jabe. Shei jyaga ta bhorbo ki kore? (If you keep taking everyone from here, there will be a lot of empty space. How will I fill it all?)

Mrityu: Kalam toh anacchho amake diye. (I am getting you a pen, aren't I?)

Bachcha: Koto likhbo? (How much shall I write?)

Mrityu: Bishwash koro, prochur. (Trust me, a lot.)

Bachcha: Kotodin? (For how long?)

Mrityu: Jotodin kalam e kaali thakey. (As long as the ink doesn't run out.)

Bachcha: Ar kaali jokhon shesh hobe? (And when it does run out?)

Mrityu: Kaali jokhon shesh hobe tokhon ami tomake nitey ashbo. (When it does run out, I will come and fetch you.)

Bachcha: Kibhabe niye jabe amake? ( How will you take me?)

Mrityu: Ekhoni lekha shuru koro na. Ami kalam ta niye ashi. (Don't start writing yet. I am getting the pen for you.)

Mrityu exits.

Scene 13

Mrityu begins a song. All actors on stage play hopscotch.

Scene 15

Tagore repeats the words from Mrityu’s song.

Aajikar din na phurate,

Hobe mor e asha purate,

Shudhu ebarer moto,

Boshonter phool joto,

Jabo mora dujoney kurate,

Tomar kanontole phalgun ashibe baarongbar,

Tahari ekti shudhu maagi ami duaarey tomar.

Tagore finishes reciting from Purabi. Victoria enters and stares at Tagore. Mrityu silently makes him aware that she has entered.

Tagore: What’s wrong?

Mrityu: She!

Victoria: Are you talking to me?

Tagore: Yes I was reciting a poem for you.

Mrityu: For her?

Tagore: Yes.

Victoria: But it was gibberish.

Tagore: No it was in Bangla.

Victoria: Same thing.

Mrityu laughs.

Tagore: Sorry. I’ve not had time to translate it. I will translate it now

Victoria:Deja! Deja! Yo lo tengo.

Tagore: I have written so much, so much for you.

Victoria:Quehaces, quehaces?!Non nonnon, no tienestiempoparatraducirloahora. Jesus! You’re leaving tomorrow.

Tagore: You’re angry?

Mrityu: Of course she is.

Victoria: No I’m not angry.

Mrityu: Listen, this will never end…

Tagore: I don’t want it to…

Tagore begins writing furiously.

Victoria: I just, I’m not going to understand your poems. So I don’t know what is the point.

Mrityu: What’s the point. You’re nearly done here.

Tagore: I’m not done.

Victoria: Evidentemente! You’re not done. Those squiggles look more like a Piccaso than a poem to me. At least if you painted, I could understand you a little.

He stops and looks at her for a moment.

Mrityu: Oh no, no, no! Don’t even think about it.

Tagore: I will paint. That’s a great idea. I will paint a baul running in absolute abandon, I will paint his face.

Mrityu: You will do no such thing.

Tagore: Listen. Will you come to Santaniketan?

Mrityu (shouts) :STOP!

They both freeze .

Mrityu: Pata hai tumhaari problem kya hai, tum Tagore ho, aur tum, tum Ocampo.Chalo maan le ke ab tum Tagore nahin or tum O’Campo nahin. Toh tum bologe. (You know what your problem is. You are Tagore, and you are O Campo. Suppose you weren't Tagore, and you weren't O Camp. Then you would say)

Tagore: Main bahut bhari hun. (I am very heavy)

Mrityu: Aur tum bologi. ( And you would say)

Victoria: Bahut door jaana hai tumhe. Chal paoge? (You have a long way to go. Will you be able to walk?)

Mrityu: Chal paoge? (Can you walk?)

Tagore: Nahin. (No)

Mrityu: Nahin. (No)

Victoria: Toh? (Then?)

Mrityu: Tum keh do. (Say it)

Tagore: Tum keh do. (Say it)

Victoria: Kya? (What?)

Tagore: Keh do ki tum Shantiniketan aaoge. (Say that you will come to Shanti niketan)

Victoria: Main koshish karungi. (I will try)

Tagore: Nahin main ja nahin paounga. Tum keh do ke tum aaogi. ( I won't be able to leave. Please say that you will come.)

Victoria: Main nahin aaungi. (I won't come.)

Tagore: Kyon? (Why?)

Victoria: Kyonki main nahin chahtike tum jao. (Because I don't want you to leave.)

Tagore: Haan to keh do. (So then say)

Victoria: Kya? (What?)

Tagore: Keh do ke tum Shantiniketan nahin aaoge. (Say that you won't come to Shanti Niketan)

Mrityu: Bahut der ke intezaar ke baad bhi wo kuch nahin kehti. (After a long silence, she still doesn't say anything)

Tagore: Will you come to Shantiniketan?

Mrityu and Victoria: You have to go soon.

Tagore: No, not yet.

He gets back to writing.

Victoria: No not yet, but tomorrow you are leaving, right?

Tagore: Stop saying that.

Mrityu: She said it.

Victoria: What do you want me to say?

tagore: Come to Shantiniketan. I’ll paint for you.

Victoria: Paint here.

Mrityu: It’s too late for that.

Tagore: It’s never too late.

Victoria: There’s not much time.

Tagore: Stop saying that! I’ll paint a mother and child for you. What’s the word for ‘asha’ in English.

Victoria: How do I know? You’re still writing. How can you talk about painting, when you’re still writing?

Mrityu: She’s right. There’s only so much you can do.

Frustrated he shouts at death.

Tagore: Will you stop torturing me? I heard you.

Mrityu: Hope.

Tagore: Hope, yes hope.

Victoria: Don’t shout at me.

Tagore: I’m sorry I wasn’t shouting at you. I’m just…please, be patient with me.

Victoria: It’s hard to be patient, when there is no time.

Tagore: I’m almost done.

Mrityu: Yes you are.

Victoria:Good. I’ll read it tomorrow.

Mrityu: It’s time.

Victoria: It’s past five.

Tagore: Give me a few more minutes.

Mrityu: One more day.

Victoria: We have only tomorrow.

Tagore: Yes, yes. I heard you. Tomorrow. One more day.

He continues writing. She stares in frustration and anger at his absent mindedness.

Victoria: Marchate, sin despedirse de mi.

She storms out.

Tagore: Mujhe ek baat samajh mein nahi aati...Ek kavi ki mrityu purush kaise ho sakta hai? (There is one thing I don't understand....how can a poet's death be male?)

Woh 3 starts singing.

“Labonay poorno prano…prane shohe….”

Mrityu feels hurt at Tagore’s words and leaves.

Scene 16

A hip hop fusion of Labonay begins in the café. Man is inside. He can hear Girl outside shouting. He’s amused.

Girl: Eh! Bhaisahib. Wo meri gaadi hai.Kissne kaha, nahin nahin nahin, please, sir, please. Main abhi de deti hun panch sau.Arey, tum log. Fuck you!

She enters all charged up shouting over the music.

G: Yaar, they towed my car. I swear, you can’t help but give bribes in this city! Hello! Can you shut up please?

(Hip hop singer 1 signals them to stop)

Hip hop singer 2: What?!

Hip hop singer 3: What the fuck is your problem, dude?

Hip hop singer 4: Who the hell does she think she is>

Hip hop singer 2: You need to let go.

Hip hop singer 3: Experiment, man.

Hip hop singer 4: Chill, dude.

Hip hop singer 3: Screw you.

Hip hop singer 1: Let's go.

(They exit. From the wings:)

Chorus: Long live Tagore!

Girl: Yaar, sorry about that. Where were we?

Man: I finished reading it.

Girl: Good. Here’s the end. Well, the beginning of the end.

Man: How does it end?

Girl: You want to know the end?

Man: Yes.

Girl: It’s Tagore. Surely you’re not expecting a happy ending?

Man: But it’s also you. I never know with you.

Girl: Hmm…

Man: I’m leaving for Shantiniketan tomorrow.

Girl: Ouch! My tooth.

He waits, she doesn’t give him the answer he wants.

Girl: That music was weird,wan’t it?

Man: It was Tagore.

Girl: In hip hop?

Man: They do all sorts of things to Tagore nowadays.

Scene 17

Woh 3 and Mausi on stage.

Mausi: Suno, aisa mat karo…Jatin bas jaane hi waala hai. (Look, don't do this...Jatin is about to leave.)

Scene 16 (cont.)

Man: Who’s Jatin?

Girl: Arey, you know that story where Jatin is on his death bed and asking for his wife and Mausi comforts him saying she’s coming when she really isn’t.

Man: yeah, yeah.

Scene 17 (cont.)

Woh 3: Jatin kaun hai? (Who is Jatin?)

Mausi: Ussne abhi abhi iss kahaani mein apna naam Jatin rakha hai. (He has just changed his name to Jatin in this story.)

Woh 3: Toh main kaun hoon? (And who am I?)

Mausi is confused. She takes out a note and reads.

Mausi: tum…patni ho.. (You are his wife)

Woh 3: Patni?...woh likhna chahta hai aur main jeena chahti hoon…main nahi ruk sakti. (Wife? He just wants to write...but I want to live...I can't stay)

Mausi: dekho aakhri gaana ga do…iss tarah mat jao…who tadapta rahega. (Please just sing the last song...don't leave this way...otherwise he will keep pining.)

Woh 3: Wahaan Ratan post office ke chakkar kaatta rahega..yahaan main gaane ke baad zinda padi rahoongi….ussne jeevan mein sabko khoya hai…kahaani mein uss baat ka badla kyon le raha hai? (Ratan will keep  wandering around the post office...and here I will still be alive after the song...he has lost everyone in this life...but why is he taking his revenge through his stories?)

Mausi: Mat jao. (Don't go)

Woh 3: Uske saath mrityu hai…mera poora jeevan hai…main jaati hoon. (He has death with him...but I have my entire life ahead of me...I have to go)

Mausi: Achcha suno, agar tum Jatin ke liye gaana gaati toh kaunsa gaana sunaati use? (Listen, if you were to sing one last song for Jatin, what would you sing?)

Woh 3 just laughs dejectedly and walks off.

Robi 2’s voice is heard : “Bas aaya, do minute”. (Coming, just two minutes)

Mausi drops her shawl and goes and sits. She hides her face with her sari. Robi 2 enters.

Robi 2: Naav jaane waali hai…mrityu intezaar kar rahi hai…main jaa raha hoon. (The boat is about to leave...death is waiting...I am leaving)

Mausi doesn’t say anything.

Robi 2: yeh mere liye hai? (Is this for me?)

He picks up the shawl. Mausi nods her head.

Robi 2: Mujhe pata hai tum gaana gaoogi..woh iss kahaani ka ant hoga..bas aise gaana ki mere uss paar pohanchne tak main tumhaara gaana sunn sakoon. (I know that you will sing...and that will be the end of this story...just sing in such a way that I can still hear your song till  I reach the other side..)

Robi 2 leaves.

Scene 18

Man leaves his chair and sits with his knees on the floor besides the girl. Girl keeps looking as if talking to the empty chair.

Man: If this wasn’t just about Tagore and Ocampo…

Girl: Yes?

Man: I’m just saying, hypothetically-

Girl: Yes.

Man: I think I would definitely like that.

She smiles at him.

Man: What?

Girl: How old are you?

Man: Too old probably.

Girl: Fifty?

He shakes his head.

Girl: Fifty five?

Man: Sixty three.

Girl: Oh!

Man: Surprised?

Girl: No, no -yes- Maybe you should grow a beard.

Man: I had one once, but it was unmanageable. I looked like I lived in a cave.

Girl: I think it would suit you, your personality.

Man: Which is that of a caveman?

Girl: Lost boy, great mind, neglected body, but still somehow…

Man: Somehow what?

Girl: Oh you know… what you do...

Man: You’re flirting.

Girl: God knows you’re old enough to handle it.

Man: Never know. I could be a dirty old pervert.

Girl: Nah. You read too much.

She continues to write.

Man: How come you hardly talk about him by the way?

Man: Who?

Girl: Tagore. I mean you are Bengali.

Man: I just don’t know what I’d say. Humein koi painting kyon pasand aati hai? Maine kahin padha tha…ki jab hum apne jeevan ke ansh unn rangon mein kahin dekh lete hain toh who rangon ka samooh humse baat karta dikhta hai…hum kehta hain yeh painting mujhe bohat pasand hai..(Why do we like any painting? I have read somewhere...that when we see aspects of our life in those colours the colours seem to talk to us...we say that we really like the painting)

Man: Tagore ab mujhe rangon mein dikhai dete hain…ek vishaal canvas par saghan rangon ke chhote bade strokes. Thoda door hatke uss painting ko dekho toh mujhe kathai rang ka ek brush stroke nazar aata hai. (Tagore now appears to me in those colours..a large canvas with small and large brush strokes of various colours...when you look at it from a distance..I can see a khaki coloured brush stroke)

Man: Aisa lagta hai jaise kissi ne kore kaagaz par mehez ‘Ka’ likh diya ho. Uss gehere kathai rang ko jab chhone jaata hoon toh woh ab bhi geela hai..aisa lagta hai jaise kahin kuchch kami hai..(It feels as though someone has written merely the letter 'K' on an empty sheet. When I go to touch that deep khaki colour it's still wet...as though there is something missing)

Man : Nahi, asal mein kami theek shabd nahi hai…khaali hai…haan aisa lagta hai jaise khaali hai…(No..in fact, missing is not the right word..empty..yes, it feels as if its empty)

Man : Mano ek kursi poori zindagi khaali padi ho…iss intezaar mein ki wahaan koi apna aakar baithega…jisse main jaanta nahin hoon… (As if a chair is empty for a lifetime...in the hope that someone my own will come and sit in it...someone I don't know..)

Man: Ek din...(one day)

She doesn’t look up from her writing.

Girl: …He wrote a lot basically.

He laughs. She’s busy writing. He goes to the bathroom.

Man: What song does mausi sing?

Girl: I’m just writing that.

She finishes writing. She puts her pen down and packs up her things while she speaks to Mausi.

Girl : I see it clearly now. The two of us - two impossibilities. We would hold out I’m sure, with our ups and downs. Like two people together, but stranded out at sea. I have my end. It’s not about the age. It’s about a moment. That’s all it takes for a lifetime of happiness. On the other hand, if you touch something you love, it wilts…

She leaves her paper and exits.

Mausi hums the last song.

Scene 19

In the villa…

Tagore recites the poem in English over here.

Tagore: I can litter your life with torn shreds of my pain,

And, moaning in dreams, keep you awake,

It is better that I remain speechless,

And help you forget me.

While on my solitary way,

I met you at dusk.

I was about to ask you to take my hand,

When I gazed at your face and was afraid.

For I saw there the glow of the fire that lay asleep,

in the deep of your heart’s dark silence.

Even if in my frenzy I turn that glow into flames,

the void inside me will still merit just a flicker.

I don’t know what sacrifice I should,

offer to the pyre of your love.

I bend my head and trudge on to my barren, simple end

with memories of you my only strength.

Victoria stares at Tagore in silence, who stares back at her, almost in defiance, as if daring her to speak.

Victoria: Its not in Bangla. I can understand it.

Tagore: You were meant to. I translated it last night for you. Now you know.

 Victoria: What? What do I know?

Tagore: Now you know.

Silence reigns between the two. They start moving away from each other. Their voices become louder but more distant as they speak.

Tagore: So I am finally leaving.

Victoria: You won’t paint anymore?

Tagore: That chair…I’m not sure it will fit through the door of the ‘sheeeep’

She laughs.

Victoria: We’ll work something out. I’ll speak the to captain, of the ‘ship’?

Tagore: Oh yes. I forgot you can do that sort of thing.

Victoria: I do my best for my guests.

Tagore: Guests. (slight sting to his tone) Yes well I’d like to give you these books, for being such a wonderful host.

Victoria: I will have to find a corner for them in my house.

The car beeps.

Tagore: I’m running late.

He starts gathering his luggage.

Tagore: Bejoya?

No response. She just stands there looking at him. He stops.

Tagore: I will miss you.

Silence. She walks up very close to him.

Victoria: That song I sang.

Tagore: Yes?

Victoria: It was from Gitanjali.

R gives a sigh.

Silence.

Tagore: Will you come to Shantiniketan?

Victoria: What?

Scene 20

Tagore is in Shanti niketan. Victoria in her villa.

A geetinatya ‘Chitrangda’ is in progress. Actors and singers are on stage. Tagore is singing along.

“Guru Guru Guru Guru,

Ghano megha garaje,

Porbote shikhore….

………………Arjun…tumi Arjun”

The play gets stuck in a time warp and repeats itself.

“Arjun…arjun….arjun….arjun”

Dear Bijoya.

Gurudev,

I went to your villa yesterday. It was not a very wise thing to do. It feels empty without you.  Have you reached Shantaniketan?

I have reached Shantaniketan and I’m working here. The tired feeling still persists. I do not know how long this letter will take to reach you.

Dear Gurudev (a thousand times dear)

I must admit that I miss you too much, it’s becoming quite uncomfortable, quite inconvenient.

My bhalobasa,

There are some animals which feign death in order to save themselves from the danger of death. I am advised by doctors to follow their example. Of course I do everything against the prohibition of my doctors, including writing this letter and painting.

I am delighted to hear you are painting. I will organize an exhibition in Paris.

The geetinatya resumes.

“Arjun, tumi Arjun….

Khauma diye koro na ashomman”

The dancers and singers freeze.

Tagore:

Dear Bejoya,

I am writing this reclining in your armchair. My body refuses to work. Paris was too short. I miss you. My mind wanders back to that balcony seeking your ministration of love.

Victoria:

Dear Gurudev,

Take care of yourself. How I feel sad not to be able to take care of you.

Song continues

“Juddhe kauro aobhaan………..mrityur gaurab”

They freeze again

Tagore:

Bejoya,

You must come to Shantaniketan.

Victoria:

Gurudev,

I cannot come immediately but I always remember you with love.

Tagore:

Bejoya,

I am almost certain I can come to Europe.

Song starts

“Kauri jaano aunubhob Arjun”

When?

“Tu”

Next march

“Mi”

Where?

“Ar”

Swizerland.

“Jun”

I’ll secure a villa.

“Nnn”

Again?

“Nnn”

Yes, but in Italy this time.

I have at last started my voyage to the West. I look forward to meeting you.

Gurudev,

I am still trying to organize the funds for the Vil-

The last song starts

“Haashi kanna…heera panna…”

Everyone gets up and moves towards the back of the stage very slowly. Each actor aquires a portrait like stance and remains still.

Last section

Victoria:

Dear, dear Gurudev,

I know you are waiting in Switzerland, and the Villa in Italy is arranged. I know you are waiting for me to respond. I know it is only a matter of my reaching there without further delay…but Gurudev, I must try to explain my reason for not…I want to come to Europe but we are busy with our magazine–I think of you fondly and miss you too- it is just that right now I’m finding it impossible to-

Tagore:

Bejoya

Will you not come to see me? I am here in Switzerland, and my time is short. I am anxiously waiting for you.

Dearest Bejoya,

I have made repeated futile efforts to inform you that I eagerly wish to see you. Are you receiving my letters?

Bejoya

I must meet you.

I do not know where you are.

I am in Italy. Waiting.

I do not know what to say. I am waiting for you.

I miss you.

Is she here?

Is she on a ship?

Where is she?

I miss her.

Bachcha stops Tagore and makes him turn around and look at the portraits. Bachcha sings ‘Mammo chitte, nitti nrittye………..ki anando, ki anando…”

Tagore rings Mrityu’s bell.

Death enters.

Scene 21

Tagore: Mujhe pata tha ant mein ant sundar hoga…maine hamesha sundar ant ki kalpana kit hi..tum wakai bohar sundar ho. (I knew that in the end... the end would be very beautiful...I had always imagined a beautiful end and you are indeed...very beautiful)

Death: Antim ikchah poori kar li tumne? (have you had your last wish?)

Tagore: Nahi. (No)

Death: Abhi bhi koi ikchah hai? (Is there still a last wish?)

Tagore: Ek…akhiri.. (yes...a last one)

Death: Kuchch likhna hai yeh mat kehna.. (Don't say that you still want to write)

Tagore: Ek chai peena chahta hoon tumhaare saath (I just wanted to have a cup of tea with you)

Death: Aisa kyon lag raha hai ki iss ant ki bhi kavita tum likh chuke ho? (Why do I get a feeling that you have written a poem about this end too?)

Tagore: Aur hum dono uss kavita ke andar abhinay kar rahe hain. (And both of us are acting in the poem?)

Death: Ek chai lana. (Bring a cup of tea)

Mrityu enters with a cup of tea.

Tagore: Tum chai nahi peeogi? (Won't you drink some tea?)

Death: Acidity!

Tagore: Toh kya socha hai? (So what have you thought?)

Death: Kya? (What?)

Tagore: Kaise le jaogi mujhe? (How will you take me?)

Death: Yeh bhi tum likh nahi chuke ho? (Haven't you written that too?)

Tagore: Who saari kalpana thi…main pehli baar isse jeena chahta hoon. (That was all in the imagination. ..I want to live it for the first time.)

Death: Chai kaisi hai? (How is the tea?)

Tagore: Bilkul waisi jaisi honi chahiye. Toh batao…kaise challenge? (Just the way it should be...so tell me...how shall we go?)

Death: Exit….exit sadhaaran hai…poora natak khatam ho chukka hai..aakhiri chai par baat ruki hai…tum chai khatam karoge …hum dono yahaan se uthenge aur exit! (Exit...exit is ordinary...the entire play is over...all that is left is this last cup of tea...you will finish it...the two of us will get up and exit!)

Tagore: Bas…uthenge aur chale jayenge. (That's all?...we get up and just leave?)

Death: Haan, aise hi hota hai. (That's how it is.)

Tagore: Itna sadhaaran? (So ordinary?)

Death: Itna saral (So simple!)

Tagore: Ismein koi kavita nahi hai? (There isn't any poetry in that)

Death: Jeevan mein kaunsi kavita hai? Jo likh raha tha who toh koi aur tha…tum toh bas use seh rahe the. (Is there any poetry in life? The one who was writing was someone else...you were just bearing him)

Tagore: Ab who kahaan hai? (Where is he now?)

Death: uski syaahi khatam ho chuki hai. (His ink has run out)

Tagore: Dekho…subah ho gayi hai (Look, it's morning)

Death: Ab iss diye ki zaroorat nahi hai (We don't need this lamp now)

Tagore: Chai khatam ho gayi (The tea is also over)

Death: Bujha de? (Shall we blow it out?)

Tagore: Bujha do. (Yes, put it out)

Death, and all the portraits in the back turn to Tagore and blow.

Black out.

…………………………………………………….END………………………………………………………………………………………..

मानव पर 10:57 pm

मानवमेरा कोई स्वार्थ नहीं, न किसी से बैर, न मित्रता। प्रत्येक 'तुम्हारे' के लिए, हर 'उसकी' सेवा करता। मैं हूँ जैसे- चौराहे के किनारे पेड़ के तने से उदासीन वैज्ञानिक सा लेटर-बाक्स लटका। -विपिन कुमार अग्रवालमेरा पूरा प्रोफ़ाइल देखें

Blogger द्वारा संचालित.