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Aadhya Publishing House

Presents

PANACHE

December 2023

Chief Editor:
Akanksha Shrivastava

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Preface

"Panache" is not just a name. It is a basic value of our "Aadhya Publishing House" as we believe talent should never die. Rather it should always stand out like the feathered plume on a helmet to attract the world and that is what Panache means. We, as the Publisher, believe in encouraging new talent in the field of literature. We want each and every poet to get the opportunity to express themselves and get the proper acknowledge that they deserve. They should be known by the world for their views and we hope very soon we shall be able to achieve this.

Panache is a monthly international magazine in the English Language, that is released on digital platforms for literature lovers.

However, our work does not end here. I, Akanksha Shrivastava, Publisher and Chief Editor of Aadhya Publishing house, am trying to put a smile on the faces of poor children by providing them with food on behalf of our publishing house. By taking this small initiative, it is our wish to fulfill this basic need of food so that we help the children to survive in a better way.



AADHYA PUBLISHING HOUSE

PRESENTS

PANACHE International Magazine

December 2023

**Publisher &
Chief Editor**

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Panache is a monthly magazine which is published by **AADHYA PUBLISHING HOUSE**. In this magazine we encourage new poets and writers by publishing their writings. Every month we offer a competition in which poets and writers can take part by registering themselves. The registered participants send their writings along with their name , photograph and phone number. The magazine will be launched on our facebook page on 1st day of every month. After the launch of magazine every registered writer will get the pdf of the magazine. Out of all the registered participants we ask every writer for their top 5 choices. And then we promote our writers on our social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, Twitter . This “**Panache**” will definitely be the attraction of literature and also the rise of every poet...



Akanksha Shrivastava
Publisher & Chief Editor

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Note :- We always demand the original write-ups from our writers. If any article, short story or poem is found to be a copy of any other article, short story or poem respectively, then the writer would only be responsible for it.

1. Suicide



Ahsanullah Nasar
Teacher and writer
Loralai
Pakistan

In the shadows where emotions reside,
Suicide, a pain we cannot hide.
It is when heartache and tears are shed,
In the shadow deep where hearts are torn,
Suicide, a pain that slowly born.
When love is lost and trust is slain,
Suicide's the ghost that haunts the brain.

Suicide can be when we are left alone,
Feelings forgotten, our hearts turn to stone.
When our secrets are unveiled to light,
Suicide whispers in the quiet of night.

Suicide's burden lightens with a mother's care,
Yet it lingers, a silent heavy air.
Religion offers guidance, a path to choose,
But sometimes, it feels like we lose.

To act or not, a dilemma we face,
But a mother's love, an eternal embrace.

Suicide is more than just saying goodbye,
It is when emotions in us slowly die.
Lies, whether from one or from society wide,
Can push us to the edge where darkness may reside.

2. QUIET ROUTE



**Akindipe
Oluwafunmilola
Student
Ibafo
Nigeria**

Life is a quiet route
Where powerful itinerants rule
And hinder the powerless ones from speaking out
To gain freedom like the loosened mule.
Death takes its toll day by day
As the innocent ones have no say.
They see suicide as an option
Because they have been failed by the nation.

Life is a quiet route
That leads to depression
And prevents our voices from being heard
When our dignity is tarnished.
All efforts to be heard
On the route are in vain
But hatred is thrown at us
And dejection is accepted into our day-to-day lives.
Every night, our expectation grows
On when to put an end to the route,
Causing suffering and death in silence
For the fear of the unknown.

3. MY GRANDPA



**Amama Christabel
Maria
Writer
Ikoyi
Nigeria**

He cut my umbilical cord during my birth,
And buried it in the ground,
With tears of joy shedding, just like me,
My grandpa!

A farmer who brought food home daily,
A driver who wakes up early,
Whose hands are strong and steady,
My grandpa.

With sweet melodies from his mouth,
And sweet kisses on my forehead,
So he keeps me warm and helps me sleep,
My grandpa.

He gave me a name after his dad,
Just as I cherish him next to God,
His teachings will stay with me even after he's gone,
My grandpa.

He taught me how to take my first steps as an infant,
So I'll help him take his last steps in old age until eternity,
Oh! This I pray through Christ our Lord,
For my grandpa!

INTENSIVE WRITING

My grandfather severed my umbilical cord when I was born and interred it in the earth.

He shed tears of happiness, just like me.

He was a farmer who brought sustenance home daily and an early riser as a driver.

His hands were strong and unwavering.

With mellifluous words flowing from his lips and sweet kisses on my forehead, He kept me warm and helped me slumber peacefully - my grandfather.

He named me after his father, just as I hold him dear to my heart next to God. Even after he has passed away, his teachings will remain with me always - my grandpa.

As an infant, he taught me how to take those first steps; now that he is old, it is time for me to help him take his last ones until eternity.

This prayer I offer through Christ our Lord for my grandfather!

By Amama Christabel Maria

4. The light is everywhere

The light is everywhere,
In the sky, the light is present.
In the moon, the light is present.
The sun occupies the light,
The light is everywhere.

In the school,
The students share lunch,
The children's care,
The light is here.
The light is everywhere.

In the light,
All are happy,
No one cries,
It's the light's magic,
That spreads everywhere.
The light is everywhere.

In the last,
I will say that,
Light is the symbol of,
Joy and happiness.
Where the coming of
Festival of lights.
The light is everywhere.

Here, "DEEPAWALI" has come,
With happiness and care,
The light is everywhere.



Anmol Shrivastava
Student
Vaishali
Bihar

5. Friendship

Sometimes, friends are all you need,
They fill hard days with their charming deeds.
They are the ones who are always by your side,
They are the ones from whom you don't hide.
Your pain, your sorrow, your bad days,
Your happiness, your joy, and your weird ways.

They know everything and still stick with you,
They are the ones who don't want to change you.
They accept you with all your flaws and help make
yourself better,
With their daily dose of motivation
and the faith you have in each other.

And if you fought, don't worry,
By the evening, it'll be gone.
You would be laughing like nothing happened,
As if nothing ever went wrong.



Arushi Mishra
Student
Bhopal
Madhya Pradesh

6. Old age!



**Bal Mukund
Dwivedi
Patna
Bihar**

Old age should be spent in the shadow of childhood.
Such old age should really be liked by the heart.
When old age is consoled with words by others,
Who would not be proud of such old age?
When one becomes regretful after seeing old age,
Such old age may not befall anyone.
Whoever finds the treasure of old age
Should loot it with both hands freely.
The experience of old age is very useful.
When the body gets tired, then it can perform tricks.
Old age is a shadow; the hot sun torments the lost.
Then only old age shows the way to lead.
Where can old age come upon everyone
And leave something in the month?
One who does not remember the innocence of childhood
He may face old age with great difficulties.
If someone does not have a lot of fun with his words,
What fun can he will have in his old age?
One who does not enjoy his words of childhood,
How will he be able to chew his cud in old age?
Life is a gradual phase; don't stop.
Whoever comes before you, go near him happily.

7. ASYMPTOTES



Dr. Bobby Narayan
Writer
New Delhi

While riding his old scooter, he saw Café Coffee Day, he stopped and entered inside. Coming to the counter, Raj, left out on there, a hot cocoa cooling to room temperature as it is, forgot to get it back. He seated there almost an hour and came out, finding his scooter irremovable. He felt sad. Instead of going to police, he moved towards office as he was getting late; not for pending important work but just to attend his farewell.

Receiving his relieving letter, he came back to his parent department. He was posted in his earlier seat. There was nothing new; no new environment, all old fellows and known. Only the new one, he got to know, Nisha being employed on contractual basis.

Suddenly Rupak shouted, 'The old boss has come'. Nisha asked, 'How do you know? Who told you? What sort of person?'

-I know everything. Raj is calm guy. No tussle with anyone.

A party was organised. Praveen and Sanjeev brought lunch for all. With the opening of parcel odour flowed in the room; Raj asked, 'Is this non-veg?'

Sanjeev said, 'Yes, don't you eat?'

Raj screamed, 'No, I don't like. Even I hate those who eat meat.'

Nisha took a glance of Raj and lowered her eyes. This made Raj in the state of tumult.

Raj is in habit of falling in love but doesn't engage in rearranging, reprioritizing, and reimagining his life. He doesn't stop dreaming about a beauty almost every night with a new failure. But doesn't ever have "can't eat, can't sleep" feelings. Thanks to his loss of memory, he doesn't mind forgetting the sweet dreams. He falls again and writes a new story with newly met dream-girl with an ambition to get a true love though he is married.

Back to his home, he shared his feelings with his lawyer friend who reciprocated: Empty love is characterized by commitment without intimacy or passion. A stronger love may deteriorate into empty love. In an arranged marriage, the spouses' relationship may begin as empty love and develop into another form, indicating "how empty love need not be the terminal state of a long-term

relationship”.

Do you know Kelifern Pomeranz? She is a California-based clinical psychologist and certified sex therapist. She says "When you fall in love, your body produces a cocktail of chemicals, including dopamine (for wanting more), noradrenaline (for excitement, focus, and attention), testosterone (for sexual interest and drive), and a drop in serotonin (which can cause that low-key obsessive feeling). These chemicals make us feel happy, giddy, energetic, euphoric, and youthful."

Raj didn't understand. He began dreaming although his wife was sitting nearby but was busy with her phone.

Next morning, he found Rupak, Sanjeev, Tahir and Nisha, all forming a group, were having tea and later also having lunch altogether. Raj watched them without showing any signs of anger or jealousy.

-2-

Varun was very close to Raj who often accompanied him, and they discussed various issues among themselves. 'Sir, what about Nisha? She is quite attractive. Won't you try?'

To Varun, Raj looking into Google, said: The 4 Types of love: affection, friendship, passion and selfless love – or sometimes known by the four Greek words for love: storge, philia, eros, and agape – show us the various forms love manifest in our relationships. You can't predict anything.

Rupak is ripe in age; despite that much junior to Raj but competes with him in all spheres. He is a rich guy, and his wife is also working. To impress Nisha, he purchased one Toyota Hyryder. Sweets were distributed but was not shared with Raj. He didn't mind. But when Raj purchased Tata Tiago, all gathered and demanded party and they celebrated. Thereafter, Rupak used to drop her at home. Raj was workaholic, so seated even after 8, didn't have that opportunity.

Raj very often noticed Nisha watching her phone. He, one day, stood behind her and saw her rereading husband's text messages and viewing his photos over and over again when they first began dating. Raj murmured, 'She is very much engaged with him. Then what is Rupak doing? What about my efforts? Perhaps she doesn't even consider me as intimate one.'

Being head of the department, Raj was obliged with the duty to treat all the juniors equally, he began to wipe out the feelings.

Just Raj began to think about several plans so that Nisha departs from his

department. At last, he finalized, 'by saying harsh words'. The next morning, the big boss informed him, 'she is likely to be dismissed'.

The matter was discussed among themselves. Tahir and Sanjeev requested Rupak to take some initiative. Rupak showed no mercy, said, 'What can I do? Whatever needs to be done, will be done by Admin.' And gave a cold shoulder.

Raj asked her, 'Have you heard about something like bad news?'

-Yes, yesterday, I got to know.

-Why didn't you intimate me? I was very sad, so didn't ...

Raj got depressed. He rushed to the Management and put up a request note to reconsider the matter and emphasised on her reinstatement adding praises, highlighting her qualities. The moment, after the fight, he returned to his chamber, Varun with loud laughter said, 'Sir, yesterday Rupak took her to Buddha Garden in his car.' 'You just wait and watch. He will make her pregnant but you cannot even tell her'.

Raj was looking at her from a distance, Nisha delivered a glad eye. It was enough for his night's dream.

Down in the mouth, Raj was hearing what Varun said, 'Faint heart never won fairy lady'. Raj is driven by two impulses, one either 'by love' or 'by fear' at the same time.

-3-

An Order was issued by the HR regarding the Official Meeting and training. The staff attended but came back with a heavy heart. They complained that the arrangements were worse.

Lower-level officials cried foul: Only two biscuits, cold tea, and no extra sugar. Next time, we are not going to attend such training.

Fighting with management with various issues caused negative results. It was decided to terminate Raj. The green-eyed god in Rupak arose. In the evening, he went to meet her husband.

Rupak told him, 'It's a good move by the management'.

-Why?

-Actually, Raj is in love with Nisha.

-What?

-That's why he is doing so much.

Her husband couldn't bear it, resulting in cupid attack. He chocked. In a jiffy, he was admitted.

However, the management didn't take any action against both citing it a trifle. Raj was well-educated and he didn't bother about the job. Nisha's was vulnerable as it was contractual and could be terminated without citing any reason.

What Raj observed that Nisha was absenting from office for last three days without informing. The work was suffering. She was not even picking up the phone. Rupak informed, 'Her husband is in hospital'.

-Any major issue?

-May be heart related. I went to Max, but doctor didn't say anything. He is under observation.

-What is the present situation?

-I don't know. Who's is going to take minute-by-minute information?.

Varun rang Raj.

-Sir, her husband is critical. She needs money, right now.

-How could you know that?

-Sir, I met Shivangi. She told me.

-Who is Shivangi?

-Sir, her friend. You can visit the hospital.

-Didn't Rupak help her?

-Sir, you know him. He is a Pig, miser. He is nobody's. Just passing time with her.

-She might be waiting for divine intervention.

-But I learnt, she asked for money from Rupak which he denied. Thereafter, she broke all the relationships, deleted his phone number. She washed her hands of.

One strange thing Raj had acquired: he began to avoid others due to his status as most of the officials were lower in position. Nobody calls him. Hardly anybody asks him about his wellness. People don't like him, don't like to talk with him. He is also disliked though he doesn't use any harsh words or abuses anybody. He has never been heard using slangs. Bereft of lively moment, he never took the courageous leap of saying 'I love you'.

Back to home he was anxious to help Nisha to come out of danger she had been facing.

-4-

Raj sold his car to Varun's friend and collected some more to pay for the surgery without informing Nisha. She was also looking after her ailing daughter at home. Later in the evening, when she came to hospital, found her husband having

bandages all over the chest, she was surprised. 'Who could have done this?' She rang Varun and could know the details.

Among the wants, Raj wanted intimacy, the desire to feel closely connected. What he lacked is the passion, physical and emotional stimulation, but afraid of decision or commitment, the resolve to stick together.

'That's lust. You are lustrous.' Said his inner self. 'You just want to have sex. You are dissatisfied with your wife. Purify your thoughts.'

Instead of paying back in his coin, next day, she came in the office and went straight to Raj and shouted, 'I could not imagine your dirty mind.' There started decline of aspirin in his system, he kept mum.

Her husband was discharged. Rupak went to meet him. Nisha was also standing near them. Rupak said, 'Why should we take other's alms? Better we return it.'

-But I don't have enough money. Both of us are earning less than twenty thousand. It's very difficult situation. We will return his money, in course of time.

-How can you return ten lakhs? It will take ten years. Further, he will take advantage of it.

Rupak paid back the money to Varun's friend and asked him to return the car. Raj accepted the money. Instead of being happy he got the news that Nisha was terminated due to her frequent absence.

Raj couldn't withstand the shockwaves. He resigned.

Few days after, one misty morning, while walking, he saw the Café Coffee Day and entered. The manager came with hot cocoa and said:

-But I didn't place any order.

-Sir, few days ago we failed to serve your order. It was left there in the counter.

-Thanks.

Coming out he saw his old scooter. As he was about to start; he saw someone approaching him. Before he could speak, the gentleman, with folded hands, said:

-Sir, you are a great person.

-I am unable to recognise you.

-Sir, you saved my life. When I was in hospital, nobody came out to help me. Please come to my house and have a cup of tea.

Raj could not refuse. He went inside and seated in a chair. Moments later, he saw Nisha coming with tea. She gave a sunny smile. Her husband shedding joyful tears, continued:

-Sir, please forgive me. I stole your scooter.

Raj kept silent. Finishing tea, he stood up and came out of the door. Nisha, standing one-legged on the doorway with lingering look, said:

-Sir, please come again. We will be waiting for you.

Raj left dreaming to kiss the sky while riding but dashed into a parked car.

By Boby Narayan



8. Knowing The Truth Is Knowing Yourself



**Dr. Chitranjan
Dayal Singh
Kaushal
Professor (Retired)
Kurukshetra
Haryana**

We all are interested to know the truth. But knowing the truth is not so easy. Most of the time we fail to understand the truth. There is a constant urge in a person to know about the outside and inside.

Man's ignorance of reality stems from his incorrect understanding of the world.

Vedic philosophy inspires genuinely questioning to know the ultimate. Man follows the laws of Earth. Earth follows the laws of Heaven. Heaven follows the laws of the Universe. The universe follows the laws of Nature. Nature follows the laws of Vedas. It is called Vedic Rit.

The entire universe is one. We all are interdependent. We should not fight with each other. Rather we should help and co-operate. Man is mortal and Atma i.e. soul is immortal.

The characteristics of Nature is to manifest itself as manifold. The characteristics of the Divine is to absorb into unity. Wisdom instructs man to establish this truth and demonstrates the underlying Divinity.

The achievement of ultimate reality and a feeling of oneness make us capable of enjoying life with a purpose and fulfilment.

Undoubtedly, money and commerce make a man make the correct decision even for helping others. Contentment and happiness come from a perfect understanding of the spirit of selfless service. This is the only way to experience the oneness of all humanity. This is the biggest thrill to understand that we all are Atman. So, we are eternal.

Kama i.e. desire of the Almighty to create this world was in the root of the universe. The law of causation is also an important aspect of the universe. The Vedic seers perceive the cause of the existence in non-existent. Sat indicates the world of matter. Asat indicates the divine principal of the energy of life. A union of mind with matter is a fact of which each one is witness to one's own self.

Meditate and experience the bliss of oneness.

The meaning of life is to experience this truth and live life fully serving selflessly. We should face all the problems of life boldly and intelligently. The important thing to remember is to not delay making the decisions. Never make decisions in too much haste. Things like relationships and health are very important to improve the quality of life.

Strong and bold people never get insecure and come out stronger each time. Point to ponder is this that you are the master of yourself. Be positive and live in a positive atmosphere. Fight negativity with all your will and strength. Overcome all the negative emotions like anger, jealousy and hatred by the chanting of names of Almighty. Satisfaction lies in the effort not in the attainment. Full effort is full victory. This is true education. Actually, education is what survives when what has been learnt has been forgotten. The heights by great men reached and kept were not attained by sudden flight, but they while their companions slept were tolling upward in the night.

You are the best person so far ever born on this earth. Just understand this ultimate reality that you are pure Atman. Infact, knowing the truth is Knowing yourself.

Here I would like to quote a few lines of one poem out of book named Maiden Expressions written by Mehak Talwar (SLM Publishers, Patiala).

Sometimes you wonder who you will become,
The feelings inside your heart shakily go numb.
You're lost, you're alone, but you are relieved,
Because you are your own shooting star, if else you believe.

Let's start a new chapter of love, caring, sharing and hope instead of hatred and war. Hands that help are holier than lips that pray. Let compassion and sacrifice be your two eyes. Let egolessness be your breath and love be your tongue.

By Chitranjan Dayal Singh Kaushal

9. My version



Denis Ogola
Student
Nairobi
Kenya

Deep down, this person in me wants to be somebody who will thrive in silence, who will dwell in life not just to count the days but to make the days count. Either best or worst, the seasons could be; inborn resilience forever energizes me.

For a while, I learned the difference and accepted the change, mixing the paints to make my presence bright. Taste, as adequate recognition in different spheres of life, is still a mission. With ambiguity in understanding oneself, I want to create my way from the unknown and infamous to the known and famous heights that are beyond destruction.

Giant mindset, diligence, success, and prosperity, health and value, perseverance for victory through hard work or luck, and being conventional count since my childhood era.

Youth taken in amazement,
Destiny accrued in bewilderment,
Firm stance, relying on calculations and plans for my attainment.
Desired brands going slippery, needs hooked in blurry borders sometimes but still celebrating our wins until we forget our losses.

Intuition relieved me of the unknown circumstances; in its lessons, I learned to balance all the good and bad offers. The clock ticking at a rapid pace, but still, my belief is anchored in Supreme timing.

10. When I close my eyes



Dennis Kiptoo Rono
Writer
Eldoret
Kenya

When I close my eyes, I see a candle,
One in the cold, none seeks to relight,
Hopes do fade, like the midmorning mist,
Smile the tears away, the candle will still light.

Darkness seeks no mercy; it can still be night,
If a barate must die, he should have fallen trying,
Drips with a 'dop' sound, the candle is still there,
Smile the tears away, the candle will still light.

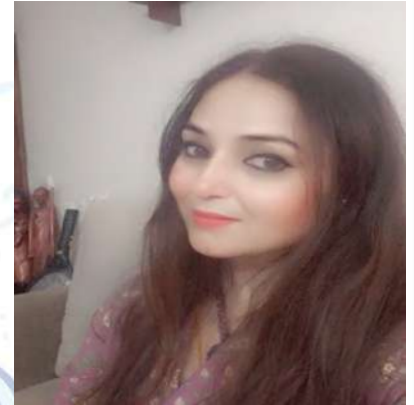
Once again, the wind hounds that sound,
I better open my eyes, to see all that I hide,
With time, I make a count, the candle is not bright,
Smile the tears away, the candle will still light.

It cliches my sad mind, the sound of that tear,
I wish I had tried, the story might have been mine,
I tried a blind site, and there sank my heart,
Smile the tears away, the candle will still light.

I think I am dying, to see the candle light,
The patience still may wait, only to find life,
Am glad I just found, the candle will just light,
Smile the tears away, the candle has just light.

Glad I see the candle light, bright in that night,
Clean I wipe tears dry, of hope it now abides,
Forever I will sight, the candle that lights bright,
I smile the tears away, the candle will always light.

11. The Muzzle



Donika Sharma
HR
Noida
Uttar Pradesh

Deskbound next to the scrubs on the dazzling urban link road, waiting for the mob with an insipid aspect. Suddenly, I heard the sound of the sea near the shrubberies. Vehemently, with my hampered feet, I rushed to the beach, giving a guise to that hushed and mimed boulevard. It gave me a gigantic feeling of a heavenly ecosphere with no turbulence in life. I tried to find out a moment where I could sense a speech or someone. But I could not hear anything.

I contemplated the unfilled, soundless boulevard with scrubs and tall trees on the side, accompanying the dense dark with a trembling gale. I tried to comprehend the charge of the stillness and swiftly found a young, smart man coming towards me through the condensed dusky hush of the street. A vague street light was flashing and screening the incidence of the breathing over there. I grasped his companionship near me, evading the stillness of the dusky. He took me into his arms to make me understand that even in the murkiest of my life, my beloved is there with a blazing luster to clutch me in his embrace persistently.

12. Don't Quit



Elonu Annabel
Student
Ogun State
Nigeria

When things go wrong, as they sometimes will,
when the road you're trudging seems all uphill,
when the funds are low and the debts are high,
and you want to smile but you have to sigh,
when care is pressing you down a bit – rest if you must,
but don't you quit.

Life is queer with its twists and turns,
As everyone of us sometimes learns,
And many a fellow turns about when he might have
won had he stuck it out.

Don't give up though the pace seems slow – you may succeed with another blow.
Often the goal is nearer than it seems to a faint and faltering man;
Often the struggler has given up when he might have captured the victor's cup;
and he learned too late when the night came down,
how close he was to the golden crown.

Success is failure turned inside out – the silver tint of the clouds of doubt,
and when you never can tell how close you are,
it may be near when it seems afar;
so stick to the fight when you're hardest hit—
it's when things seem worst, you must not quit.

13. YEARS AGO



Esha Fatima
Student, Writer
Sargodha
Pakistan

Years Ago, I Fell In Love With You,
Unaware Of The Depth Within My Heart,
But When I Summoned Courage, My Love, You
Withdrew,
Leaving Me Shattered, Torn Apart.

Oh, The Years Have Passed, Each One A Reminder,
Of The Love That Once Bloomed, So Tender And True,
Yet Now I Stand Here, All Alone, Welcoming Autumn,
Wondering If My Heart Will Ever Find Solace Anew.

Formal Attire, We Wore Our Masks,
Pretending Indifference, Hiding Our Pain,
But Behind Closed Doors, Our Souls Danced,
Oh, The Love We Had, How It Used To Reign.

But Fate Played Its Game, Tearing Us Apart,
Like Fragile Petals Scattered By The Wind's Whims,
And now I stand here, with a heavy heart,
Yearning For The Love Lost, Drowned In Unrequited Dreams.

Short-lived Were The Moments, Our Love So Pure,
An Ember Flickering In The Shadows Of Time,
And Though Our Paths Diverged, Never To Intertwine,
The Memories Of Us, Forever Endure.

Years May Pass, Seasons Come and Go,
But My Love For You, It Refuses To Wane,
For It's Etched In My Soul, A Love That Still Glows,
Even If Our Hearts May Never Intertwine Again.

So, I'll Hold Onto The Fragments Of Our Time,
A Bittersweet Symphony Of What Could Have Been,

PANACHE
MONTHLY MAGAZINE
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MSME, Govt Of India

And Cherish The Memories That Will Forever Chime,
Of A Love That Was Lost,
But Once Made My Heart Gleam!!!

By Esha Fatima



14. Twilight



Fida Salazar
**Religious leader/
writer**
Philippines

Oh, how I wish to enjoy the twilight zone,
Watching wonderful heaven's colors.
Little by little, brightness disappeared,
Darkness began, but still, in my heart, you will stay
forever.

Your memories keep haunting me.
I can't erase you from my mind.
Yes, it was twilight time when you broke my heart,
You broke my dreams.
Everything we planned since the very start turned to
nothing.

Why did you ever say goodbye?
Why did you ever make me cry?
Just for a while, I'm with you,
And love was starting to be real.

I blame myself for losing you.
I was a fool to let you go.
My restless nights long for you.
I will forever love you.

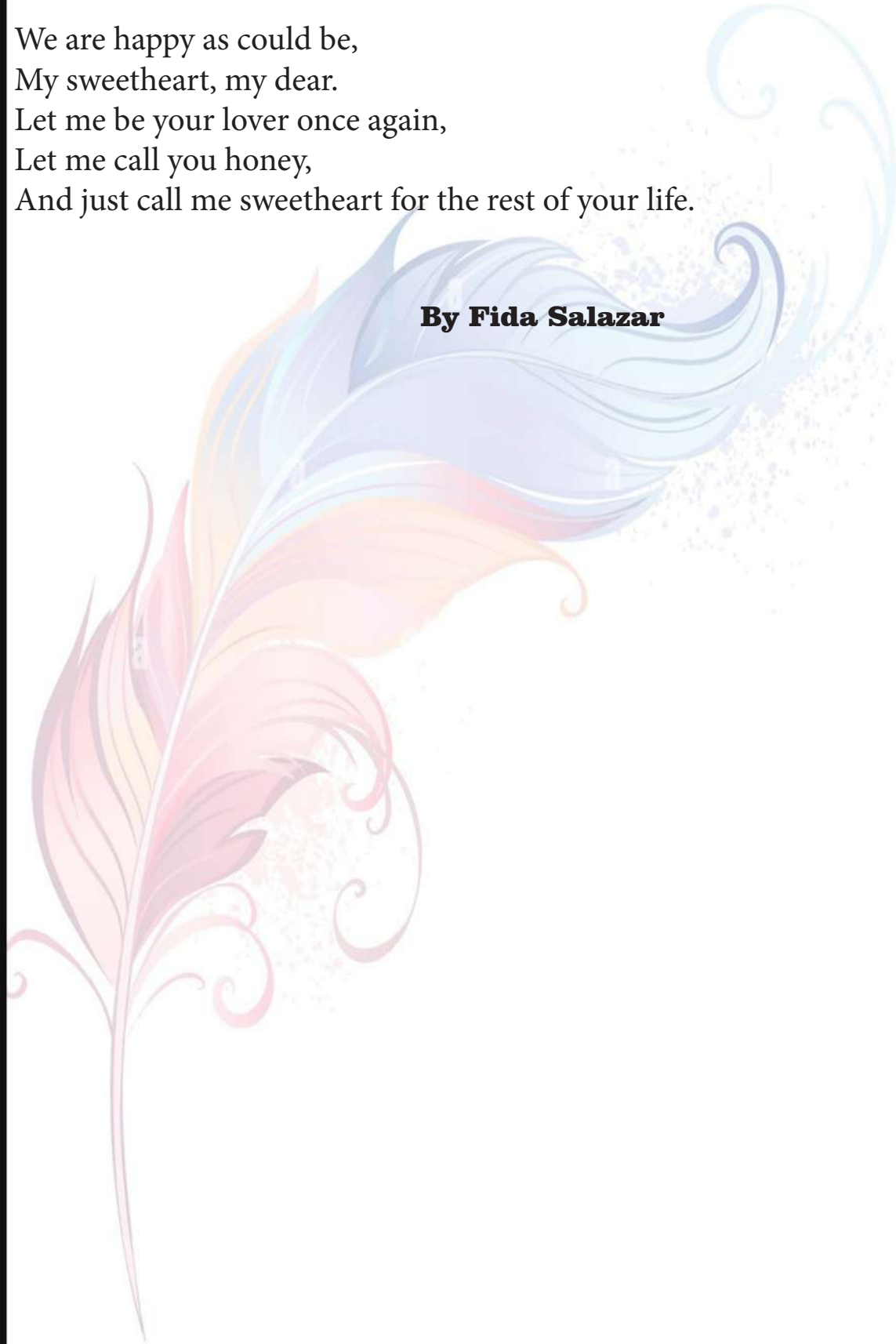
It seems like magic!
I can't believe it!
You and I back in each other's arms,
This moment of twilight time.

Then suddenly, stars up above
Turn twilight into bright skies,
So bluer than blue.
Love is lovelier the second time around,
Much sweeter than before.

Thanks for the twilight zone.

We are happy as could be,
My sweetheart, my dear.
Let me be your lover once again,
Let me call you honey,
And just call me sweetheart for the rest of your life.

By Fida Salazar



15. Overcoming Adversity



**George Dowson
Andoh Junior
Accra
Ghana**

How One Young Man Triumphed Against Financial Hurdles to Succeed in Education

Introduction:

In a world where education is often seen as a privilege rather than a right, the story of Dr. OWUSU FRANK ADZEBA serves as an inspiring reminder that no obstacle is insurmountable. Facing the daunting challenge of paying his school bills, Frank's unwavering determination and resilience propelled him toward a path of success and triumph.

Frank's journey began in the small town of Kumasi, Ghana, where dreams were often overshadowed by financial constraints. With limited resources and a single-parent household, the weight of his family's financial responsibilities fell squarely on his shoulders. Despite the mountainous burden, Frank's resolve to pursue education remained unyielding.

Undeterred by his circumstances, Frank embarked on a mission to find a way to pay for his education. He explored every possible avenue, from scholarships to part-time jobs, and even started a crowdfunding campaign. Through sheer tenacity, he managed to secure enough funds to cover his tuition fees, books, and other educational expenses.

However, the challenges did not end there. Balancing work and studies proved to be an arduous task for Frank. Often burning the midnight oil, he fought against exhaustion and time constraints, determined to make the most of his educational opportunities. His dedication and perseverance soon caught the attention of his teachers and peers, who admired his unwavering commitment to his studies.

As the semesters flew by, Frank's hard work began to bear fruit. Not only did he excel academically, but he also became a beacon of inspiration for his fellow students. His story of triumph against adversity served as a testament to the

power of determination and the significance of education in one's life.

News of Frank's incredible journey reached the ears of influential members of the community, who were captivated by his story. Their support poured in, ranging from financial aid to mentorship opportunities. Frank's tale touched the hearts of many, and he soon found himself at the center of a community-driven initiative to empower and assist financially disadvantaged students.

Today, Frank stands proudly on the stage, receiving his well-deserved Medical Doctor's degree. The applause that fills the auditorium is not just for his academic achievements but for the indomitable spirit that brought him to this moment. His story has become one of hope and inspiration, reminding us all that no dream is too small and that there's always a way to overcome obstacles.

Lastly, OWUSU FRANK ADZEBA's remarkable journey serves as a testament to the power of perseverance, determination, and the value of education. His triumph over financial hurdles has left an indelible mark on the community, inspiring generations to come. Through his unwavering spirit and refusal to succumb to adversity, Frank proves that with the right mindset and support, success can be achieved against all odds.

Remember, no matter where you come from or what challenges you face, your dreams are within reach. Let Frank's story be a beacon of hope, encouraging you to pursue your passions and overcome any obstacle that stands in your way.

By George Dowson Andoh Junior

16. The soul

The soul lies in the heart.
The soul is older than the heart.

The soul has a direct connection with the brain.
The soul has more experience and gain.

The soul doesn't believe in lies.
The soul speaks the truth, from earth to sky.

The soul doesn't mislead.
The soul can also read.

The soul puts you in the scanner.
The soul also acts as a receiver.

The heart banks on emotions.
The soul has different emotions.

The soul always tries.
The soul never dies.

The soul never gets wet.
Its timings are well set.

The soul never burns.
The soul always returns.



**Girish Chandra
Upadhyay**
Legal profession
**(Advocate High
Court)**
Prayag Raj
Uttar Pradesh

17. DREAM DAMSELS

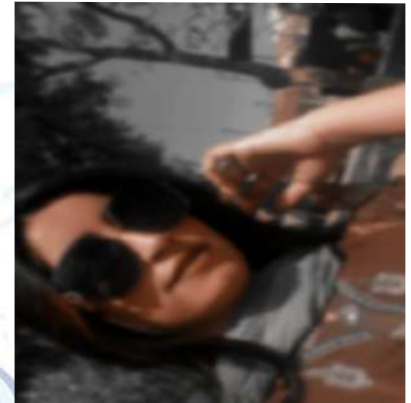


**Gowri
Ramachandran
Retd. Educator
(Delhi Public
School, R K Puram),
Author, Editor.
Currently residing
in Chennai**

What keeps them fluttering?
Despite the harsh, dusty winds?
Battling against Nature's onslaught—
Those bright-hued pansies!
Their delicate petals,
Like the wings of a butterfly,
Moving hither, thither,
Holding on, never giving up.

Such joy they bring,
These divine damsels!
Delicate and yet so firm.
In determination, to hold on.
Nature created them to be so.
Fragile and seemingly weak,
Yet so strong in will,
To stay and spread cheer.

18. I am just a mess of unfinished thoughts



Husna Abbasi
Writer
Pakistan

I am just a mess of unfinished thoughts. :)

He was painting her face today,
Suddenly, his hands stopped on the voice of her footsteps.
He frowned. This fragrance was becoming a habit of his.
"What are you painting?"
At her voice, he shook his head and started painting again.

He was making her hands now.
"That's not fair, Yar. You leave this picture incomplete every time.
You told me that you will also draw lines of my hands in which we will be written together."
(She was singing something.)
"You didn't even create the moisture in my eyes that was in my eyes when I left you."
(She was now turning her hand towards the picture.)

She looked at the picture carefully and said, "This smile was farewell. I did not smile from the heart, believe me.

Before you met me, you used to be like this, a playful girl."
(He spoke slowly.)

"The immortal bull of my love destroyed you, even took you away from me."
(He was probably talking to himself while crying.)

She came a little closer while walking.

Her anklet's voice was distracting.

"Stop it... Leave me... I said leave me now..."

He shouted.

He realized that she was nowhere. He wanted to turn around but he couldn't.

Maybe if he turned around, he would turn to stone.

He was now painting the necklace he had seen on her neck for the first time

(Silver Colour),
Which showed her personality more perfectly.
The mind had taken him somewhere far away again today.
(She is no more.)
Sigh....
He put the brush back.
Today, this picture was left incomplete again.
"Listen,
Listen,
What are you painting?"

By Husna Abbasi

19. The Gem: My Daughter



When I opened my eyes,
I saw her as I had visualised.
Curly hair, dimpled cheeks and eyes bright.
Small little hands,
Face serene and white.
Just as I had thought
My dream fulfilled
of possessing a daughter,
Chubby and bright .
A rare sight.
Those two painful nights
Turned into a beautiful dream.
The cuddly cute little angel,
A bundle of joy and wonder.
I owe so much to my daughter,
The rarest of rare,
A valuable gem,
Loving at heart, pious in mind,
Like a fresh current of breeze,
Who swept off the cobwebs of mind,
Instilled seeds of positivity,
Who taught me to love life,
Brought sunshine and mirth,
Her sing -song voice,
Silky tresses, luminous eyes, flawless skin,
The day dawned with her sweet voice.
The night was heralded by her moon face,
Bestowed with Godly intelligence,
She could predict people's future,
Prophetic, pregnant with knowledge,
Munificent and kind,
Guarded by God, God's child

**Dr. Jailaxmi R
Vinayak
Prof, Research
guide for Ph.D
candidates
Bhopal
Madhya Pradesh**

20. Impotence



Joe Luis Lopez
Puerto Rico

Sometimes when I read the newspaper, it makes me wonder: what am I losing by observing how devastating this society is? I really feel impotent at every daily stage because I know we are not quite diligent in accepting certain information given by the government. Neither are the entire people aware of the nastier behavior they are living.

Every year, the scenario is repeated over and over, and I feel like... WTF are these people thinking? All the delinquency is increasing, and nothing seems to be done. Children are abused by parents, even killed, and disabled people are also murdered by an unattended community. The elderly fall into this worst scenario too. It is unstoppable and irresistible.

Another issue is the same nasty politicians. Three major parties are struggling with the new vision to change our nation's constitution. In 500 years, we are still joined with the United States of America as a colony, and the battle is very controversial. The reality is that the Congress dictated Puerto Rico is not worth being a statehood. Because we, as a nation, couldn't decide nor want to change, the veracity of being an American territory.

Education is also horrible; students are not quite diligent to study, and they don't have the initiative to become somebody in their future. Unfortunately, they fall victims to crime or get united to be puppets of delinquency.

I watched an awful interview about some public schools that are involved in the prostitution world during school hours, inside the schools, using the bathrooms. Obviously, parents know, the school principals know, and the school district knows about the case. Then what? Nothing has changed after the report.

My reaction was copying the activity of the United States. They are not creative; they want to commit fraud and lies to gain popularity.

This is the cruel environment now in Puerto Rico. All food is expensive, jobs are not quite diligent nor secure, and citizens are not quite smart enough to accept that their lives are in constant danger due to their dissatisfied lifestyle.

By Joe Luis Lopez



21. EVERYBODY IS BEAUTIFUL



At one point,
I've perceived the same thing —
'Everybody is beautiful...'
The flicking fine shining facades,
The wrinkled crackly aged skins...

I've observed closely enough — to state a few:
The beauty in every error people see;
The hoarse voices in men worse on women,
The albinos in their white-reddish skins,
The crying crippled with different disabled bodies...

What's left was nothing except 'Good' to me,
For every possible critic was pleasant,
No matter how fat a being is,
No matter how tiny a human is,
It all appears beautiful to me.

But — 'TRUTH IS'
It's true that it's not true,
"Everyone is beautiful."
A blind man might be a nice ugly gentleman,
And a fine-looking fiddle dude — evil.
Perspectives differ but REALITY never...

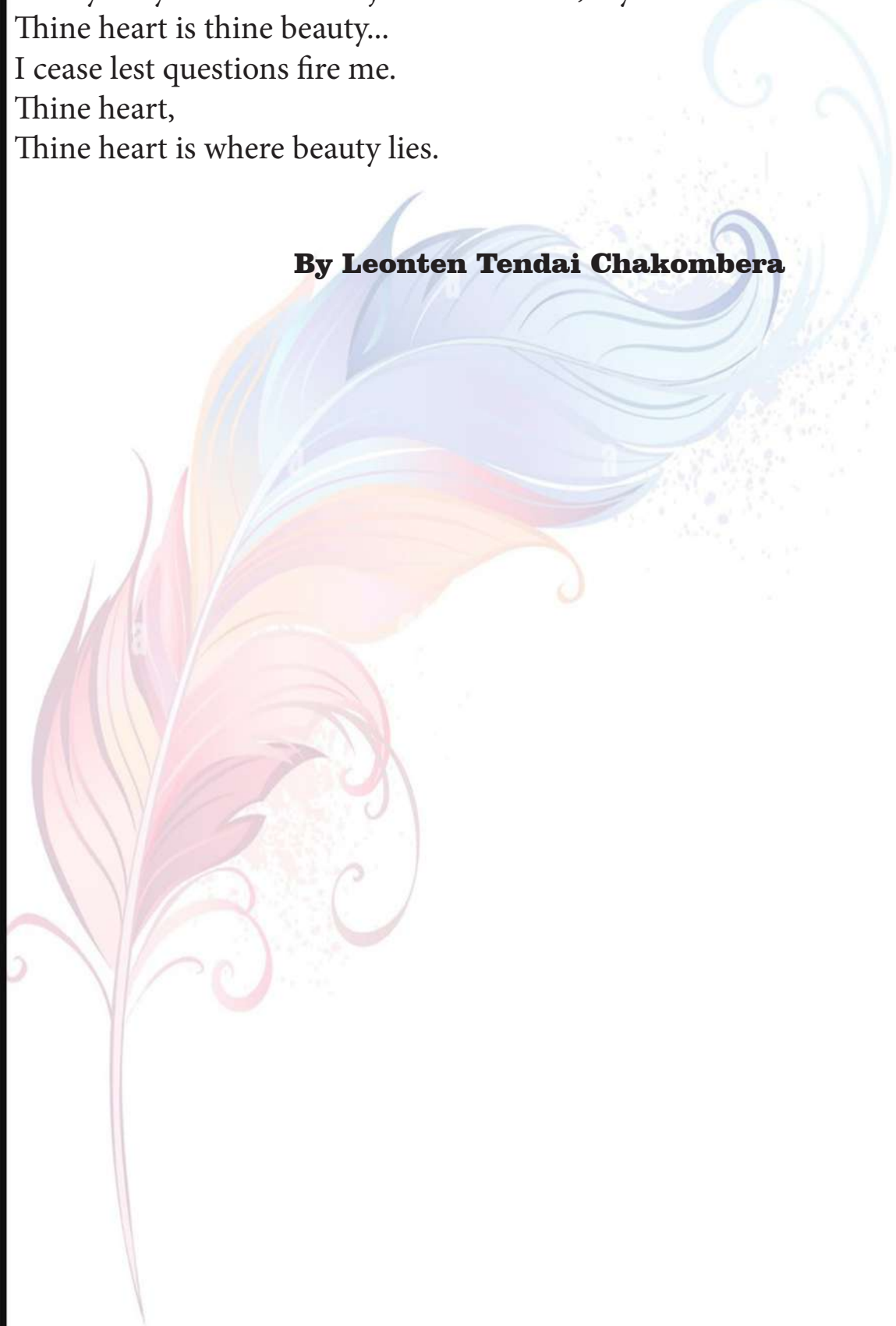
Echoes of eventuality reviews:
A wise lad walking covered in rags,
And a foolish man dressed in a stunning outfit;
Bogus Pastors in churches,
And real ones seated in bottle stores nor beer hall.

This all is just an insight.
I've seen deeper than the eyes of man.

**Leonten Tendai
Chakombera
Author, boiler
Maker , Artisan,
Auto-Mechanic,
Evangelist
Mutoko
Zimbabwe**

It surely doesn't look as it seems.
"Everybody is beautiful" is just a statement, my fellow friends.
Thine heart is thine beauty...
I cease lest questions fire me.
Thine heart,
Thine heart is where beauty lies.

By Leonten Tendai Chakombera



22. MARY'S SECRET - A CHRISTMAS NARRATIVE



Lucy Victoria David
Writer/ motivational
speaker
Durban
South Africa

Come join me, as we go back in the chronicles of time to when our Lord Jesus was a boy, doing things that all ordinary little boys do. Let's imagine His mother Mary telling Him to do some chores around the house, or washing His hands before His meals, perhaps even scolding him for not listening the first time! Mary watched with admiration as Jesus grew into a man. He worked alongside Joseph, His earthly father as an artisan of note. Cutting, sawing, sanding, nailing, chiseling and shaping wood in Josephs workshop.

Their home was filled with love, laughter and the delicious aroma of unleavened bread which Mary lovingly prepared for their daily meals. Unbeknows to most people, veiled in Marys heart, lay a deliberate, carefully hidden secret. Her precious son who was born of the Holy Spirit came down to earth, to fulfil a heavenly mandate, a divine mission given by His heavenly Father. He was to willingly give His innocent life for mankind as an exchange. Mary could not forget the words which the angel spoke to her. She would be the conduit through which the Christ child would be born. (Luke 1:26-38) The ultimate was that He would give His life on a cross, shed His blood for the forgiveness of the sins of the whole world, thus opening a portal for estranged mankind to be reconciled to God! How it must have pained Mary knowing that Jesus immaculate birth and death on the cross, was not just an act of love, but a divine transaction! A ransom was paid in exchange for the emancipation of mankind, from the chains of satan, and for the gift of eternal life. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life". (John 3:16) According to holy writ, mothers will lament over their children in the days ahead. We see this as predominant in the world right now! Crushed spirits, fear of the unknown, broken hearts, disturbed emotions are among the many things we're faced with daily in today's mainstream society.

The question is echoed, "why, why, why?" The mind cannot comprehend Gods plans and purposes. All we do know and believe, is that they are good, and that we have a glorious future, as we hold onto hope in Christ our Savior! During this time of Christmas, when the world is "frenzied" with parties, holidays, extravagant shopping sprees and gatherings of sorts, let's take a few minutes to remember those families who've lost loved ones. Let's spare a thought for those who will shed tears for the child who left "too soon", let's view the empty chair at the dinner table, let's scan the extra gift under the twinkling, beautifully decorated Christmas tree, as the pain of grief consumes us, mere mortals.

Friend, may I encourage you during this Holy season of "peace, and goodwill to all men", that a day of reconciliation is soon to dawn upon us. It will be a day like no other, of spectacular celebrations, as the heavens part and we behold the dance of a million twinkling stars, of the humming of the planets as they gracefully pass each other in full color. Our hearts will be filled with joy as we behold the grandeur of heaven. A splendor so amazing, which cannot even be imagined by our human minds! This Christmas time, let hope fill our hearts, for the babe of Bethlehem is soon to return as rightful King, to take us to our rooms which He so masterfully created. Come look! There's a door with your name intricately "engraved in gold" on it! Listen for Gods voice reassuring you with these words, "welcome to eternity, you've fared well my good and faithful child"! Mary's secret heralded a new dispensation. That of grace. Gods free, merciful and unmerited love, when she birthed the Christ child. May the Spirit of the babe of Bethlehem surround you and rest within you, giving you comfort like no other. Here's wishing you and your loved ones a Joyous Christmas and a peaceful New Year!

(I dedicate this article to the families who have lost children and loved ones during the year 2023).

By Lucy Victoria David

23. DILEMMA



**Major Sir Adesoga
Jubril Asiwaju
Teacher, Writer and
Artist
Ijebu-ode
Nigeria**

Let me ask with my pen, kindly answer me this,
Before I proceed to wink at you to respond with a kiss.

What are we, friends or not?
I couldn't differentiate; I forgot.

Will you tell me now? I want it to be true.
If it should be more than friendship, kindly give me a
clue.

As a friend, instead of saying "how do you do?"
If it's of love, let me tell you "I love you too."

Will you believe that there isn't things I wouldn't do?
I was an angel through my name, but wings got broken just because of you.

I might go to heaven to seek a permanent stay here on Earth.
All because of you but not in terms of death.

To the Angels, I shall return my wings
And risk everything for you, what do you think?

24. PEACE

True peace is better now,
No slander and a lot of talk.
Work with what He did not bring,
Creator of human beings and the universe always.

Peace is not achieved
Except for people of goodwill,
And workers for the sake of God's commitment.
Even in harmony, friendliness, love,
And permanence of charity.

No enmity and hatred,
Hatred for creation.
Because the time will come
If we continue like this, disobedience.

Mass destruction will come,
It is not impossible,
To the anger of the owner, the judge,
When we did it.

Of corrupt business, O so-and-so,
Not pessimism, but optimism.
Take care to apply
What the Most Merciful brought in the Qur'an.

To save creation rights to the earth,
And all homelands with unity.
Harmony, yes, by alliance,
Do not work against what the Lord has brought.

Because I know more secrets from you,
And He is the creator of everything with a scale.
Except for the corruption of the earth and the universe,
It is welcomed and shocks you in flames.



Med Kerkoub
Writer
Algeria

Settling the dispute between opponents,
Even compromise and cooperation,
In the confines of peaceful coexistence,
Among neighbors who are jealous of each other.

Pride in the ingredients and national principles,
Universal self-suggestion,
The wisdom of the wise,
And prediction of matters and secrets.

Or the delicate crypts at every time and place,
Thanks to these brave knights,
In the Arab countries of Persia and Rome,
A tribute to people who know their destiny.

And the meaning of harmony,
So they abided by the command of the Judge,
To build the human self and all nations,
For people to live in peace.

And lasting safety in a land of our creation,
And our dear, forgiving death,
Which has the best decision,
The mind relaxes, the heart relaxes.

The mind is free to think for creativity,
And refinement, O man,
May good prevail and stability prevail,
And peace and peace, and even security and safety.

In all parts of the world as a whole,
With all interaction and harmony.
Oh peace, because imitation wisdom,
And stick to divine teachings,
What the Most Merciful brought.

By Med Kerkoub

25. In the realm of true connection



Meenakshi Sharma
'Manushri'
Ghaziabad
Uttar Pradesh

In the realm of true connection,
A real friend, without deception.

Sorrow and joy, they truly feel,
In happiness and sorrow, they zeal.

Reason guides their every stride,
Compelled by friendship, side by side.

No fakeness in their bond,
Authenticity, a pledge beyond.

Beautiful souls, in friendship's grace,
A needful presence, in life's embrace.

Lawful hearts, their actions right,
Faithful through both day and night.

A wonder in the journey we share,
Doubtless bonds, beyond compare.

Not clever, not a cunning art,
No deceit or pretense in their heart.

Neither junior nor senior, a peer,
Yet, a wise advisor, crystal clear.

26. Where Love Ends!



**Mohamad Sadiq
Ganaie
Development Officer
Sopore
Jammu & Kashmir**

While the majestic moon scatters its milky light,
The stars disappear in the bright full moon night.
Far somewhere, a bird sings,
On some hillock, a bell rings.
Mothers put their babies to bed,
Farmers have their livestock fed.
Grannies tell youngsters tales,
Something like Sindbad's sails.
Cicadas sing on some tender shoot,
Somewhere in between, owls hoot.

The two of us sit on the levee by a flowing rill,
Leaning against each other in early autumn chill.
Gazing incessantly at the moon glade,
Captivated by the melodious serenade,
Softly sung by some devout lover,
Beneath his beloved's window shutter.

You don't say it, yet I hear,
You asking me loud and clear,
"Just as I love and for you long!
Like the singer of this beautiful song,
Is there a trace of me in your yearnings?"

I feel befuddled, though I know,
Somewhy the words do not flow.
But be sure as the sun and the moon,
Or anything that the world has known,
I may not keep pace with the trends,
Yet you will find me where love ends!

27. Soulmate



Mudashir Busari
Student
Ilorin
Nigeria

In the beginning,
It feels like burning ember,
'Cause I have given up.

In the beginning,
It was full of pain and suffering.

Then it comes,
In a cool night,
As if it has never happened before.

Then it comes,
In a silent flowing night,
Like a stranger.

I was confused,
Like I have never heard,
'Cause I'm heartbroken already.

This dilemma continues,
Until I felt it, though it
Comes from my heart,
And I can't deny it.

Here I am,
In a journey that doesn't have a destination.
Here I am in a land that is undefined.
Here I am in a market that is full of priceless things.

Can I move on, soulmate?
Can I stay here, soulmate?
Can you promise my safety?
'Cause I'm in depthside, my soulmate.

28. Just a Passing Cloud



**Nhamo
Muchagumisa
Teacher
Mutare
Zimbabwe**

Relocating to a new environment weeks before taking the flight to a destination across seas, oceans, various other water masses, peaks and depressions was like a prelude to an unfamiliar life for Fambai. His parents had not quite exactly completed their house in the Mahwe Masimike section of Tsvingwe Township, but they had managed everything within their capacity to make it habitable, the most important being a tin roof to shut the unpredictable sky out.

The relocation from rented accommodation from Sakubva in Mutare to Tsvingwe was to Fambai the beginning of his long journey towards the fulfillment of his dreams. He, an A-Level graduate of Sakubva 1 High School, was going to be studying computers and information technology at the Institute of Technology Delhi in India. He had always dreamt of being an information technology engineer, and the path under his feet was leading him towards the ultimate destination.

However, an encounter at a communal water pump turned out to be a great distraction. Ninety percent of the times he visited the pump, he met a girl who must have been of his age. She was of average height with a calm cheerfulness on her face, seemingly parading an early maturity in terms of character. She kept her hair short, which gave her a kind of plainness that created in her an element of uniqueness. Her floral dress, which concealed her exquisitely composed body would have been a serious disqualification if it had sat on another body.

Fambai allowed the girl to linger in his mind longer than casual attention permitted. As if that was not enough, he allowed the girl to steal into his dreams. "I'm in love with that girl," he told himself, "but I'm going away."

Another thought forced a bitter soberness down his throat, "You have a life to prepare for, which cannot be exchanged for a bundle of seductive feminine

beauty that may bring you pain as is the case with most conjugal unions!”

Would he possibly spurn a scholarship, that would see him standing on higher ground just to entertain a sudden fancy? The young beauty belonged to an environment in which an entire neighbourhood fetched water from a communal spout, while his fortunes prepared for him a more sophisticated neighborhood.

The water point was unavoidable, so was the lovely girl. She was there again at sunrise and they talked. “I’m Fambai Chinewe, an A-Level graduate of Sakubva 1 High,” he finally introduced himself. He did not want to disclose his further education prospects to her. He did not want the new neighbourhood to know about this development in his life, lest someone might play mischief and cast an evil spell on him.

“I am Anoshamisa Muchinesu, an A-Level graduate of Tsvingwe High, praying for an edifying University life,” she said, the mention of her intellectual status sounding a little unconvincing because of the blush in her eyes after mentioning it.

They talked about the comforts and discomforts of Penhalonga, Ano betraying no optimism about a break in the water and electricity challenges, yet she appeared to be in love with the place.

Fambai thought it should have brought him relief when he met Anoshamisa walking to Tsvingwe Business Centre with a boy who was approximately his age. He wanted to believe that there was a boy in her life already, that she should stop haunting the darkness of his thoughts with the extravagance of teenage romanticism. He thought that Anoshamisa and the boy looked quite like a perfect match and fanatically hoped that they would tie the knot very soon, while he pursued his studies several time zones away from Tsvingwe.

For three days after seeing Ano with the unnamed boy, Fambai did not meet her at the communal water pump. “She has finally left my life before she had found space to fit in it,” he told himself with satisfaction. But it was not that simple, as Fambai realised that each time he visited the water pump, he entertained a faint

hope of meeting her again. He missed the sight of her, her short hair, the beauty of her shy smile, her floral dress that would have been just an ordinary dress if it had sat on another body.

Having concluded that Ano had finally left his emotional orbit, he just hankered to see her one more time, just to say farewell to her, and perhaps get her contact details, just to immortalise his first experience of Tsvingwe. She had just been a passing cloud in the clear sky of his life and wondered if another cloud like her would ever bless the emptiness of the sky above his head again.

Two days before his departure, the excitement of the forthcoming flight had completely taken over him. Ano's space in his thoughts had shrunk to less than a square inch. He visited the borehole pump for perhaps the last time just after sunrise. As he bent down to pick up his brimful bucket, a sudden dimness obscured his sight. He withdrew his eyes from the container and looked at the eastern horizon. A tiny cloud had obliterated the sun, casting a shadow upon the land between Tsvingwe and Christmas Pass. It was not his first time to experience such a natural phenomenon, but why had it permeated his senses so much today? Then within half a minute, it was sunshine again from where he stood, up to where the sky curved behind the mountains.

On his way back home, the figure of a young woman suddenly materialised in front of him, dangling an empty plastic water bucket by the arch of a tapering handle from her left hand. The look in her eyes, the smile of her white teeth, the gesture of her hand, as she approached him seemed to proclaim that her prospects with the young man he had seen walking with her were very bright.

The juveniles stopped, standing face to face, less than an arm's length apart, as if they owed each other a confession. His would be like, "I wanted you for my bride, but I'm flying to a very far away destination within 48 hours."

Ano's confession would be like, "I would be yours forever, despite how many oceans, mountains, valleys or depressions came between us had I met you a little earlier, but my heart nestles somewhere else."

Yet when they talked, it was the usual greetings, nothing at all romantic, until they passed each other, taking opposite directions, when Ano turned to make a muffled shout at him. “I want your contact details, so that we may keep in touch once you leave this location.”

Fambai shouted his phone number, an ache in his chest reminding him that he could not easily let go of her, no matter how deeply immersed he was going to be in his studies.

The day of the flight finally arrived. Fambai took his seat aboard the international airbus and began to visualise his journey across a countless horizons. He closed his eyes and uttered a short prayer. Just before he opened his eyes, he felt the presence of a human body sitting next to him. And as he opened his eyes, he saw, sitting by his side, his daily intrigue.

“Anoshamisa!” he said, not too sure if the girl was Ano.

“Fambai,” she responded, with a calmness that reminded him of her unwavering mature demeanour.

“Where are you flying to?” Fambai asked, his chest choking with excitement.

“India, to study Computer Science and Information Technology at the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi.”

By Nhamo Muchagumisa

29. MY PEN



Oladunjoye Olayemi
(Onigege Ara)
Fashionista
Ijebu ode
Nigeria

My pen, my sword.
Without my pen, no word.
She understands my thought,
On paper, she scribbles a lot.

The only true companion,
That consoles me when I was lovelorn.
Stronger than iron,
She breaks the border of every region.

With my pen, I pass information
All over the nation.
Different ways I have using a pen
She cuts like a sword when words enter my den.

One of the ways you can know my level,
Is when I hold my pen.
What can be like my pen?.....

30. Bleeding A Headless Body At It's Last Breath



Something is ringing in my ears.
I can't focus on the words you are saying.
You said you loved me; you said you saw a future with
me.
But here you are saying it's over.
I've gone deaf when those words slipped out of your
mouth.
I've gone numb, cold to the marrow of my bones.
You've destroyed everything that made me who I am.
You were the dictionary that defined the life of me.
But you left me on the way.
While leaving my hand, I feel like a headless body.
I don't know where I'm going; I'm aimless.
It's just like bleeding, a headless body at its last breath.

Own Abbas
Writer
Jhang
Pakistan

31. My Village Halloween!



**Phillips Tayo
Damilola
Writer/Content
Enthusiast
Lagos
Nigeria**

My Village Halloween!

Ecstasy of mural clothings,
Colours and Garbs Feathers.
Hush Bed Of Fronds Frocks,
Silvery of Ancient Odes,
Timely Traditions Presently,
Abides in the surfed Habitat,
In the Palm groves locker,
Called Forefathers' Shrines,
Jokes Apart...Off The Skits.
Nay, Xmas Lights Can't Light,
Not Firecrackers Spark Ray,
Nor Snows Falling at ease,
Wherein Our Crusted Being.
Respite Must We Myth!
Shallow Odd Our Feet.

My Village, Scared Isn't A Fantasy,
Months Away Like Tides.
If Yours Is A Merry Making,
My City Versus Yours Akin.
If Heading Home root,
Hiss...Don't Say Countryside.
Mine Roots of Village End,
We Don't Jumpy Around,
Our Village Halloween,
Knows not Finery Of Delicacies.
Taste Not Ye Fried Chickens,
Route Not The Roasted Ouch,
Of Jollof Rice...Fried Rice...Huh.
Wear Your Yacht Of Regalia,
Garrison Your Yelp Of Heels,

Massacre Your Gland Of Pomade,
Knows Our Masquerade Fancy Not Your Garland.
Take it away...Your Adulations,
Don't Dare...Of Your Salty Hands,
For You have ...Nil The Haves Not,
Don't Dare The Dairy Dagger,
Of Gagging Open Eyes,
Watching All and Sundry,
Of Yourself For Yourself,
Others At The Uncertainty,
Ye come With Bridled Sacrifice,
To Sage...Sanctify Ahead!
To Sacrifice...Sanctimoniously,
Our Village Halloween!
Wears No Colour Of Pride,
Wields No Cat Of Pestilence.
Wide Our Inbuilt Loft,
Of My Ancestors' Clan,
Except Back To The Cities',
Of All For Himself,
Everyone For Oneself,
As Xmas Bells Are Ringing.

By Phillips Tayo Damilola

32. Let the Earth be Blue and Green



Prashant Kumar
Student
Patratu
Jharkhand

The blue is our planet,
The green is its ornament.
The blue and green are the Earth,
Or Earth because it's blue and green.

But something black covers it like a blanket,
Which is absolutely not a situation to sit back and wait.
By black, I mean types of hazards to the environment,
And the cause behind it is mainly high-profile human
settlement.

Pollution, deforestation, and excessive resource exploitation,
Are the scenarios of a mad rush for urbanization and industrialization.
Which lead the earth to a position,
Where it can't bear the needs of future generations.

By causing environmental degradation,
Man is on the way to self-destruction.
There's a high need to realize something,
That we have not inherited Earth but borrowed it from future beings.

Oh! Humans understand your responsibility before it goes out of capacity.
Because it would be I and you both, the sufferers of the situation forth.

Let us come together for the cause of our planet,
Let us not further degrade it to remove the covered black blanket.
Let us prevent the worst scene,
Let the Earth be blue and green.

33. DEPENDABLE FRIEND

Don't feel bad, please don't mind,
But a dependable friend is hard to find.
Friends are several in the vicinity around,
Dependable supports when feeling unsound.

Life is dull and dim in light,
But a true friend brings delight,
Sympathy, love, dedication, and care,
It is a bond where one gets and shares.

Stay choosy in the choice of friends,
A dependable one is beyond trends,
A true friend leads the right way,
Always cheers when one in dismay.

One is lucky and bears massive pride,
If one gets dependable amid a passive crowd,
Life gets sweet and fills with beauty,
Dependable prefers you despite big duty.

Told stories are multiple in history,
Untold is friendship and filled with mystery,
When you are sickly and feel unstandable,
Yet you stand when you get dependable.



**Pushendra Pratap
Singh
Teacher/ poet
Shahjahanpur
Uttar Pradesh**

34. "Snow Fall"

On my dream bed,
A fairy whispers, bowing her head.

Silver is falling,
Just on your calling.

Soundlessly, the flakes,
Turn into snow squalls.

Skift or Grue gathered,
A sudden blizzard.

Frozen hands collect snowballs,
For making a snowman every fall.

Marks behind footsteps,
Are portraits of long paths.

Garden covered with soft white,
That is carpeted so bright!

Snowflakes' bunch,
Blindly make them munch.

Who is ready for brunch?
Of that snowy crunch.

Then the snow melts and turns into slush,
When she mixes sugar and milk while I crush.

The night is near about,
Snowfall blossomed out.

Calmly reaching the destination,
Under silent meditation!



Raja Noor-ul-Iman
Writer
Hajira Kashmir
Pakistan

35. Pros and cons of using digital gadgets

Digital gadgets are electronic devices that require electricity to operate. Ironically speaking, the immoderate usage of Ipads, smartphones, laptops, android tvs., tablets, smartphones etc. makes us unsmart. They are ubiquitous. Checking notifications constantly on phones has become modus vivendi. There must be a stricture on their usage for the commune bonum. A Deloitte study has indicated that electronic gadgets will become indispensable for the posterior anon. Our prime minister rhapsodizes about digitalization and National Education Policy gives a lot of consequence to smartphones. However, just like many other inventions, the devices have their merits and demerits as well.

Let's discuss their pros. Innovative abilities, innovation adroitness, creativity and strategic cerebration can be enhanced in young children by these devices. Digital mode of payment, on line sale of products, digital books, you-tube classes etc. are some of the bright aspects of digital devices. The usage of computers and phones has eminently ameliorated communication between users several miles apart. The games in the devices develop cognitive learning and enhance the evolution of analytical deftness. Manual dexterity and computer literacy is enhanced by using computers. Students are galvanized and learning becomes easier, if teachers use these gadgets. A lengthy documentation task is expedited when computers are utilized. Several persons at different locations can hold a meeting, using a computer with internet facility and microphones. Hand -eye coordination, aplomb, and precision are evolved when a plethora of computer games is mastered. Websites functioning like virtual stores are used by consumers to order products, diminishing the cost of incepting businesses. Engineering and Mathematical adroitness are developed by certain intensive games. Certain perilous tasks are executed by robots, thus diminishing menace to human lives. Areas inaccessible to humans are cleaned by tiny vacuum cleaners. Trainees are safeguarded from fatal accidents by auto-pilots allowing the training of pilots in real-life situations. The digital technology proved to be a boon or a game-



**Dr. Ravi Prakash
Tiwari**
Author (Pun is Fun)
Chinsurah
West Bengal

changer during the lockdowns. Even in the world post-lockdown period, it plays a pivotal role in our day-to-day life. The on-line classes and on-line work from home are a boon to us. A lot of QR codes[for further resources] are furnished by our state curriculum. The research by London School of Economics revealed that constricted usage of digital devices, especially phones, enhances the academic performance. The digital technology aids in accruing erudition and is an ocean of data.

Let's discuss the cons of using them. These devices being non-biodegradable effectuate pollution. Noxious electro-magnetic rays causing fatal diseases are emitted by some devices. Precious time of children goes down the drain. Violent games make children pugnacious. Sedentary life style and poor time management are brought about as people fetishize electronic gadgets. Burnt gadgets emit toxic substances. Electricity consumption is spiked while using gadgets, leading to a hike in electricity bills.

The UNESCO recommended a universal ban on the usage of digital devices at schools, vindicating that it was imperative to rein in classroom commotion, ameliorate learning, and safeguard children from cyber bullying. The Directorate of Education, Private School Branch, Govt. of National Capital Territory of Delhi, has accentuated the urgency for all stake holders such as students, parents, teachers, and principals to come to a consensus to minimize the usage of electronic devices in the school environment to perpetuate a high level of learning and ingenious ambience in classrooms. But we abuse it more than we avail ourselves of these. Its relentless usage stultifies us. They have made us sloth. The UNESCO has implicitly admonished against an irrational rush to embrace digital products in educational institutes. Its report highlights that mere proximity to digital devices diminishes the concentration level of individuals. Students are easily tempted to check notifications. They play games and remain preoccupied with social media, leading to the wavering in their focus on studies. Parents should be vigilant about this at home too. It is an open secret that the radiations emitted by a plethora of digital devices are deleterious to health. They bring about ocular ailments, auricular ailments, and even cancer. Psychologists postulate that digital devices being addictive in nature can impede the development of concentration level and social deftness, and effectuate aggravated anxiety and mental ailments. The digital devices have impacted children and adults so much that they tend to lose sleep. They are so

much addicted to such devices that if they don't use it frequently throughout the day, they tend to evince emotional, mental, and behavioral issues. They get peeved and evince mood- swings.

The ubiquitousness of digital devices at schools will raise disparities among students belonging to different strata of society. Students with access to the latest digital expensive devices will have an advantage, while those with limited resources or privileges might suffer from inferiority complex or feel stigmatized. It will stimulate larceny of devices and jealousy too. Thus, the environment of the school will be vitiated. Even adults fall a quarry to these devices. They are swindled by on-line scammers and coquettes. Their bank accounts are hacked. Cyber-crime is on the ascent. The viewership pf pornography has gone to a different level. People have more facebook friends than real-life friends. Socialization has taken a back seat. Very few children and adults go to parks or fields for recreation. They love to dwell in the digital world. They are detached from nature and society. So, a medley of ailments plagues them. Huge amount of money is spent on digital gadgets to buy and repair them. It renders a middle class family financially-straitened. It's high time we struck a balance between dwelling in the digital world and the real world. Speaking broadly, If the balance is lost, we will have to pay the piper. Ipso facto, they are more noxious than beneficial. They should not be banned at schools or anywhere root and branch. Schools and parents have to play an instrumental role in this regard.

By Ravi Prakash Tiwari

36. PLAT FORM



S.Arunkumar
Writer
Chennai
Tamil Nadu

I am a mother of two sons and a daughter,
At my last breath who pours water.
Miles away from my hometown,
No use of property I own.
On a deserted railway platform,
I lie aimlessly, eagerly awaiting death.
Deserted, abandoned, now I am orphaned,
Many relatives, but of no use, even children.

Right hand and leg paralyzed,
Bed rest, regular medicines, doctor advised.
My dependable sold, my husband died, left me alone,
My reliable soul, my companion,
Breathed his last, finally buried.
My future bleak, weak, and worried.
Hopefully asked children at the burial ground,
With whom I have to stay.
All murmuring, shouting, big sound,
All said no way, no way.

On the pretext of better treatment, admission,
They had a plan and a mission.
Boarded a train in the night,
Midway alighted, no movement of people.
Carried and dumped on the platform as I am crippled,
Left me on a deserted platform nowhere in sight.
Vanished in the air, pitch dark, a nightmare, my dwelling.
Retired school teacher gets monthly pension.

Right hand and leg paralyzed, only thumb impression,
No dwelling place, deserted platform.
Shared themselves flats and a farm,
Every month children visit,

With bread, snacks, and sweet.
Not with love, but to get a thumb impression,
To get and share my pension.

Given birth from my womb,
A bleak hope, somebody may take me home.
But in vain, no hopes only dream,
Tears roll down on cheeks like a stream.
Now, I am often left alone,
Silently, I mourn.

When the train arrives, the platform bursts into activities,
Some passengers offer leftover food.
Some, through coins, offer fruits and bread,
My clothes completely worn.
A blanket here and there is born,
Health is deteriorating, no medicine,
Left alone, what is my sin?

Eyes wide open, one day I die,
Who is there to cry?
My lifeless body removed,
Silently I was buried.
Life is not a bed of roses.

By S.Arunkumar

37. Immix or mix



**Saleem Raza
Jakhar (Amar
Shaw)
Teacher, Writer
Khairpur Sindh
Pakistan**

Betwixt all the pains,
I immixed with joys.
So sad to tell you the tale,
Of my life, I hath prevailed.

Bothered not, yet Simeon,
The radiations life did loathe.
Combative visions, free to sacrifice,
All immixed within one cup of nice.

Life, at least, immixes with death,
Day before, day after.
The eternal home, from where
Our heavenly father comes.

Love hath never immixed with anger,
Nor does anger be mixed with water.

Likewise, fire cannot be water, to quench the thirst,
Nor does water can lit the lantern, to give us light.

Some questions are easy to answer at the spot,
But some others, no one ever yet found the answers why?

38. No limit of emotion



**Satyajeet
Purkayastha
Teacher
Dharamjaigarh
Rajgarh
Chhattisgarh**

Mountains fall down on
Strong land,
Trees cut down on
Calm land.
Claim directly on
The water and wind as
Responsible for doing it.
No one knows
How the heart of nature breaks.
No limit of emotion
In hate or affection.
Didn't you see
Tears of the sky as rain?
Polluted blood is
Running in the veins.
Nature is suffering
With the fever of
Global warming.
Damage to the beautiful face
And heart by
An artificial creation.
Think about the nature
Sick, suffering, logging.
For love there is —
No limit of emotion.

39. Peacock

Like a
Moonchild
gazing at the
Purplish clouds
that floated
lazily in the
evening sky,
You ruffled,
luminescence
eyespot tail feathers,
You dance and howl
train rattle for love,
Numbs the mind,
for a moment
Hypnotize the tempest
with Black bewitching eyes
Strutting
Elegance
Pirouetted alone
'Dance with me'
and Estrangement of
embers glided within her.



**Sheila Ann
Packirnathan
Poet and Writer
Ipoh, Perak
Malaysia**

40. Religion of writing



**Shiv Prasad
Jabar
Latehar
Jharkhand**

The religion of writing is a very dangerous path. There are two ways to do this: one is convenient, and the other is full of thorns, for those whose conscience is sold.

The pen works for the common people, raising its voice for public welfare. Its voice echoes from the streets to the Parliament. The soul of the country, time, and situation resides in their hearts. The Indian Constitution grants it a fundamental right, but this is, in theory, not in practice, and if it is, then only partly. This is the reason why writers often die of hunger and take pills on an empty stomach. They are bound by deception, and the tragedy lies in the hands of media owners. The hands of the pen are tied, and the tongue is often locked.

Caste, creed, sect, and influential capitalists form the basis of power. The truth is that they run the country; power is a puppet. Elections become a game of money, and governments are formed and broken due to black money. The public is won over by illusions. The people in power often have ties with religious leaders who maintain mutual friendships with politicians. The public continues to live in mental slavery of communalism and is fed a lot of opium of communalism. Society has not been able to rise above this till date. This same concern troubled the novel Samrat Munshi Premchand, which still exists today.

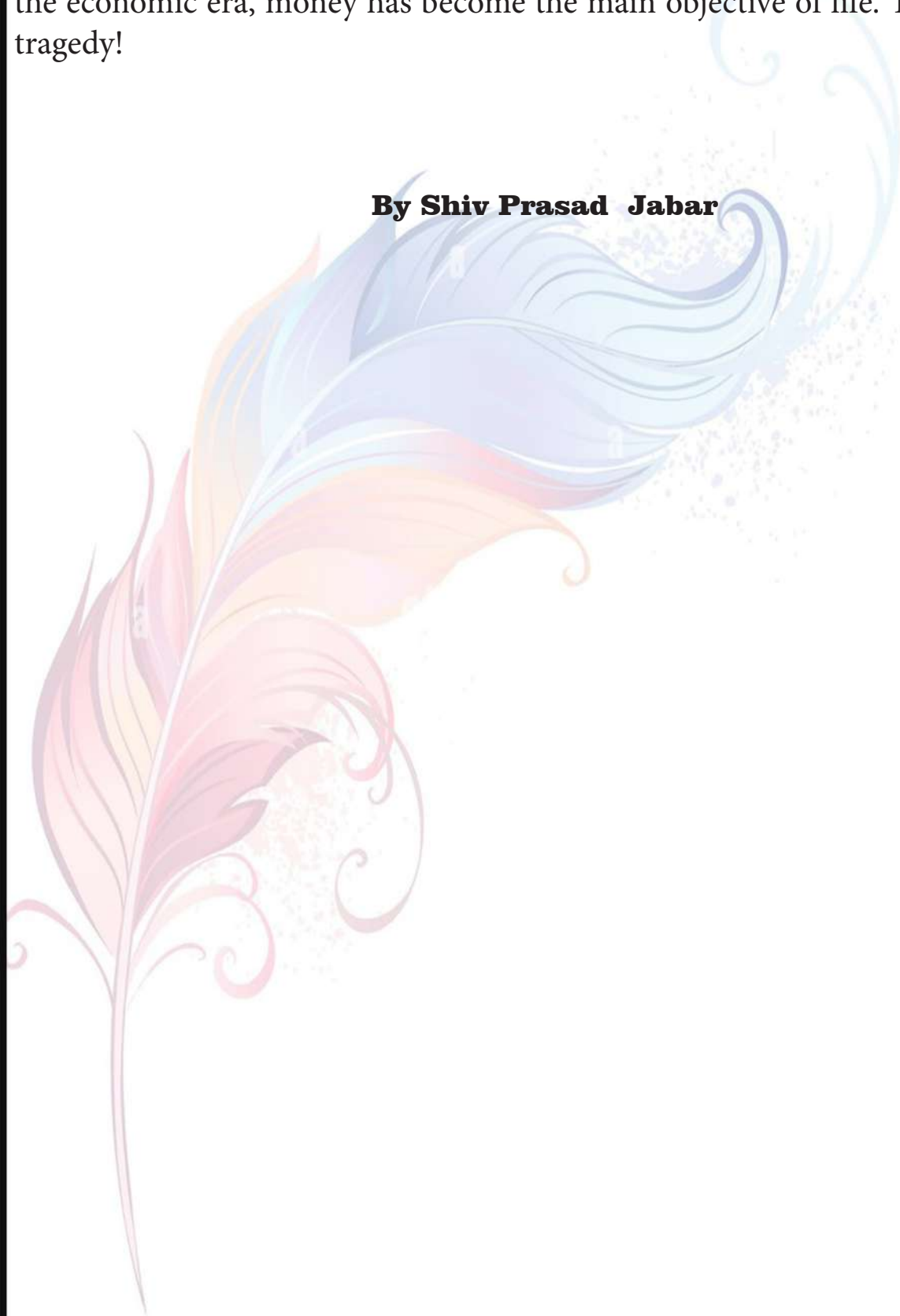
Therefore, the education system is limited to materialism only, with moral values taking a secondary place. It is related to inner consciousness, conscience, and human culture. It is a mine of expression of self-respect. Lord Macaulay's Kshipra system is still doing the same work, contributing to mental slavery. However, material priority is the basic foundation of life, but it is not the main goal of life. This is why the Gurukul system was destroyed, and the mental freedom of independent India is still in a state of slavery. The objective of Western philosophy is also limited to material happiness.

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In the era of industrialization, the importance of materialism has increased even more. Hence, the whole world has been engulfed by materialism, and in the economic era, money has become the main objective of life. This is a huge tragedy!

By Shiv Prasad Jabar



41. A DIALOGUE WITH SOPHOCLES



Shoaib Mehmood
Lecturer English
Sargodha
Pakistan

O Sophocles, the ancient seer,
Did you hear the gods' cruel laughter's roar?
You penned the tale of Oedipus' fate,
Did you ponder on the web you'd create?

Did you ever feel remorse for the cursed king,
Whose life, by your hand, took a bitter swing?
Didn't you weep for him in his tragic quest,
When he tried to escape fate's cruel jest?

Could it be true, the cruelty gods possess,
To curse a child before he drew his first breath?
Could they be so cold, so utterly unkind,
To toy with the lives of humankind?

Did you, O bard, relish in his loss,
Each turn of events brought tears to toss?
Didn't guilt or remorse ever fill your heart,
For playing your part in this tragic art?

Wasn't it enough to slay his father by his hand,
And lay with his own mother, wedded by fate's command?
Why did you, in your malice, weave a tapestry of shame,
Concealing his true lineage, a secret to proclaim?

Then, why did you wait, O unfair one, with cunning delight,
Until Oedipus begot children in the night?
Did you savor the moment, his truth to unveil,
As his own flesh and blood trembled, hearts turned frail?

Doesn't the sound of his staff haunt your mind,
An omen of your own blindness, for knitting his fate unkind?
Did you know, as you composed his tragic tale,

That it would forever echo, as a haunting wail?

O Sophocles, the bard of ancient Greece,
Your words endure, echoing evermore.
But I ask you now, as I ponder your creation,
Did you truly comprehend the weight of your narration?

SOPHOCLES' RESPONSE

Oh, Shabes, dear soul, thy fervent outcry rings,
Yet let me humbly answer, with poetic wings.
In weaving gods and mortals through my pen,
I sought to fathom truths unknown to ken.

The tragic plight of Oedipus, indeed, I own,
A tale of woe, where sorrows ceaseless flow.
Yet blame not my design, nor scorn my art,
For wisdom lies where tragedy imparts.

Remember, gods' designs elude our grasp,
Their plans and judgments, veiled in mystic clasp.
Could I, a mortal small, dare question their might?
Nay, Shabes, nay, I but aimed to cast some light.

Behold! Through Oedipus, frailty of man unveiled,
His hubris, flaws, and errors, all detailed.
A cautionary tale, a mirror for our kind,
A reminder that even kings in fate may bind.

O Shaibi! Let not anger cloud thy mind's view,
Seek the lessons, where profound truths accrue.
In the tragic realm, where destiny's threads are spun,
Lies wisdom's glimpse, for me, for thee, as one.

By Shoaib Mehmood

42. That Academic Meet



Sindhu Rana
writer, poet, anchor
script - writer,
voice - over artist,
former Convent
School teacher
Jalandhar
Punjab

It was a lazy, sunny day. Father was sipping tea and going through the third newspaper on this particular Sunday morning. He seemed to be enjoying his tea and the holiday both when Mother said, "Why don't you teach our son today? It would be a little help."

Father was suddenly taken aback. Such a request had never come his way before! Taking a few seconds, he looked up from his newspaper, then folded it and kept it aside. He beckoned with a finger for his son to appear before him.

The child, nervous but obedient, walked up slowly.

"Five into five is?"

The child was blank.

"OK. Four into eight is?"

The child was silent.

"Child, speak up."

"I - I don't know," he stammered.

Father got up, obviously angered; he stormed, "You don't know! What do you study in school? And what do you do at home?"

Saying so, he picked up the six-year-old child and placed him on the common wall of the under-construction house of the neighbor's and said, "Now answer."

Now, this was totally unexpected. The child let out a muffled sob.

Mother, rising from her chair, cried out, "These tables are not in his syllabus. He has not done them yet. Please....."

Father threw up his hands in exasperation. Dismayed, he said, "Why didn't you tell me before?"

"You never asked. Moreover, how was I to know..." stammered the Mother.

Father, disgruntled and annoyed at the scene, hastened to walk inside. The son, crying quietly, fidgeted on the wall. Mother, uncertain about the situation, decided to get up and act. She hurriedly brought down the child from the half-built wall. Collecting him in her arms, she wiped his tears and strode inside.

To say the least, this was the first and the last-ever Father-Son-Academic Meet.

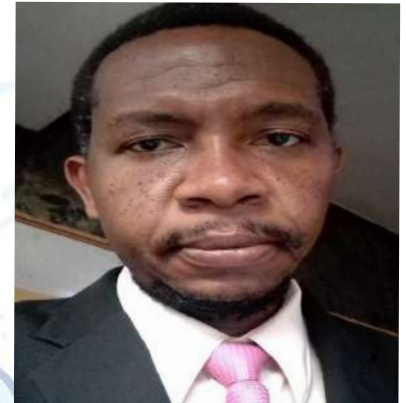
The duo, i.e., the Mother and the Son, grappled with homework, syllabus, assignments, exams, projects, and much more on Sundays and other days of the week. Father was happily spared from any kind of study burden. Spared, he happily devoured every word/knowledge from his newspapers on Sundays. Mother, now wiser, never repeated the request again. Needless to say, all days of the week, especially Sundays, and many more years to come passed peacefully!

Today, the son occupies a prestigious place in an MNC.

The father is proud of his son!

By Sindhu Rana

43. THE HANGING OF NEHANDA



Stephen Linjesa
**Writer/Poet/
Obituarian**
Harare
Zimbabwe

In a case entered as "The Queen against Nehanda,"
The British imperialists accused her of murdering an
outlander,
A brutish white native commissioner,
And condemned her to an appointment with the
executioner.
She was thirty-six years of age,
A commander and a recruiter, who had organized an
armed struggle to reclaim stolen heritage.
Defiant to the last breath,
Hers was a most horrible death.
She walked onto the scaffold singing and dancing,
Her willowy figure elegant and entrancing.
Oh, how sweetly she sang!
Her leg irons jiggling with a mighty clang!

With a smile of ineffable gratitude,
And an attitude of matchless grace and fortitude,
She halted before the tormentors baying for her head,
Colonizers who wanted her to hang by the neck until she was dead.
Hands bound behind her back,
And a rope loosely encircling her neck,
Attached above on the cross-timber,
Nothing could make her limber.

Her face unhooded,
Eyes unblindfolded,
She saw it all, the gallows, the noose,
The gaping crowd, watching her lose.
Yet she stood tall, with dignity and grace,
Facing her end with a fearless face.
And in her eyes, there was no fear,
Just a deep resolve, without a tear.

She boldly uttered words they didn't want to believe,
"My dry bones shall live!"

A serene highness,
A Munhumutapa princess,
The lion-goddess of rain and land fertility,
Highly respected for her military strategies and planning ability.
She had taught the Shona people to revolt,
And from white settler goods to bolt.
Refusing to subjugate herself to Christianity,
She had wanted only liberty, equality, and fraternity.
Instead, they offered her eternity,
An opportunity to stand at the bottom of the straits,
Waiting to guide into the wide white walk brave souls with noble traits.

She stood looking fresh and cool and sweet,
The signal when it came was almost discreet.
A rasp sound of the trap door opening after the bell,
Then the heavy thud of her body as it fell.
Her eyes becoming congested,
So they could no longer be rested.
Her tongue becoming swollen,
Thrusting forward between teeth into cold air now sullen.
Suddenly she felt a stunning scuff blow,
White light blazed, making her childhood memories aglow.
With a sound like the breaking of a dry twig came numbness,
Then all was silence and darkness.

All her life she had spoken,
Now her body with its neck broken.
Her ethereal black garments fluttering,
The contents of her bowels sputtering.
Swung gently from side to side,
For having chosen not to abide.
Though brutalized and animalized,

She had died free and uncolonized.
A symbol and an icon of resistance,
To whom the oppressed masses had sought assistance.
Her brutally decapitated head was taken to Britain,
For the finest flower of civilization, a trophy of conquest to retain.

By Stephen Linjesa



44. Why Did He Erase Her Name



**Tanzeela Rehman
(Malickzadi)
Teacher
Sargodha
Pakistan**

Why Did He Erase Her Name

A day free from her hectic routine.

She was arranging her books on the shelf.

Suddenly, a book fell from the shelf.

A page came out from it.

It wasn't just a piece of paper.

It was full of memories.

It was full of queries.

It was full of pain,

Having the words that damaged her brain.

By picking up that page from the floor,

She deep lost in her thought.

And remembered the day,

When he wrote her name before him

And gave it a name of forever.

It was the name of that person whom she called mine.

It was a person whom she loved more than others.

It was a person whom she told everything when he said further.

Having tears in her eyes,

She asked a question to herself.

Why did he erase her name?

Why did he write someone else's name in front of him?

Whether the word forever was not meant for her?

Whether it was really her name?

Brain messed up with all these queries,

Finding her face full of worries.

Wiping her tears,

She put all her strength altogether,

And tore that page into pieces and threw it into the bin,

Just like him.

Moving outside by reminding herself with these words,
No one cares,
Even for your tears.

By Tanzeela Rehman (Malickzadi)



45. Long Live

Meet me at midnight to say farewell to the 365 days that were 2023...

Dear reader, may all your worries be set free...

What the future holds, still unwritten, still unknown...

Love and joy, we embrace the elements that life employs...

May Karma guide us to sweet desserts...

Ones bringing us happiness and mirth...

Long live every moment, every sight...

Welcome the New Year with open arms and a heart so bright...

May the magic of Christmas light up our souls...

Every dream, every wish, be fulfilled in whole...

As the end of 2023 brings us blessings galore...

Wishing you, dear readers, the happiest 2024, friends, that we've ever known before...

Be surrounded by love, peace, and grace...

Tread on the path of life with hope and faith...

Every step taken leads us to our destiny...

Filled with surprises, opportunities, and prosperity...

Raise your glass and toast; here's a Christmas poem, a blessing from my heart to yours...

Long live bright days, giving you a fresh start...

As 2023 ends, let it be a time to reflect and renew...

May 2024 lead you to all that's good and true...



**Tha Ono
Teacher
Gasparillo
Trinidad & Tobago**

46. When December Comes



Usha Krishnan
Life Coach,
Educationist, NLP
Coach
New Delhi

Dear December,

When you arrive stealthily,
And when the noble November is buzzing off reluctantly,
The road ahead looks hazy,
And the wee hours appear to be murky.

Dear December,

When you stretch yourself slowly,
And when the noble November is still moving away
reluctantly,
The treetops prefer to be dozy,
And the green foliage wishes to be drowsy.

Dear December,

When you spread your arms wholeheartedly,
And when the noble November is speeding up to go far successfully,
The capricious wind loves to be breezy,
And the winter blooms are enraptured to be refreshingly dewy.

Dear December,

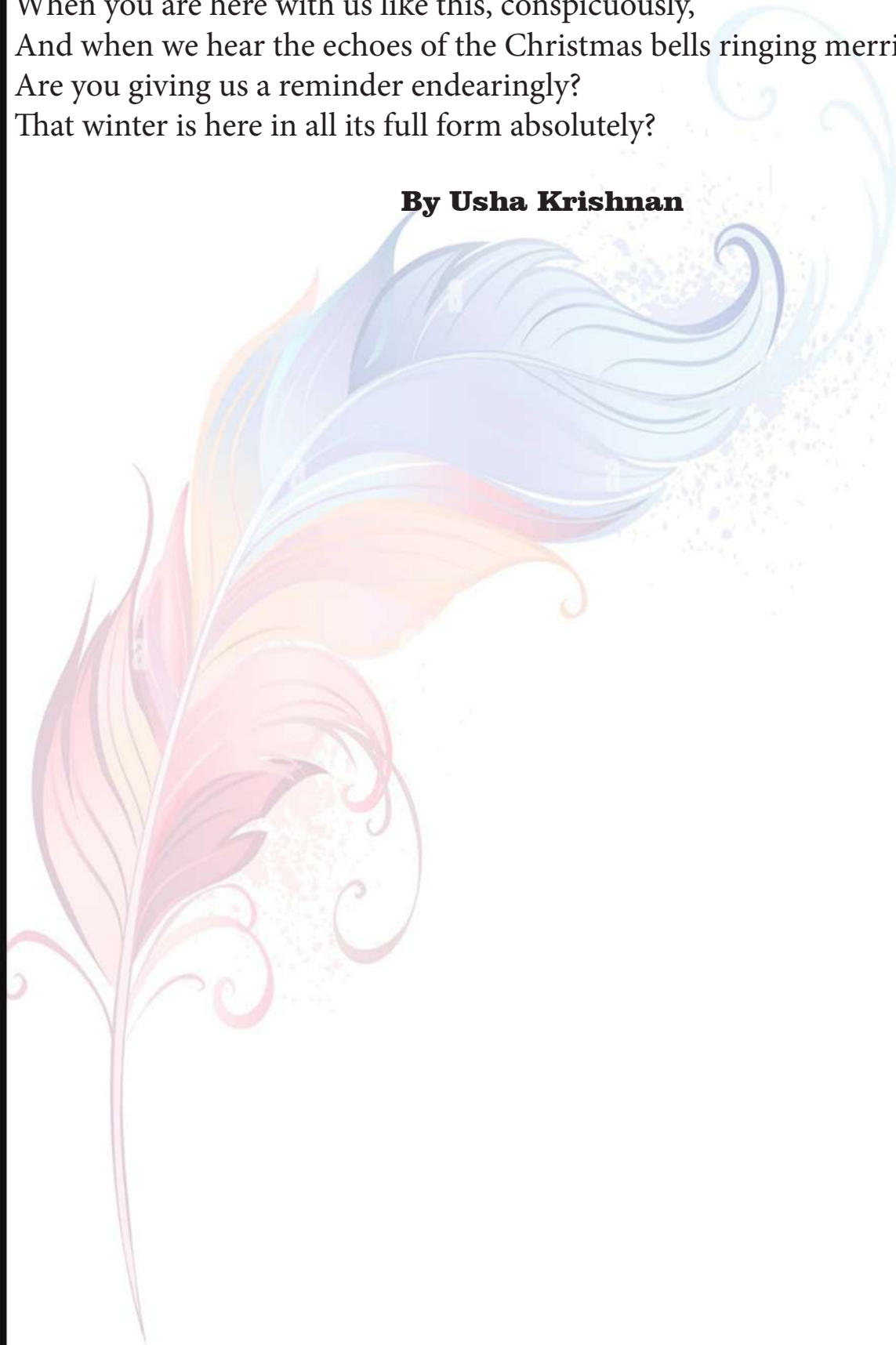
When you extend your hold here widely,
And when the noble November is removing all its traces from here hurriedly,
The canines and felines are so eager to remain drowsy,
And the morning hours are thriftless in their decision to remain wintry.

Dear December,

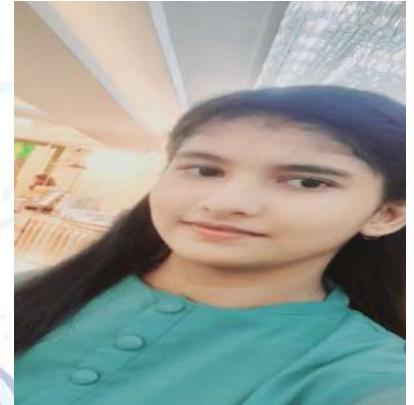
When you hold your reins eventually,
And when the noble November has gone far away intendedly,
Are you giving us a prediction so hasty
That the winter has spread its hands cold and icy?

Dear December,
When you are here with us like this, conspicuously,
And when we hear the echoes of the Christmas bells ringing merrily,
Are you giving us a reminder endearingly?
That winter is here in all its full form absolutely?

By Usha Krishnan



47. Life is short



**Vaishnavi
Shrivastava
Student
Vaishali
Bihar**

Live the life you love,
Love the life you live.
For it is very short,
And can never be bought.

Life can be good,
Or it can be bad.
You've got many things,
You wish you never had.

A really nice house,
Even a very fine car.
Those fancy things in life,
Won't get you very far.

Life is for enjoyment,
Live yours to the fullest.
For it is very short,
And can never be bought.

Striving for big riches,
Maybe a waste of time.
Make the best of what you have,
While you're still in your prime.

You've got many things,
You wish you never had.
Life is made for living,
Whether it's happy or sad.

48. Love's A Funny Feeling Of Mind

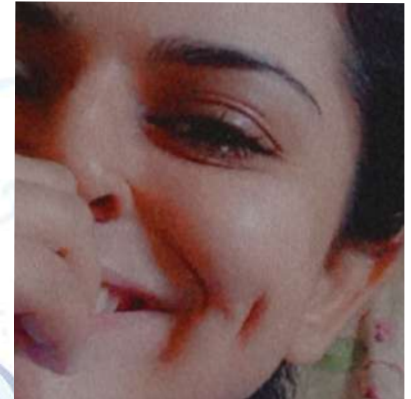


Vinod Kumar Jha
Poet
Darbhanga
Bihar

Love's a Funny Feeling of Mind,
Colourless, formless, bloodless kind.
It is scenty and spell,
Blows like wind without a tail.
It is shiny like the sun,
Walks slowly like the mum.
Men, birds, animals happily exchange it,
To keep their minds and bodies fit.
They all know its needs and power well,
They are mousy to disclose its tale.

Love is a selfless service,
Not a trade,
Happiness giver, not man-made.
Love is peace, not a war,
Natural medicine, not a bar.

49. Anxiety



Zoya Khan
Student
Peshawar
Pakistan

Would you believe if I unfurl,
An invisible tattoo under my bosom.
What it takes for a caterpillar to become a butterfly,
And a duckling to become a swan.
Would you believe if I show you my scars?
Caused by the ghost of you.
Would you understand my long journey of self-love?
That how a scarlet-eyed vampire haunts me at night,
Draining me to death every gloomy night.
My soul yearns for dawn every morn,
Hands tremble with vicious thoughts,
Cold sensation runs through my bones.

Oh Maa! twice my blanket,
I can see the demon's teeth
Hovering over me,
Bloodthirsty,
Oh Maa! hold my hand,
Console me to sleep,
Tell me I'm chivalric more than a demon's clutch,
Tell me I'll defeat them someday.
Tell me you believe that I'll get over the horrible glimpses of that vague portrait,

Hark!
Let me regain my sanity.
Let me calm my chaotic mind.
Pour morphine into my veins and flesh,
Numb me to profound slumber till the morrow Azan.
Wake me up, oh bright dove!
Let me hear your voice,
Let me kiss this holy grail.
Let me heal my wounds,
For I have climbed thorns for so long.
Hear me, lad!
Would you understand my journey without destination? Would you?
Peace, peace, oh peace.

50. Peace of life Books



Zumar Yousaf
Student and Writer
Pakistan

What are books? What is their role in our life? Everyone has different ideas about it. Some people think that reading books is a waste of time, but some consider books as friends. In fact, books play a very important role in our lives.

If a good book can improve a person's life, choosing a bad book can ruin it. Books play the most important role in a person's life, even if the books are part of a course, they are related to something else.

Friendship with books saves a person from many problems. But for that, a person should have an understanding of which book is good for him and which is not; in short, he should know the choice of books. You cannot succeed in life if you only read course books. You need all kinds of understanding and experience to succeed in life.

Joe's books cannot be read in their entirety. People say that there is no good teacher except life, but in my view, life is as good a teacher as possible. But nothing else can teach a person the way of life better than books - a way of living. You can become anything, but unless you read books, your life is meaningless.

Many people say that books are dry, they don't understand them, but books are life; they are the friend of man. They should be read not just for the sake of it but with understanding so that you can grasp the importance of books. Finally, I would like to say that if you want to succeed in your life and avoid many difficulties, then you should make friends with books.

**“Panache”
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