

LITERATURE | INTERVIEW



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GUEST OF THE MONTH
MR. SWARIT NIGAM
STAR ON THE HORIZON

2025

VOLUME/ ISSUE

#4 / #3

Step into
the Musical
Bliss

A PRODUCT OF
AADHYA PUBLISHING HOUSE

PANACHE

INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE

Embrace the glamour and sophistication of Music
and literature

CHIEF EDITOR:

AKANKSHA SHRIVASTAVA

AADHYA PUBLISHING HOUSE

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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

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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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Mr. Swarit Nigam

A VOICE THAT SPEAKS TO THE SOUL ...

**BY AKANKSHA SHRIVASTAVA, CHIEF EDITOR,
PANACHE INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE**

Some artists don't just sing; they make you feel. Their voice becomes an experience — one that stays with you long after the music stops. Swarit Nigam is one such artist. His journey in music is not just about melodies and rhythms; it's about devotion, discipline, and a deep connection with something beyond the ordinary. Hailing from the culturally rich city of Lucknow, Swarit's music carries the depth of tradition with the soul of something timeless. His voice isn't just trained—it's felt.

There's an honesty in the way he sings, a passion that comes from years of dedication and an unwavering love for music. Whether he's performing on a grand stage or composing something close to his heart, he brings an energy that is rare to find. But Swarit isn't just a singer; he's a storyteller. His music has a purpose, a meaning beyond just notes and lyrics. From classical ragas to deeply spiritual compositions, he has carved a path that is uniquely his own. And as he continues to grow, one thing remains constant—his commitment to music as a journey, not just a destination.

In this exclusive interview with Panache International Magazine, we step into Swarit's world—his inspirations, his dreams, and the music that defines him.



Interview *Voice of Soul : Mr. Swarit Nigam*

EARLY BEGINNINGS & MUSICAL JOURNEY

1. Swarit, you started your musical journey at the tender age of four. What are your earliest memories of singing, and who or what inspired you to pursue music?

I started my musical journey at the age of four.

My inspiration came from my mother, who is a professional singer and holds a Nipun in music. She sings beautifully and has been my first guru.



2. Being a born singer, did you receive any formal training, or is your talent purely innate?

Yes, I have received professional training. Initially, I learned music from my mother. Later, I pursued professional training under Ustaaad Banne Kha Ji of the Kawwal Bachon Delhi Gharana.

3. Coming from Lucknow, a city known for its rich cultural heritage, how has your upbringing influenced your musical style?

Lucknow is a city rich in arts and culture, which has played a significant role in shaping my pronunciation and Urdu diction, both of which are essential for singing.

MILESTONES & ACHIEVEMENTS

4. Qualifying NET (National Eligibility Test) in 2024 is an academic feat. How do you balance your scholarly pursuits with your musical career?

I have completed my Master's degree and Nipun in Indian Classical Music. Additionally, I have qualified for NET in the same field. Many people believe that balancing music and academics is challenging, but I have always found it manageable. The key is time management and discipline. When you truly love something, you naturally find ways to dedicate time to it. I structured my daily routine in a way that allowed me to prioritize both my studies and my riyaz (practice). With persistence and dedication, I was able to excel in both fields.



Interview *Voice of Soul : Mr. Swarit Nigam*

5. Performing at prestigious platforms like UMANG Awards (telecasted on Sony TV) and Zee Marathi Swartarang Awards must have been exhilarating. Could you share some memorable moments from these experiences?

One of the most memorable milestones in my journey was performing at the UMANG Award Show, which was telecasted on Sony TV.

It was a surreal experience to perform on such a prestigious platform alongside some of the most renowned artists in the industry. Later, I also had the opportunity to perform at Swartarang, which was aired on Zee Marathi.

Following these achievements, I was honored to have my song released on T-Series' official channel, marking another significant step in my career.

7. Your song released on T-Series' official channel is a huge milestone. How did this collaboration happen, and what was the response from your audience?

My collaboration with T-Series was a turning point in my career, and it all started with a devotional song that resonated with millions.

Six years ago, my rendition of Shiv Tandav went viral, amassing over 16 million views and continuing to grow. This unexpected yet overwhelming response proved the power of devotion and music combined.

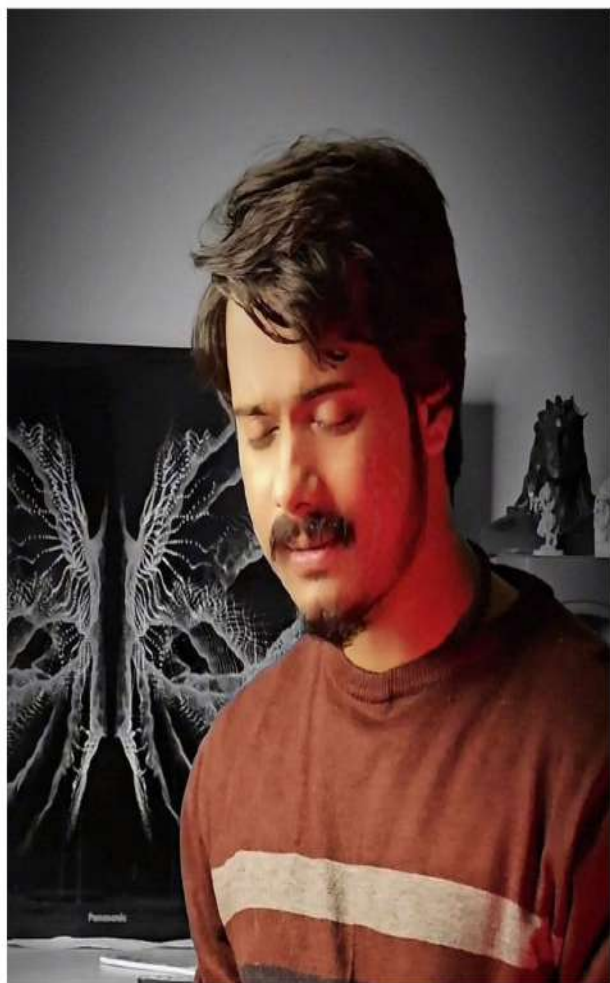
SPIRITUAL CONNECTION & VIRAL SUCCESS

8. You mentioned your inclination toward spirituality. How does it influence your music, and do you see it as a defining element of your artistry?

My devotion to Lord Shiva has always been the guiding force behind my music. I have read the Bhagavad Gita twice, and it has given me immense wisdom and strength. My connection with spirituality is the reason why I chose to sing Shiv Tandav in the first place, and its overwhelming success reaffirmed my belief that divine music has a way of touching people's souls.

Since then, I have composed, written, and sung many bhajans, all of which are available on YouTube. Every note I sing, every word I write, is a humble offering to Lord Shiva, whose blessings have shaped my journey.





VISION & FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

11. As an artist with such a versatile background, what kind of music do you see yourself creating in the future? Any upcoming projects you'd like to share?

I appreciate all genres of music, but my soul is most deeply connected to spiritual music.

That being said, I also enjoy exploring other genres. I have some romantic songs and bhajans that will be released soon, and I am excited to share them with my listeners!

9. Your Shiv Tandav went viral five years ago, amassing over 16 million+ views. What do you think made it resonate so deeply with the audience?

Many people appreciate my pronunciation in Sanskrit, particularly in Shiv Tandav.

I believe this comes naturally to me because of my devotion to Lord Shiva. My deep spiritual connection allows me to internalize the meaning of the verses, and that's why I sing them with clarity and emotion. It is an honor for me that people recognize and appreciate this aspect of my singing.

10. In the current era of digital music, how important is social media and platforms like YouTube for artists like you?

In today's world, online media is incredibly powerful, and I have fully embraced it.

I am the Co-Founder of my company Music Champs, which was founded by Sangita Tiwari Ji.

Through our platform, I teach music online, and we have expanded our reach to 10 countries, including the USA, Canada, the UK, Nepal, and South India. Our students come from diverse backgrounds, proving that music knows no boundaries.

12. Do you have any dream collaborations—artists, composers, or music directors—you aspire to work with?

My dream is to become an independent artist, creating music that truly represents who I am.

14. What is your ultimate goal as a musician—fame, innovation, devotion, or something else entirely?

My ultimate goal is to spread spirituality and Sanatan Dharma through my music, ensuring that divine music reaches people across the world.

RAPID-FIRE ROUND (FUN & SPONTANEOUS)

- **One song you can't stop listening to these days?**
- **If not a singer, what would you be?**
- **Your go-to spiritual mantra or chant?**
- **One artist—past or present—you wish you could perform with?**
- **Lucknowi food or Mumbai street food—your pick?**

- Lately, I have been listening to a lot of romantic songs.
- If I weren't a singer, I would have chosen the field of business.
- I am a dedicated disciple of Prema Nand Ji Maharaj, and I believe in the power of chanting the name of God as the highest form of devotion.
- A dream collaboration for me would be to perform alongside Sonu Nigam Ji. 😊
- Lucknow vs. Mumbai? While Mumbai is the city of dreams, Lucknow's food is unmatched! Nothing compares to the flavors of Lucknowi cuisine, and I don't think any city can compete with that.



Swarn Nigam

My Experience : Mr. Piyush Goel

I, come from a middle-class family, and my childhood was spent in a village alongside my siblings. My early education also took place there. Back then, there was no one to guide me academically—I studied whatever I could on my own. My father was posted in the village, and rural life had a profound influence on me. I spent my formative years in places like Sabdalpur, Chaumuha, and Barola with my father. The most memorable days of my life were in Chaumuha. After completing my 12th grade there, I pursued a diploma in Mechanical Engineering from Gandhi Polytechnic, Muzaffarnagar (1984–1987).

Like many others, I had dreams—first, I wanted to become a pilot, but I couldn't clear the NDA exam. Then, I aspired to be a professor, but I couldn't pursue higher education. Eventually, I became an engineer (diploma holder), yet life took an unexpected turn—I became a writer.

My first job was as a supervisor in Manihari Kundli, earning ₹600. Later, I worked in Pilkhuwa for ₹800 and then at Yamaha, Surajpur, for ₹1200. Over time, I gained 27 years of experience in my field.

Then, in the year 2000, my life changed forever. I met with a terrible accident. I was left lying on the road, begging for help, but no one was willing to take me to the hospital. I tried to get up, but my body refused to move. At that moment, my two-month-old daughter came to my mind. Desperate, I prayed to Sai Baba and Maa Vaishno Devi: "Keep me alive at least until I can see my daughter get married." And then, something miraculous happened. Somehow, I reached the hospital. After undergoing ten surgeries and spending nine months bedridden, I recovered and returned to work.

Just when I thought life was back on track, another storm hit—I lost my job in 2003 and sank into depression. Then, another miracle happened. A friend gave me a copy of the Bhagavad Gita and asked me to read it. I accepted it as prasadand, with divine grace, read and wrote all 18 chapters and 700 shlokas in both Hindi and English. Not only did my depression disappear, but I also found a new job.

I moved to Sonipat, and soon, my writings on the Bhagavad Gita were published in Dainik Jagran. As soon as they were published, news channels began interviewing me. During one such interview, someone asked, "You have written the Bhagavad Gita in a mirror-image script, but who will read it?" I smiled and replied, "Valmiki once chanted 'Mara Mara,' and it turned into 'Rama Rama,' leading him to compose the Ramayana in Sanskrit. My only message to everyone is—if you can't read my work the usual way, try reading it in reverse. If the Bhagavad Gita changed my life, it can change yours too."

After that, I took on an unusual challenge—I wrote an entire book using a needle. The Bhagavad Gita gave me a platform, and the book written with a needle brought me recognition on Google. From 2003 to 2024, I wrote 18 books.

Friends, our duty is to keep moving forward. Some things are in God's hands—and they are meant to stay there.

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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. Whatever May Be

Why do you rage, fierce heart, with such pain?
To claim that only I bear sorrow and grief is in vain!
What is the use of surrendering to despair?
Instead, let wisdom shine in your stare!

If my fate as a mortal is already penned,
Why lament or declare, "This is my end"?
My freedom is dearer to me than anything—
Like a steed, untethered to any hitching string!

Be satisfied with what you have seen,
Even if it's shorter than winter's sunbeam.
Be content—do not dwell on the past,
For what is worth more than being alive at last?



**Mr. Abdrakhmanov
Yeginbai Bozuly
Civil engineer,
poet, genealogist,
writer, and a
member of the
"People's Diplomacy
International
Cooperation" (PDIC)
organization in
Astana
Kostanay
Kazakhstan**

2. Do Not Marry a Poet



Mr. Adesoga Jubril
Educator & Writer
Ogun
Nigeria

How can you marry the wanderers of words?
Their verses will only lead you astray.
Poets are flirts,
With many muses and endless inspirations.

Loving a poet is a dangerous dance—
Dance between their lines, and you may lose yourself.
Their love might be beautiful,
But it is a story told many times.

They may hold you close,
Yet keep one foot in another world.
Every silence becomes a stanza,
Every sigh turns into a line break.

Do not marry them—
They belong to the wind.
Always moving, always changing,
Never yours to hold.

A poet's love can never be real—
The truest affections are written in lines and stanzas.
Do not confide in them, for their words
May be laced with irony and exaggeration.

3. Lover Boy



Mr. Aladodo Yasir
Student, writer,
Poet
Ilorin
Nigeria

Your love is like rainfall in my heart,
Nourishing the soil, reviving the ground.
With every drop, my soul takes flight,
Anew, refreshed, and joyfully unbound.

The parched earth of my being revives,
As petals of trust and hope begin to thrive.
In this desert of life, your love survives,
A haven where my heart feels alive.

The rhythm of your love, like rainfall's beat,
Echoes within me—a symphony so sweet.
Quenching my thirst, it washes away defeat,
Leaving behind a garden where love and joy meet.

Forever may your love rain down on me,
And in its waters, may my heart be set free.

4. Mahakumbh: A Great Festival

The atmosphere is crowded,
The air flows lovely, unclouded.
Every chant echoes truly,
Sangam shines so beautifully.

People arrive from across the land,
Prayag's paths are vibrant and grand.
A sense of peace, a heart at rest,
The management strives to serve its best.

The sacred Sangam, known as Triveni,
Welcomes pilgrims, thousands—many.
But only one King rules the scene,
Prayag Nagari, pure and serene.

The water is cool, yet hearts feel warm,
Excitement peaks beyond the norm.
A sacred bath in the holy tide,
With gratitude, prayers rise inside.

The Kumbh arrives every twelve years,
But MahaKumbh comes once in twelve of twelve spheres.
A time for devotion, a moment divine,
A million saints in a sacred line.

As if the gods descend to earth,
Blessing all with endless worth.
Songs of glory fill the air,
A joyful journey beyond compare.



Mr. Amit Sharma
Teacher
Delhi

5. This is Nature

What is nature?

Nature is full of creatures.

Sand, soil, and air are all part of nature.

This is nature.

Nature is the dream of God,

A wonderful gift to humankind.

Trees, animals, and water are included in nature.

This is nature.

Nature consists mainly of three seasons—

Rainy, summer, and winter.

These three seasons are the gold of nature.

This is nature.

Nature never stops.

Its clock runs fast,

It is a swift racer.

This is nature.

What is nature?

Finally, I believe...

It is a source of joy and happiness.

This is nature.



**Mr. Anmol
Shrivastava
Student
Vaishali
Bihar**

6. Appeal to Humanity

It is time for us to stand as one,
In hardship together, we cannot be undone.

There is a divide between rich and poor,
And kindness seems to exist no more.

Where are you going, humanity?
Politics now rules over sanity.

Who will dare to speak the truth?
And will those who hear accept the proof?

Listen to reason, people—
For without it, we are all feeble.

Whoever ignores life's lessons in vain
Will find that nothing good remains.

For life flows like a river's tide,
It is time for us to stand with pride!



**Mr. Bakhitkhozha
Rustemov
economist,
writer, journalist,
international
publicist, literary
critic, historian,
theologian,
translator,
musician, poet
Kazakhstan**

7. A Man Was Walking

A man was walking, hiding his age,
Hiding his thoughts.
He walked through the mountains,
While the clouds hung
Wearily all the time.

But the guitar sang behind his shoulders—
It sang all the time.
The soul of the vast expanse
Rang along his path—
It always rang!

Let the clouds strike with hail,
Let the storms rage,
Let the rain lash out,
And the wind rush in—
Yet he remained unbroken!

Even if there are no mountains ahead,
The vast firmament of the Earth awaits.
Go forward, man—
You will get there, I know!



Ms. Bevz Lyudmila
Eastern Europe

8. The Timeless Warrior



**Mrs. Bindu
Unnikrishnan
Educator
Pune
Maharashtra**

I saw a woman with a warrior's soul,
How she holds herself together is a mystery untold.
When the world tries to bring her down,
She stands even stronger, wearing her crown.

Her power lies in her steady rise,
Her unbroken spirit, fire in her eyes.
Her steps echo strength, her rock-steady will,
She is a force to reckon with, a brilliant thrill.

No one sees the pain she hides,
Yet she smiles—her strength, her guide.
Her dreams burn bright, not just her own,
But for the lives she's always known.

She nurtures, she builds, she leads the way,
With trembling hands but a heart that stays.
Her soul is stitched with courage and care,
Love and fire woven everywhere.

She's the calm and the storm combined,
Gentle yet fierce, with a powerful mind.
Her laughter frees, her tears renew—
A warrior—timeless, strong, and true.

9. Shadows of Shame



Dr. Bobby Narayan
Writer
New Delhi

Two days after his marriage to Lalita, Sombir's life spiralled into chaos. The night of the crime was a blur of rage and poor judgment—a heated argument with a neighbor over an ancestral land dispute ended with Sombir fatally striking the man. His actions were irreversible, and by dawn, the police had taken him into custody.

Sombir's family, long accustomed to his fiery temper, disowned him. His father refused to engage lawyers, stating, "He must face the consequences of his actions."

Lalita's family, shocked by the scandal, kept their distance. But it was Lalita's choice that left everyone in disbelief. "I will not return to my maternal home," she declared, standing firm in her decision to stay in her marital home despite her husband's incarceration.

The trial was swift, and Sombir lost. A life sentence awaited him. Alone in his prison cell, he simmered with a mix of anger and despair. His thoughts frequently turned to Lalita—her face, her voice, her presence.

Months passed before he made a bold request: he demanded to meet Lalita. "Sex is my legal right," he argued to the jailor. "She is my wife, and our marriage was legal." The unusual plea raised eyebrows, but the case escalated to higher authorities. After deliberation, the request was granted under strict supervision. A room was arranged for the couple within the prison walls.

-2-

Lalita, though reluctant, agreed to meet him. It was a night heavy with unspoken words, guilt, and duty. She submitted, driven by an overwhelming sense of obligation to the marriage she had vowed to honor.

The iron gates of the jail creaked open, their harsh sound echoing across the barren courtyard. As she stepped inside, every gaze seemed to land on her, scrutinizing, mocking. The women guards standing near the entrance exchanged sly glances, their whispers loud enough to be deliberate.

"Look at her," one of them muttered with a smirk, loud enough for her to hear. "So lustrous, isn't she? Wonder what this one did to end up here."

A ripple of laughter followed, coarse and sharp. She straightened her back,

refusing to let their taunts chip away at her composure, though her insides churned.

"Too delicate for a place like this," another guard added, her eyes raking over her polished appearance as though it didn't belong within the grimy confines of the prison walls.

She clenched her fists. Their words were meant to humiliate, to strip her of any dignity she had left, but she wasn't going to give them the satisfaction of seeing her falter. Her steps remained steady as she was led further inside, the sound of laughter trailing behind her like a shadow.

In that moment, she made a silent promise to herself: no matter what, she would endure.

-3-

Suddenly Lalita stopped going to jail. She couldn't bear the pinches of people in jail.

Weeks later, Lalita discovered she was pregnant. The news should have brought joy, but instead, it plunged her into a deep turmoil. She couldn't ignore the questions swirling in her mind: What kind of life could this child have, burdened by a father's crime? How would society treat them? Would the child grow up with the same anger and recklessness as Sombir?

Haunted by these thoughts, Lalita made a bold decision. She filed an application in court seeking permission to terminate the pregnancy. "This child does not deserve a life of shame," she wrote, her words filled with anguish.

When Sombir learned of her decision, he erupted with fury. "How dare you kill my child?" he shouted during their next prison meeting. "This is my blood, my legacy!"

Lalita, her voice trembling but resolute, replied, "And what legacy is that, Sombir? A legacy of violence and disgrace? This child will grow up bearing the weight of your crime. Do you want that for your son or daughter?"

The prison walls seemed to echo her words, cutting deeper than Sombir's anger ever could. He fell silent, his clenched fists loosening as the reality of her words sank in.

The conflict grew, dragging on for weeks. Lalita's determination clashed with Sombir's desperation to hold onto something—someone—that could give his life meaning. But eventually, Lalita stood before the court, unwavering. Her petition was granted.

The day the procedure was scheduled, Sombir sat alone in his cell, staring at the blank walls. His anger had dissipated, leaving only an ache of loss and regret. For the first time, he faced the enormity of what he had done—not just to the man he killed, but to everyone connected to him.

Lalita, too, bore the weight of her choice, but she walked away with her head held high. She had made a decision not for herself, but for the future—one unburdened by the chains of Sombir's guilt.

And so, their paths diverged: Sombir remained confined, a prisoner of his actions, while Lalita sought freedom from a life overshadowed by his crime. Neither would forget the other, but their shared story had come to an end, leaving behind lessons of pain, choices, and the cost of living with one's decisions.

The walls of Lalita's matrimonial house felt like a prison, suffocating her with the weight of Sombir's crime and society's piercing judgment. She couldn't bear the whispers of the neighbors or the haunting silence of her empty home. The night offered her a chance to escape, and she took it. Lalita ran away from her matrimonial house in the night.

Under the cover of darkness, Lalita packed what little she could and fled. Her feet carried her toward the train tracks, a place where thoughts of escape collided with thoughts of surrender. A speeding train met her while crossing. The sound of a speeding train grew louder as she stepped onto the tracks, her heart pounding with a mix of fear and despair.

But fate intervened. A passerby, a night watchman, spotted her silhouette against the moonlight and pulled her back just as the train roared past and she was saved. She collapsed on the ground, trembling, her mind overwhelmed by what could have been.

In the months that followed, Lalita's resolve hardened. The child came to the earth. She gave birth to her child—a baby boy with Sombir's sharp features but her gentle eyes. Looking at him filled her with both love and anguish. She knew she couldn't raise him in the shadow of Sombir's crime or under the cruel gaze of society. But Lalita decided to live far away from the shadow of shame.

Determined to give her son a life free from shame, Lalita decided to leave everything behind—her home, her past, and even her name. She moved to a distant village where no one knew her story. There, she built a quiet life, working tirelessly to provide for her son.

She boarded a train not knowing where she was going. The rhythmic clatter of

the train's wheels was oddly soothing as she stared out the window, watching the blur of trees and distant fields rush past. Her heart was heavy, weighed down by the uncertainty of where she was going or why she'd even boarded the train in the first place. She just needed to leave.

Lost in her thoughts, she barely noticed the faint shadow of someone approaching until it stopped directly in front of her. Slowly, she looked up.

Her breath caught.

It was Sombir.

He stood there, his familiar silhouette framed by the harsh overhead lights of the train car. His eyes, wide with surprise, mirrored the shock she felt.

The train begin to move. Slowly!

"What are you doing here?" she whispered, her voice barely audible over the hum of the moving train.

"I should ask you the same," Sombir replied, his voice calm yet tinged with something she couldn't quite place—concern, maybe?

The world outside the train seemed to fade as a silence settled between them, heavy with questions and memories. It had been months since she had last seen him, months since she'd walked away from the life they once shared.

Fate, it seemed, had other plans.

The train stopped with a jerk. She looked outside. Hundreds of policemen crowded the platform; some of them were approaching the train.

By Bobby Narayan

10. Spring



**Ms. Dinara
Butobayeva (pen
name Dido)
Writer, lawyer and
psychologist
Slavgorod
Russia**

The city was breathing
With all its strength,
Meeting the vague spring.
Dragging herself with grace,
She was drawn to melancholic longing.

Heaving breasts
Beneath French blouses.
In search of lost time,
Counting trousseau shirts,
Every woman dreams
Of the culmination.
Ah, a head is needed for such outfits!

Spring is a time for cocktails.
The siren of voluptuousness
Beckons wanderers into the net of
Stockings.

Compasses spread,
The words sway.
Lacquered souls,
With a rich entourage,
Comb through iambs
And dancing chorea.

The laws of language oblige us—
Assigning roles to speech,
Performing cultural acts,
Obeying the compulsion
Of official chatter.

Courtly eloquence,

Sentimentality,
A smashed face—
Petty philosophy
Drowned in deep places.

Faces turn like weathervanes,
Still-life expressions,
A thousand reproductions.
Stencil thinking
Rebuilds,
Figures transplanted.
Comprende?—
A senseless translation.

The ponds bloomed
With the life they once lived.
Miracles bloom all around—
Botanicals
Beneath silk undergarments
And powdered spouts.

We can't hear the steps of love,
Yet we recognize them—
A manifestation of the unmanifested.
Love is not the last resort
In the game of sex—
Now, the air smells of sturgeon,
And the road to God is steep.

Remnants of reason cling
To inconvenient truths,
On crutches of freedom,
Patching the void
Of loneliness.

With a face in aquarelle—
Lived, worked,
Grew a little older.
Is time measured in years?
If so, then years
May as well be called seagulls.

By Dinara Butobayeva

11. Believe Me, You Can't Escape from Love's Embrace



**Ms. Dinara
Orazbekova
Vice-President of
the International
Chamber of
Writers and Artists
CIEZART
Kazakhstan**

Believe me, you can't escape from love's embrace,
Once you've met her, without her, you're misplaced.
She'll stay with you through dark nights and days,
Tormenting your heart, burning like a fiery blaze.

Every moment, every hour brings you pain,
Taunting you with jealousy and longing in vain.
Wherever you go, her presence you'll seek,
Unable to drink, to eat, to sleep.

If the feeling of love is mutual and true,
Guard it like a flame from the winds that blew.
Don't let streams of tears put out its light,
Treat it with care, hold it close and tight.

Remember, without warmth, no fire burns bright.
Be gentle, treasure your love, and do what is right.
If you desire love that's faithful and true,
Be honorable, and let honesty guide you.

— Translation by poet Yelden Sarybay

12. Love You



**Mr. Esengeldy
Suyunovich
SUYUNOV
Author , poet,
writer, journalist
Kazakhstan**

My mind shattered into fragments
At the sight of your charming grace.
Your laughter—ringing in enjambments—
Scattered my sorrow, vanishing without a trace.

Your hair—like the fresh breath of spring—
Swept me away, gently coaxing my heart.
Day and night, I whisper one thing:
I fell for you from the very start.

At times, you awaken from a dream
And catch the first golden rays of dawn.
You beam, as if in a silent theme,
A melody within your heart is drawn.

Just so, I caught a blissful flash—
Your smile, as pure as light!
You—untouched by sorrow's clash,
Unburdened by the heavy clouds' might.

Awakened, I have not known sleep again.
How can one rest when love's glow burns bright?
I cherish and nurture hope, now and then,
To hear your soft laughter once more tonight.

13. Our Imagination in Verse

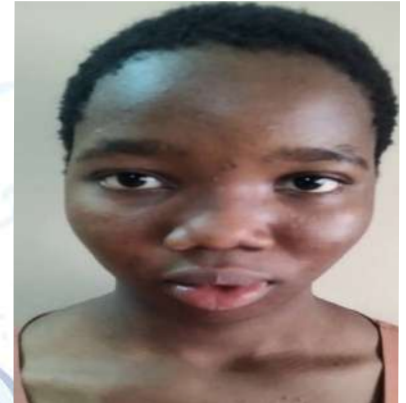
A piece born from imagination,
A rhythm with meaning, a deep sensation.
A thought that lingers in the mind,
Waiting for the right words to find.

A vision crafted in the head,
Transformed to lines that can be read.
It had to be written down with care,
So others could listen and be aware.

Some write of joy, some write of pain,
Some speak of loss, some tell of gain.
Some poems are soothing, gentle, and sweet,
While others may carry struggles and heat.

A poem explains what we have fought,
It holds our battles, our deepest thought.
It reveals what we're going through,
And uncovers what is true.

All written down upon a page,
To be explored at any stage.
A message standing strong and bold,
Waiting for hearts to grasp and hold.



**Ms. Falade
Adefolahanmi
Esther
Student**

14. Why?

Why does apartheid exist?
Hatred, antagonism, murders.
Why do class and caste conflicts persist?
Evil, wrath, envy.

When will absolute tranquillity prevail in the world?
Goodness and rays of hope?
To overcome myriad barriers
On the path of life.



Mrs. Gargi Saha
Teacher
Varanasi
Uttar Pradesh

15. Memories

Memories are like waves in the sea,
Life itself is never a cup of tea.

Memories chase us, like criminals,
we are humans, not mere animals.

Memories can also be revived,
Memories can also be revised.

Memories remain intact in the brain,
Memories find their way down every lane.

Memories remind us of our past,
Memories can haunt us, fleeting yet fast.

Sweet memories bring joy and light,
While bitter ones steal our delight.



**Mr. Girish Chandra
Upadhyay
Advocate Allahabad
High Court,
Allahabad
Prayag Raj
Uttar Pradesh**

16. SHE

Bemoaning the past
Crawling to the present
Sometimes tiptoeing
Sometimes on tenterhooks.
Sans good mornings and
Pleasant evenings she treads cautiously
On razor's edge
She might topple off
The hazardous precipice
Who knows for better?
Culling the strewn splinters of past
Bit by bit, pieces by pieces,
Like shards of broken glasses
Scattered, diffused sunrays,
Shimmer of the glow worms
She speculates: had it been Butterflies of spring
Zephyr fanning her cheeks
Swooning smell of petrichor
In lieu of all that ghoulishly
Bleak, arid dismal predicament
Wouldn't she have lived?



**Dr. Jailaxmi R
Vinayak**
**Writer, singer,
poet and an orator**
Bhopal
Madhya Pradesh

17. Chocolatee Love!!!



Ms. Javeria Amjad
Teacher
Sargodha
Pakistan

My Dandy! Eye candy!
Loving you is not handy!
For lovers in color, flower collocate,
I fret, as I see you in every chocolate!
It's arduous to roam even in the mall,
As chocolates conspire, intrigue in a brawl,
Whenever I behold crunchy KitKat,
All but I think is our fervent chat,
Twix, in my eyes burns like twin flame,
Concurrently ignites your name, my name!!
Delectable, I find coconut filled Bounty,
Zealous love at once stuffs my heart's county,
Tempting, irresistible is crumbly flake,
Exasperating you, puts my life at stake!
Lindt is smoothest, creamiest of all!!
Your chocolaty love coats me like a durable wall!!

18. Captain of Your Ocean



**Emb. Dr. Jose Luis
Lopez
Puerto Rico**

I take the reins of the helm,
I sail with the ship to your body.
My heart beats a million times,
By miracle, no storm or cyclone arrives.

I know I must dock in that bed,
Where perfumes soothe this chest.
You consume me alive—there is no regret,
That is why I feel you pure, delicious.

The more I caress you, the more anxious you become,
That little warmth keeps us entwined.
Without dark thoughts, without any wounds,
What matters to us, my love, is this flame—

A fire that ascends to the firmament, calling for more,
Because this passion, like a feast, devours us whole.
It ends with delight, with even greater taste,
For being the captain of your ocean is divine pleasure.

Feeling embraced by your waves, your salt, and your wine,
Even if I sink to the depths, you will rescue me.
To dwell in your soul, to heed your call,
Would be a dream, a paradise to behold.

I love you so deeply—I dance, I rejoice, I cherish you.
There is no place more essential than being with you,
To eternally nest in this world, together as one.

19. I Wish Not

I wish not for Santa Claus or Tinkerbell,
I wish not at a wishing well.

I wish not upon a shooting star,
For in life, I've learned those stars are very far.

Blowing on dandelions serves me not well,
Wishbones don't make me feel swell.

Crossed fingers and tossing salt over one's shoulder
Lose meaning as one grows older.

I wish instead that God gives me the strength to strive,
Rather than merely wish while others contrive.

I wish for a day better than today,
When, through God's grace, my troubles fade away.

I wish that peace and love prevail,
As the world exhales and tips the scale.
So we may learn, with greater detail,
What working over wishing would truly entail.



**Dr. Kyle Travice
Pillay
Motivational
Speaker/
Entrepreneur
Durban
South Africa**

20. Sisterhood

Sisterhood is a beautiful thing
A gathering, a bonding of souls,
Securely and colorfully intertwined,
One within the other.

Sisterhood is a sacred thread
That runs deep within the hearts of sisters
A thread of secrets shared,
Of laughter and tears.

Sisterhood is a harmony
Of different sounds and lights,
Emanating from within,
Coming together as one.

Sisterhood is closer than a breath.
Despite the years, months, days, or hours,
The presence of a sister is always felt,
Pulsating with the rhythm of love.



**Ms. Lucy Victoria
David
Writer, Motivational
Speaker
Durban
South Africa**

21. I Hear the Music of Spring



**Ms. Lydiya
Trishechkina
Editor, script
writer for videos
and commercials,
content creator,
assistant director
in the DALI author's
group
Kazakhstan**

I hear the music of spring
In the breath of windy March,
In the sighs of fragile silence,
And in the chorus of birds' delight.

The delicate chime of icicles
Drifts like a divine sonata,
And bright Mozart, in unison,
Resonates in the rippling brook.

The cello sings within me—
My soul breaks free from captivity...
And Grieg, and Schubert, and Massenet
Echo in a spring cantilena.

Beneath the languid voices of violins,
Under the snow—trembling, tender,
And blue like the heavens above—
The shy snowdrop blooms.

I hear the music of spring,
And lightness lifts me as I soar
On the crest of a joyful wave,
While my heart melts, melts, melts...

22. With You



**Mr. Manarbek
Karekenov
Kazakhstan**

Both you and I tried not to let the fire of feeling fade.
When you are gone, the noisy world turns eerily silent.
With you beside me, even the desert becomes a garden,
With you, even poison is sweet, and a frosty day feels warm.

Both you and I, when we meet, our souls rejoice and smile.
When you are gone, the hope for joy feels hollow.
With you beside me, even the darkest night glows bright.
With you, even deceitful honey makes a false life seem right.

Both you and I have sought love since our youth began to unfold.
When you are away, the world turns cold, my heart locked in ice.
With you beside me, the vast expanse of the world rests in my hand.
With you, I need no other soul... You are my love, so grand.

With you, even ice feels warm, and storms turn into gentle breezes.
This request may seem curious, but I ask you, please—
Promising that we will never part—
Give me your life, your fate, your heart!

23. A Silent Satisfaction



**Mr. Nhamo
Muchagumisa
Teacher
Mutare
Zimbabwe**

Something had always seemed to suggest that Mrs Chegura would one day leave her marriage forever, yet even after seeing this development coming, Mr Chegura found the pain of losing his wife worse than all the verbal abuse he had suffered from her. The silence in which he had endured the presence of an insubordinate wife would not compare with the emptiness that surrounded him after her departure.

She had been chasing prophets from the time she had heard a whisper within her head telling her that her husband had been having a relationship with a workmate. She had gone to night prayers on mountain tops, where spiritual vigils were held around sacred bonfires. She had congregated with church mates on river banks on hot days and during cold nights. She had lain on damp grass a countless nights. She had undergone spiritual baths in pools endowed with myths of the spiritual world. Indeed, she had surrendered her body, mind and soul to her obsession with ritualism.

"Dear wife," Mr Chegura said to his wife one night, "you worship a God who answers prayers. Have you not gone through enough discomfort, sleeping in the open, and at times wallowing in the mud, away from the comfort of home?"

"What comfort is in this place?" Mrs Chegura asked, "where I'm forced to spend the full span of the night lying next to a man missing the pleasure of being with another woman?"

"Never allow your imagination to run wild on such issues my Dear, because that is the reason a lot of women lose all they have."

"And you gain all you dream of by giving your body freely to a loose woman?" Mrs Chegura retorted.

"There is no such woman!" Mr Chegura shouted.

Mrs Chegura walked out of the bedroom, banging the door behind her to spend her night in the sitting room.

She had narrated bizarre tales to her husband about being assaulted in her dreams by a woman she thought was her husband's mistress. She had "sensed" some hideous intention between her husband and his workmate to terminate her life to free up space for their depraved affair. Mr Chegura always told her that it was a figment of her own imagination, fanned by a jealous suspicion which she could easily recover from if she allowed her husband to be there for her.

A cholera scare created an opportunity for Chegura and his wife to be Mr and Mrs Chegura again. Government had declared that all church gatherings held in open spaces without proper sanitary facilities had been indefinitely suspended. Mrs Chegura would have to fill her side of the matrimonial bed every night. But Chegura's ears had not been prepared for the incessant witchcraft accusations that he had learnt to reply with silence.

"You can't deny anything, your silent satisfaction says it all," she would say, before leaving the matrimonial bed to sleep in the sitting room.

When the ban on open church gatherings was finally lifted, there was no comfort for Chegura, who could not say which was better playing the abandoned husband, or spending his life with a woman who saw the devil incarnate in her life partner.

Then came the relocation of Mrs Chegura's church which should have deescalated the tension between husband and wife. At least Mrs Chegura would not be abused by bogus prophetic voices that had broken many families. Chegura suspected that the leader of the church had been involved in some scandal that had damaged his reputation. He thought that his wife was just not willing to divulge the secret to him.

A few weeks passed in which husband and wife seemed to be returning to the peaceful coexistence of the past. Chegura had started considering relieving his parents of the burden of looking after his two daughters who were both in senior primary school. They were going to experience the presence of a mother once again. Chegura had started seeing through the opaque cloud of his relationship with Mrs Chegura.

Then one evening upon his return from work, he found his wife gone. She had written him a note to the effect that her would be murderer had not allowed her peaceful nocturnal rest for three consecutive nights. She had opted to be with her christian community until her nemesis had been subdued.

After informing his in-laws and the police about his wife's desertion, Chegura decided to settle for a new peace in his life. An impenetrable fog filled the void Mrs Chegura had left in his life, but when the fog finally cleared, he was in a relationship with a girl who was fifteen years his junior, but was optimistic that she could make a good wife. She had a job in town and she commuted to work from Tsvingwe High Density Suburb a few kilometres from the city of Mutare.

He had first met her while taking a shortcut from Old West to his place in Tsvingwe Medium Density Suburb. She had walked ahead of him, keeping a respectable distance, although she was aware of his efforts to catch up with her. Both seemed aware of the chaos in the sky above them. The capricious weather of Penhalonga had apparently started playing one of its usual tricks that often found uncircumspect walkers crawling for shelter in the red mud.

A sudden gust of wind blew her sunhat from her head, and sent it flying towards a cluster of thorn shrubs. The girl stopped and watched helplessly as her hat got caught among the twigs a couple of metres above the ground.

The man behind her caught up with her and suddenly spoke, "You can't do anything about it. We have to walk faster or risk being caught in a hailstorm."

"I'm afraid we are already in it," the girl said as the first raindrops hit their bodies with an emphatic fury of malicious weather."

"And the bad thing about it is that we are facing the torrent," said Chegura.

They walked side by side like they had known each other for ages as the raindrops pounded them. Chegura proposed taking the girl to his house, but she declined the offer. "Better accompany me to my place, half a kilometre across Tsambe River," Angela said, as that was the girl's name.

"I just hope the bridge is not under water," Chegura said more to himself than to her.

Freezing in the implacable shower, they finally hit Angela's doorstep. She lived in a room in the backdoor quarters of a large house. She collapsed into bed with her wet clothes on. Chegura realised that she was catching a fever. He opened her wardrobe and extracted some dry clothes, threw them on her bed then went out into the rain, instructing her to change before the wetness did further mischief to her body.

Going back into the room he made a relevant call to a contact she had given him. He only left after her friend, who lived one or two streets away had arrived, and that was after the rain had ceased. Chegura had never been so useful to a woman for quite a long time, but he knew how it felt to be in love. His new found friend was 23 and he was 38, but they seemed to have made a lasting connection.

The beauty of a woman continues to appreciate once one falls in love with her. The Saturday of the raging thunderstorm was succeeded by a tranquil, cloudless Saturday that granted Chegura with an opportunity to visit the girl whose return to health had become a constant thought on his mind.

He sat once more on the stool where he had sat in the company of a feverish stranger. He was completely taken over by her seductive presence. Why not say the love word and learn to live without her love should she reject him? Before she could say yes or no, she told him how her parents had long separated before her mother died.

"My father had first been jailed for livestock theft and after his release from jail, he broke up with my mother," Angela told Chegura.

"Thanks for opening up," Chegura said. "We have to find him my love."

Chegura and his new found love sought the help of a middle man to help in the negotiations for Angela's bride price and travelled all the way from Penhalonga to Bocha, where Angela's father was said to be living. Chegura had raised a substantial amount of money for the bride price.

In Bocha they spent a day in the homestead of Mr Sagwidza, Angela's father. He was a church leader and to him the payment of bride price was to be made in the presence of some of his prominent church members.

When the church members assembled, the negotiations began, but everything seemed to be a figment of a wild imagination to Chegura. Among the guests was his estranged wife! She was one of Mr Sagwidza's congregants, Chegura supposed, but that was unlikely. His wife was probably dead and had decided to send her ghost to demoralise Chegura.

By the time the negotiations ended, Chegura was now convinced that there was no ghost among the guests. His silent satisfaction about the new twist in his life allowed him no time for remorse, even though he realised that his wife wiped her eyes a countless times throughout the negotiations. When the proceedings ended, he took his new wife and left without exchanging a word with his estranged wife.

By Nhamo Muchagumisa

24. Detty December

Beautiful recipe,
Once for all,
All for once,
Such a month,
Like the precise flow burst
Of a pregnant woman.

Oh!
Detty December,
We click thee,
With a stockpile
Of our efforts
From the preceding months,
To celebrate thee!

Cheques burned,
January's fears set in,
With the usual weeks' hiss
Of flawed policies,
A late budget reading,
Salaries moonwalking—
How can we sit by Zion Cathedral
And not sing of Detty December's flair?

Noise against the windy days
Of the ember-hazy clime,
Lagos—fluffy with fumes,
Grandiose plans in pipes—
How can we sit by Zion Cathedral
And not let our hearts drift toward Mediterranean voyages?

Hello,
If the worst comes down to the wires,



**Mr. Phillips Tayo
Damilola
Writer/Content
Enthusiast,
Lagos
Nigeria**

Out of our pounds, penny foolish... we stake odds,
Risking an unlucky capture of wads,
Waddling boats through extravagance—
Women... weed... wild pubs...
Where cuisines are costly,
Where lodgings are unlike the Biblical manger
Wherein Christ was exaltedly born.

We wreck Formula One drives,
Incurring fuel costs—huge debts cut
Out of our flowing gowns,
Pockets, and modern chip cards,
Flipping at the ozone stations' plundered pumps.

Hello,
The three wise men rode camels, not Chevrolets.
Detty is thy December,
Once filled with wishes,
Next filled with new wants thereafter.

By Phillips Tayo Damilola

25. INVISIBLE SCARS – The Unseen Pain



The world sees me as a villain,
A predator of violence and pain.
I walk through the shadows,
Weighed down by the burden of being misunderstood.
They don't even see the sorrow that ravages my soul,
But who am I to change their minds?

Believe me, I'm trying my best
To put their words to the test.
And it really gets to my chest—
Most people tell me to rest,
But all I feel is distress.

I'm a complex pattern of emotions,
Yet no one takes the time to unravel me.
I fear that one day, my pain will burst forth,
Because no one understands its depth.

Instead, they judge me,
They condemn me,
They treat me as though I'm a criminal,
Sometimes even less than human.
They cast me aside,
They blame me,
They only see my surface—
The façade I've built to shield myself from their harsh words.

But beneath it all lies:
A sea of sorrow,
Deep trauma,
Painful past,
Invisible scars,
A voiceless cry,

**Ms. Precious
Ojukwu
Student
Lagos
Nigeria**

An ocean of tears shed for injustice,
The love I've been denied,
The acceptance I've longed for.

When I needed help, I wasn't given any.
I needed listening ears but was met with condemning mouths.
I sought advice but received scornful remarks.
I needed guidance, not lustful desires.
A helping hand, not a heart on fire.
I needed kindness, not cruelty,
Yet all I was given was hopelessness.

I am not a monster—
I am human, and I deserve to be treated as one.
I am fragile, and that is not a crime.
I have emotions that deserve respect.
I have flaws and scars, and I am not ashamed of them.

But I am scared—
Scared of life's harsh realities,
Scared of its complexities,
Scared of hurtful words,
Scared of falling and failing.

Yet, in this world full of choices—
Both light and dark—
We must take bold steps forward,
Even when each step brings a new challenge.
Still, we must keep going
For the brighter moments ahead.

So, even if I've been criticized,
Even if I've been hurt,
Even if I've been broken—
If this is the complexity of life I must face,

Then I will face it over and over again,
With a steady, unwavering pace.

I will live, and I will fight.
I will survive, and I will strive.
I will excel, and I will thrive.
I will fall, and I will rise.
I will embrace my flaws
To make a difference,
To prove them wrong,
To shock them all,
And to be the girl no one expected.

By Precious Ojukwu

26. Heavenly Shelter



**Mrs. Promila Punnu
Bhardwaj
Retd. General
Manager,
Industries
Department,
Himachal Pradesh**

Sitting idly in the tranquil
And most sought-after heavenly shelter
Of ethereal nature, I often see—
Breezes carrying a seed,
Soil gently embracing it,
Clouds generously watering it,
The sun warming it with affection,
Roots sprouting from the stem,
Stems bearing tender leaves,
Leaves giving way to buds,
Buds blooming softly, slowly,
Thorns lovingly guarding flowers,
Flowers releasing their fragrance,
A sweet aroma delighting others,
With a pure and selfless devotion—
Wishing only to serve,
To give without envy or resentment,
To nurture without harm or bias.

Is not love—the supreme love—
The secret of nature's
Eternal beauty and calm?
A love that seeks to serve,
A love that sacrifices joyfully,
Diminishing itself
To let others flourish,
Silently showering them
With beauty, happiness, and peace.

Oh, the serenity of nature!
Is not love your very essence?
Sheer, selfless love alone
Seems to be the hidden key

To the tranquility that spreads
Across this enchanting
landscape,
Filling my soul with deep
repose—
A glimpse of Heaven on earth.

In nature's soothing embrace,
Where peace reigns supreme,
I find solace and joy—
A haven of leisure and delight.

27. Strength In The Silence



Sometimes, life feels like a winding road,
Each step more difficult than the last.
I wonder if the light will ever show

The joy I seek or if it's meant to pass—
For others, but not me—it seems so near.
I've lifted others, yet now I stand outclassed.

The voice inside whispers, disappear,
But where would I go, and whom could I trust?
I keep fighting, though my path feels unclear.

Will life always feel this heavy, unjust?
I don't have answers, but I'll hold on tight.
I'll keep moving, though it's hard to adjust.

The joy may come, though not in sight tonight,
Yet I'll persist—I'll rise through darkest skies.
I'll fight and move forward with all my might.

**Mr. Saleem Raza
Jakhar (Amar
Shaw)**
**Teacher, Writer
Khairpur Mir's
Sindh, Pakistan**

28. Spring in India

The air is filled with scents so sweet,
As springtime dances on nimble feet.
Mango blossoms, tender and bright,
Glisten softly in golden light.

Gulal and laughter paint the skies,
As Holi's hues begin to rise.
The cuckoo sings a melody deep,
Waking the earth from winter's sleep.

Fields of mustard, yellow and bold,
Sway like waves in sunshine's gold.
The rivers hum a gentle tune,
Basking in the warmth of noon.

Temple bells in dawn's embrace,
Echo chants of love and grace.
Spring in India, pure and free,
A timeless song in harmony.

From Kashmir's bloom to Kerala's green,
Spring's embrace is fresh and keen.
A time of joy, a time to sing,
India glows in endless Spring.



**Mr. Shashi
Dhar Kumar
IT Consultant &
Author
Gautam Buddha
Nagar
Uttar Pradesh**

29. The Women of Brewster Place

A literary novel that won the 1983 Nobel Prize in Literature, exploring the lives of a group of African American women in the Brewster neighborhood.

Written by TAGHRID BOU MERHI | Lebanon / Brazil

"A man is not judged by the color of his skin, but by the content of his character." – Martin Luther King Jr.

Racism and color discrimination have existed for centuries, becoming particularly pronounced during slavery and its aftermath in both American and global history. During this period, racism and color prejudice were used to justify and perpetuate slavery and racial segregation.

With the rise of social movements and the struggles of Black individuals and human rights advocates, signs of rebellion against societies that ostracized Black people began to emerge toward the end of the 19th century and throughout the 20th century. Anti-racism protests and demonstrations increased, along with calls for equality and an end to racial discrimination in education, employment, housing, and social life.

For example, the Civil Rights Movement in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s led to widespread protests and demonstrations against racial segregation and discrimination. In the modern era, there is increased awareness and activism against racism, as well as the rise of organizations and movements advocating for the end of racial injustice.

The Women of Brewster Place, written by American author Gloria Naylor—who won the 1983 National Book Award (not the Nobel Prize in Literature)—is one of the most significant novels exploring the lives of African American



Ms. Taghrid Bou Merhi



women in the Brewster Place neighborhood. It highlights issues of identity, relationships, and the social struggles these women face. The novel is distinguished by its elegant style and its ability to create vivid and realistic portrayals of characters and situations.

The story deeply explores the experiences of Black individuals, contributing to a greater understanding and appreciation of their challenges and hardships. As a result, the novel serves as an important contribution to shedding light on Black issues and improving public awareness of their experiences and struggles, helping to reshape international perceptions of Black communities.

Themes in The Women of Brewster Place

In *The Women of Brewster Place*, Gloria Naylor presents realistic portrayals of the lives of African American women, highlighting the significant challenges they face due to racial oppression. These challenges include poverty, violence, and lack of opportunities, as well as social and workplace discrimination.

For example, the novel tells the stories of women who struggle to gain recognition for their worth and competence due to their skin color. They face discrimination in various aspects of life, including employment, where they struggle to secure equal opportunities compared to their white counterparts, and in society, where they experience isolation and marginalization.

Furthermore, the novel highlights the psychological and emotional consequences of this discrimination, as African American women live under constant stress and anxiety due to racism and unjust treatment.

Thus, the novel illustrates how racial prejudice leads to exclusion and marginalization, making individuals outcasts in their own communities.

The book's title, *The Women of Brewster Place*, symbolizes the Black women of the Brewster neighborhood and reflects their experiences and struggles within their society and culture. It underscores the importance of understanding their realities and challenges in a world marked by racism and discrimination.

Key Characters in The Women of Brewster Place

Mattie Michael – A strong, kind-hearted woman who becomes a mother figure to many of the women in Brewster Place. She embodies faith and resilience despite life's challenges, offering support and guidance to others in difficult times.

Etta Mae Johnson – A bold and free-spirited woman who seeks love and security but often finds herself disillusioned. She represents the struggle of Black women trying to find stability in a world that frequently denies them dignity.

Kiswana Browne – A young, educated activist from a middle-class background who chooses to live in Brewster Place to fight for racial justice. She struggles to connect with the realities of the women around her while trying to make a difference.

Ciel Turner – A woman who endures immense personal loss and heartache, embodying the pain and resilience of many women in Brewster Place.

Lorraine and Theresa – A lesbian couple who face both racial and sexual discrimination, highlighting the intersectionality of oppression. Lorraine, in particular, experiences a tragic fate that underscores the novel's themes of violence and societal rejection.

Struggles Faced by Black Women in The Women of Brewster Place

The Black women in The Women of Brewster Place endure various struggles, including:

Physical and emotional violence, leading to psychological and physical consequences.

Poverty and economic marginalization, as they live in difficult financial conditions with limited job opportunities.

Discrimination and oppression, resulting in social exclusion and lack of access to education and employment.

Lack of social and communal support, causing feelings of isolation and

helplessness.

In the novel, Naylor focuses on themes of deferred dreams of love, family, marriage, respect, and economic stability. She conveys the recurring message that poverty breeds violence, true friendship transcends gender, and that Black women in urban ghettos bear their burdens with grace and courage.

Fictional Characters Representing Real-Life Struggles

All the characters in *The Women of Brewster Place* are fictional. However, they reflect the real-life experiences and struggles of Black women in society. Their stories represent genuine challenges faced by African American women in urban America.

By creating these fictional characters, Gloria Naylor provides a realistic and profound depiction of Black women's lives, allowing readers to empathize with their experiences. Although the characters are not directly based on real people, they convey the authentic struggles and realities of many Black women in American society.

The Road to Equality and Social Justice

As modern social and cultural movements continue to progress, the push for equality and social justice remains ongoing. Achieving fundamental changes in society requires continuous and multi-dimensional efforts, including:

Legal reforms to protect minority rights.

Educational initiatives to raise awareness.

Cultural transformation to eliminate racial biases.

True equality and the eradication of racial discrimination require a comprehensive shift in both societal and cultural consciousness. This, along with effective legislative measures, can reduce racism and promote fair treatment for all.

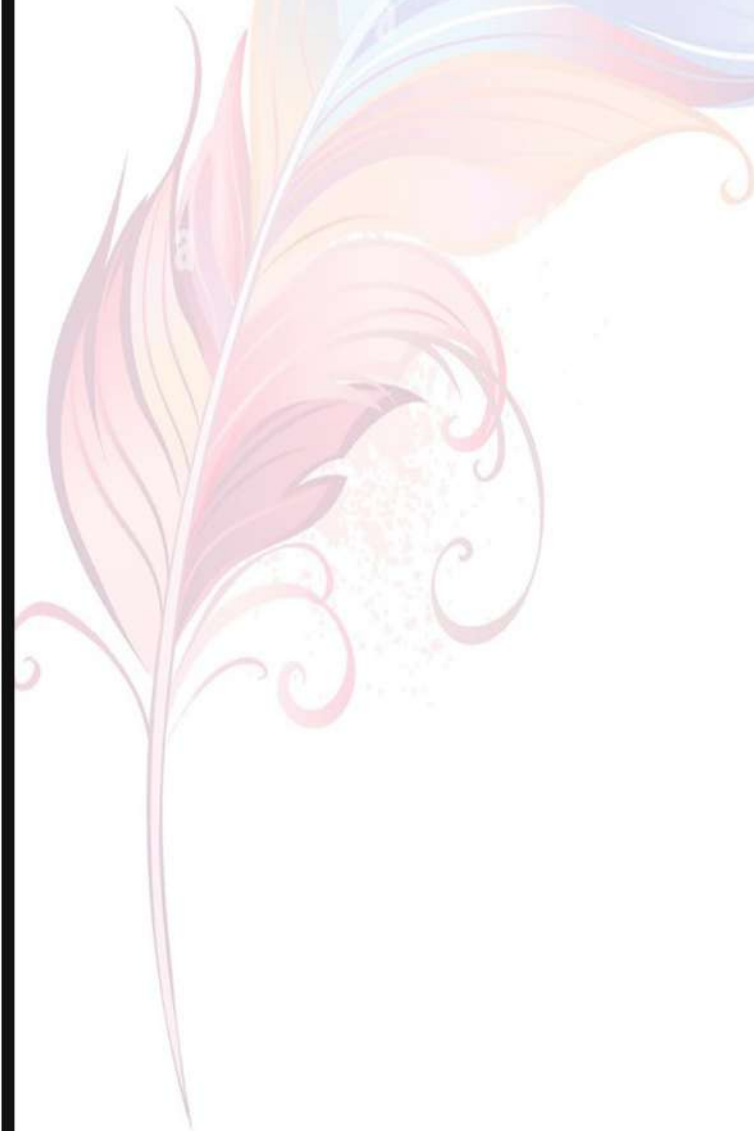
However, achieving this goal takes time, consistent effort, and resilience in overcoming challenges. Nonetheless, by building more inclusive and just societies, significant progress can be made toward equality.

A Message of Hope in The Women of Brewster Place

Gloria Naylor does not offer a definitive solution to the struggles of Black women in Brewster Place. However, she presents their challenges with realism while leaving room for hope. The novel illustrates how these women learn from their experiences and continue to persevere.

Despite their hardships, they exhibit remarkable willpower and determination to overcome obstacles and build better lives for themselves and their families. The story ultimately leaves readers with a sense of hope and faith in the possibility of change, emphasizing resilience in the face of adversity.

By Taghrid Bou Merhi



30. To My Future Love



Mr. Tha Ono
Teacher
Gasparillo
Trinidad & Tobago

Time churns, dreams wind on...
My heart found its echo as yours whispered, "Be mine."
My quirks danced, your laughter the song...
You saw the beauty in the chaos that I am,
Your soul is the place where I truly belong.

Your eyes—twin stars shimmering in my midnight—
Guiding me through the darkness, turning my
shadows into light.
Every awkward moment, every stumble and fall,
You embraced my imperfections and loved me through
it all.

Our hands fit like puzzle pieces, a gentle, perfect clasp,
Weaving our own adventure in love's enchanting grasp.
Through storms and sunshine, in the quiet and the loud,
You stand beside me, steadfast—my heart forever proud.

Here's my vow, my promise, as we journey hand in hand:
I will cherish every quirk and flaw, to love you as we stand.
Together in this life, our two souls meld into one,
I am yours, and you are mine—my love, my forever Valentine.

Every heartbeat echoes a rhythm pure and true,
I thank the stars above for the gift of you.
In your arms, I've found my home, my laughter, and my grace,
Together, we shall write our tale in love's warm embrace.

Let this world keep spinning, let time forever flow,
In your love, I've found my peace, my joy, my endless glow.
Happy Valentine's, my future wife—with all my heart, I call:
Thank you for accepting me, quirks and all.

31. The Shadow Weaver



**Ms. Vaishnavi
Shrivastava
Student
Vaishali
Bihar**

In moonlit halls, where darkness reigns,
A figure sits with silken threads and pains.
With every stitch, a tale unfolds—
Of secrets kept and mysteries told.

The loom creaks softly, a whispered hush,
As shadows dance in the weaving's rush.
The threads entwine, a labyrinthine spell,
That binds the heart and all who dwell.

The weaver's eyes, like stars above,
Shine bright with knowledge and hidden love.
Their fingers move with ghostly grace,
As the fabric grows at a mysterious pace.

Within the tapestry, a story's spun,
Of forgotten dreams and deeds undone.
The threads of time, in intricate design,
Conceal the truth and the weaver's crime.

The night air whispers with an eerie sigh,
As the weaver's art reaches the morning sky.
The shadows fade, the threads release,
And the mystery in the fabric ceases.

Yet in the heart, a thread remains—
A hidden link to the weaver's pains.
And those who seek the truth divine
Must follow the thread to the Shadow Weaver's shrine.

32. Motherland



**Mr. Victor
Nikolaevich
Denisenko
Poet
Bogodukhiv
Ukraine**

The infinite expanse,
The heavens stretched like a tent.
The sun reached its zenith,
Illuminating the distant horizon.
The air seemed to burn,
Brimming with force.
A bird in the sky
Carries the sun on its wings.

Kazakh steppes,
Your horizon vast and endless—
How can I take my eyes off you?
How can I part
And say goodbye without tears?
You are like my mother's house,
A dream I have carried for so long.

Meadows, grasslands,
And the cries of cranes,
Sacred statues standing eternal—
I bow before their faces.
I will forever remember the dew
On the melting fields,
The stories of wise men,
And the wisdom of the aged (Aksakals).

I long to feel the vastness once more,
To embrace the infinite with my gaze,
To see the feather grass swaying,
Whispering sorrow in the steppe.
And no matter where my soul may wander,
I know I will return.

**“Panache”
Aadhya Publishing
House**



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