



PANACHE

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**AADHYA PUBLISHING
HOUSE**

**GUEST OF THE
MONTH**

Director
Sreedhar Reddy
Atakula

Chief Editor
**Aadhy Publishing
House**

**MS. AKANKSHA
SHRIVASTAVA**

**A WORLD CLASS
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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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**Publisher &
Chief Editor**

Akanksha Shrivastava
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Designed by:

Lalit Kishore Gaur
LKG Telefilms
lkgaur76@gmail.com

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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EDITORIAL :

“FROM PASSIONATE STORYTELLER TO ACCLAIMED FILMMAKER: THE JOURNEY OF SREEDHAR REDDY”

In this insightful interview, we delve into the inspiring journey of Sreedhar Reddy Atakula, a filmmaker whose passion and resilience have paved the way for his remarkable success. From his early days of creating stories while walking to his impressive achievements with Anwitha Creations, Sreedhar's story is a testament to the power of perseverance and creativity.

Sreedhar's candid reflections on overcoming personal and professional hurdles offer valuable lessons for aspiring filmmakers. His emphasis on the importance of a strong script, teamwork, and continuous effort underscores the essence of filmmaking. He encourages young creators to trust their unique vision and persistently share their work, confident that passion and dedication will eventually lead to success.

Sreedhar Reddy's journey is not just about making films; it's about creating narratives that resonate deeply with audiences. His advice to make something that emotionally connects with viewers and to never give up is truly inspiring. We at Aadhya Publishing House are thrilled to share his story and hope it motivates many to pursue their creative dreams with unwavering determination.

Thank you, Sreedhar Reddy Atakula, for sharing your journey and insights with us. Your story is a beacon of inspiration for all.

Akanksha Shrivastava
Chief Editor, Aadhya Publishing House

“FROM PASSIONATE STORYTELLER TO ACCLAIMED FILMMAKER: THE JOURNEY OF SREEDHAR REDDY”

1. What inspired you to become a filmmaker?

Answer: From my childhood onwards, I had a habit of walking instead of taking any transport. While walking, I used to create stories myself, in which I was the hero. By creating these stories, I would enjoy myself and eventually reach home. After completing my education, I was working at ICICI Bank's regional office in Hyderabad. While working, I fell in love, but after two years, my relationship ended because her parents did not accept it. After that, I went into a deep emotional depression. To overcome that depression, a friend suggested that I write stories to make films (if we engage with more work, we will forget our past and keep busy). Then, I started working with two assistant directors and one director who was passionate about making films. I began writing stories and producing them. I achieved my first success, and from there, I continued writing stories and producing them to become successful. Eventually, I wanted to become a director too. I sought training from my team and started writing a love story, which led to the film "True Love End" (My aim was to get at least 5 million views on YouTube, as no YouTube film had reached 5 million views in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana until 2019). After its release, I was surprised to see 100 million views for my series. Since then, I have never looked back.

2. What is the secret behind Anwitha Creations' success?

Answer: Anwitha Creations' success is attributed to Lord Durga Mata. I started Anwitha Creations to become a strong person in my life journey. By God's grace, I got a team of five members who are very passionate about making films. All five members are very hard workers. My team is my strength and the key to my successful position.

“FROM PASSIONATE STORYTELLER TO ACCLAIMED FILMMAKER: THE JOURNEY OF SREEDHAR REDDY”

3. What hurdles have you faced in your filmmaking career?

Answer: I have faced many challenges, including:

- Budget and scheduling issues
- Creative differences
- Technical issues
- Legal and ethical matters
- Stress and burnout
- Career development

There were many aspects where I encountered issues.

4. How did you overcome them?

Answer: To overcome these issues, I took one year to create the best team and sought inputs from my team and experienced outsiders. I spoke with production buyers, production controllers, DOPs, costume designers, light men, and line and executive producers. Accordingly, I changed my plans and implemented them to achieve success, manage the cast and crew, and ensure production quality.

5. Who is your favorite filmmaker, apart from you, and why?

Answer: I admire all filmmakers who are passionate and love films. Each filmmaker has a unique knowledge and vision. In my personal opinion, it's important not to follow any filmmaker's ideas or visions blindly. Create your own vision and ideology to become successful and create your own world. Just imagine if your creativity and ideology inspire other filmmakers.

“FROM PASSIONATE STORYTELLER TO ACCLAIMED FILMMAKER: THE JOURNEY OF SREEDHAR REDDY”**6. What is very important to shoot a good film?**

Answer: First, a good script. A good story will tell you many things and change many people's lives. Do thorough groundwork, seek people's help, talk with more people to get ideas, work with a team, get a good producer, create an awesome team passionate about filmmaking, do pre-production work, create a storyboard, hold workshops, get a good DOP, a good technical team, and light men. Especially, as per your story, get artists without compromise. If you do all these, I am sure your film will become a success.

7. What advice do you want to give to the younger generation?

Answer: First and foremost, you need to understand that you don't have to do everything. You just need to know what you want to express on the screen and get help. If you can do it all on your own, great. But if you can't, it shouldn't discourage you.

- A great script is 70% of the movie. Don't start until you're satisfied with the script.

- You don't need high-tech tools and cameras. You don't need professional actors. Everyone can act. You just need to be patient enough to get the right cut.

- Make something that would emotionally resonate with your audience. Keep putting your work on YouTube and don't ever stop. You'll get your break if you're passionate enough.

Thank you,

Sreedhar Reddy Atakula

Film Director

Anwitha Creations

Name . SREEDHAR REDDY ATAKULA

Place. HYDERABAD

Dob. 10-04-1986

Education . MBA (FINANCE)

Achievements:

1. Film maker of True Love Never Ends which received 25 million views in YouTube
2. Got a best singer Appreciation award from ETV saragalu program in 2004 and also got free seat in thyagaraju institute.
3. Received a best film award (True love end) from international film festival awards in 2020.
4. Got a best film award from kalaraju film awards in 2020 for True love end film.
5. While working in icici bank regional office at hyderabad. Got a best employee of the year award in 2012.
6. My dream is to be done a films for silver screen . That was happened in 2024 Jan 26th my film was released in theaters (Before Marriage)

Golden words:

“ HARDWORK WORKS SOME-TIMES, BUT SMART WORK WORKS ALL THE TIME.”

Sreedhar Reddy Atakula

Director:

Sreedhar Reddy Atakula

Anwitha Creation



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1. Mother's Day Special

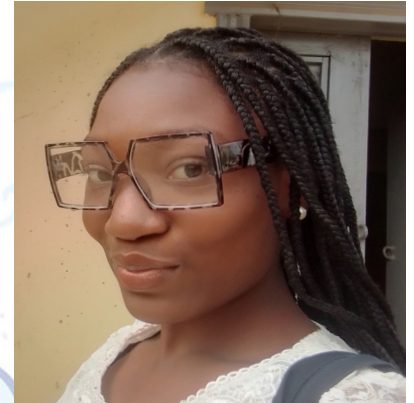
On this Mother's Day, all I want to say is sorry to my mother. I am sorry for putting her in such a position when she stands at the door of my room and watches me pretending to sleep, knowing that I am not. I am sorry for lying to her every time she asks me how I am. I am sorry for taking long baths when I couldn't control my tears, while she was sitting right outside waiting for me. I am sorry for lying to her, saying I was working, when she asks why I didn't turn my room's light off the whole night and slept. I am sorry for staying away from home, pretending that I was sick and unable to travel back, when I simply couldn't go home. I am sorry for pretending that I am sick only because of the weather when my stomach was full of ache and I couldn't eat anything. I am sorry for telling my doctors that I am just tired when I was more tired mentally. I am sorry for the suicide attempts.

I am sorry for lying to you on so many occasions, but I can't share all this burden with you, Mama. You don't deserve to see your daughter failing badly at life. You don't deserve to listen to my traumas at this age. I have spent a whole life surviving all alone. But you, Mama, you would shatter if I told you about one single day. Please understand that I am lying because I love you and I can't see you breaking over my scars.



Ms. Aaliya Batool
Artist
Lahore
Pakistan

2. Stabbed friendship



**Ms. Akindipe
Oluwafunmilola
Student
Ibafo
Nigeria**

Friendship is a shadow.
At first, it seems intimate and close,
But it's literally far.
It keeps its distance in portraying love,
Faithfulness, sincerity, and being real.
What hurts most is being stabbed
In the back by someone you trusted
And believed was not relating to you from a distance.
It's painful, like flesh torn by a thorn.

What's the essence of having a friend?
It's better to be alone
Than to be with a pretentious friend.

What's the benefit of entertaining pain?
It's better to cut off a friendship
That is full of hypocrisy.

What's the essence of giving hurt a chance?
It's better to let go of unwanted friends
That damage your emotions.

In the next world,
I'll choose wisely who I'll call my friend.

3. Our purpose

The gusts of cool, gentle breeze say something to us: that our tired bodies should get some relief. That's why they blow. The current of the gurgling river says, while flowing, that we should not stop in one place. That's why it flows continuously. The birds spread their wings in the sky and say that we are flying and flying. We remain on the earth with a narrow mind; that's why we fly in the sky. The swinging flowers, spreading beauty and fragrances, say, "Why don't you spread fragrances?" That's why we remain fragrant.

All the plants and trees on earth have adopted philanthropy and made it their aim to give even their fruits, flowers, leaves, and stems. But we, the best creatures on earth, are always ready to take. Yet, there are some with generous hearts who sacrifice everything.

The purpose of this life should be such that it becomes useful to others. This should be the nature of everyone. Then this earth will become a heaven to live in.



**Mr. Bal Mukund
Dwivedi
Patna
Bihar**

4. The Return of the Mahatma

(A One -Act Play)

Characters

Gandhi: The Father of the Nation.

Yamraj : Death officer in heaven.

Narad: A saint who moves about in the circle of gods.

Chitrugupta: The Registrar of the Yamaloka.

Ramji Patel: An ashrami who lives in Sabarmati ashram.

Gopalji: Another resident of the ashram.



**Dr. Bhavesh
Chandra Pandey
Teacher
Munger
Bihar**

(Scene1)

(In the Yamaloka the Yamaraja is looking at an application. A man named Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi is standing before him with folded hands. Chitrugupta, the Registrar is standing before him.)

Yamaraj: (Looking at an application)Mr. Gandhi, died on January, 30, 1948, your application states that you want to go back on the earth and live there for some more days so that you can finish the work started by you.

Gandhi: Yes sir.

Yamaraj: You also state that your countrymen love you and respect you very much. You are treated as a Mahatma by your countrymen. You are an ideal for politicians and social workers.

Gandhi: Yes sir.

Yamaraj: But Mr. Gandhi the records of my office tell that you had been murdered by your fellow countrymen. Isn't it correct?

Gandhi: Yes but that is too old a fact to change my intention. After all one man does not make a country. And you know that he was aptly punished for that.

Yamaraj: I know it, I know it. But do you think you will be accepted by your countrymen with warmth? As I see in the records that you had almost as many opponents as supporters towards the end of your life. Even your best supporters had some grievances against you. They called you Bapu, they called you the father of the nation. Nevertheless, they treated you as the greatest obstacle in their way. On the basis of the facts I believe many of them must have been thankful to your assassin.

Gandhi: Sir. let me not hear of those devils facts. I don't say all of them are baseless but my countrymen have repented for that. Now the situation is completely different. I can't describe in words how much people love me. Almost every conscious Indian cites my name. I am regarded as a godly figure. If I go back to my country now I shall be hailed and people will never want to see me come back to the yamaloka.

Yamaraj: I wish it was so. Please be seated and let me consult Mr Chitragupta on the issue. (Turning to Chitragupta) Well Mr Chitragupta what does your record provide in this case?

Chitragupta: Sir, I can see that we have provision for rebirth. But I cannot find any instance of a man going back on the earth in the same form. I can see one man named Satyavan who was taken back to the earth by his wife Savitri. In that case too the man had not entered the yamaloka.

Yamaraj: Thank you Mr. Chitragupta.

Gandhi: Mr Chitragupta, can you not find a way out? I am very much willing to see my country after so many years. I have heard that my country is progressing fast and it is being regarded as a fast flourishing economy in the world. They say that India is shining and it will soon become a developed country. I wish to see where my countrymen have led my dear nation. I shall be really sorry if I'm not allowed to go back on the earth for some days.

Chitragupta: I'm sorry Mr Gandhi. I am able to do nothing in this case. This is not your country where secretaries and registrars can break any law for a trifling gain.

Yamaraj: I would suggest you Mr Gandhi to forget this matter right now. I have never found any man who wished to go back from here leaving all the luxuries that we provide. One thing I must make clear to you that the laws do not provide for your return from here and I cannot allow you to do the same.

Gandhi: Why do you say so? If there is one exception to the rule there will be another too.

Chitragupta: I'm sorry but that is impossible.

Gandhi : Right then I will sit here on dharna and start satyagrah. I will sit here at your door and start a hunger strike?

(Yamaraj looks puzzled as Narad enters)

(Enter Narad)

Narad: Narayan, naraynan! Why Yamaraj Ji what is the matter ? You look so

worried?

Yamaraj: Ah, come Narad Ji. you have come at a very right moment. Now this man called Gandhi from earth is putting undue pressure to allow him to go back there for a few days in order to see the progress of his dear nation against the very rule of our land.

Narad: (Laughing) What is the matter to worry then? Yamaraj Ji when you cannot face a dead man how can you face a living man? The matter is so simple? You just allow him to go on a tour to his land for one month on parole of some sort. You know that he is a man of his words. Once he promises something he will do everything to keep it. (To Gandhi) I think one months time will be sufficient? (Gandhi nods? Narad Ji steps out)

Yamaraj: Mr Gandhi on the advice of Narad you are being allowed to go to the earth for one month. In the mean time Chitragupta will keep account of your activities. I hope you will keep your words as you are known to do.

Gandhi: Sure Sir.

Yamaraj: All right sir. Happy journey!
(Thank you very much sir.)

(Scene 2)

(Gandhi is in a very happy an enthusiastic mood. He is in his typical dress – dhoti, round eye glasses cap and staff. As he flies down he sees his own statues at different places. He is quite happy to see the regard his countrymen are giving to him? When he comes very close to the earth he thinks where he should land? At last he decides to land near the Sabarmati ashram. As he enters the ashram he is seen by an ashrami named Ramji Patel.)

Ramji: Who is this man? He looks very much like Gandhiji. (Calls aloud) Who is that man? Who enters the ashram?

Gandhi: Do you not know me my son? I am Gandhi.

(Ramji runs away crying with fear).

Ghost, ho ghost!

(A fellow stops him).

Gopalji: Why Ramji what is the matter?

Ramji: A ghost. I have seen a ghost. See there he comes. He looks very much like Gandhi and calls himself Gandhi.

Gopalji: Cool down. He must either be a madman or a cheat. Today everyone

who calls himself Gandhi is either a mad man or a man who wishes to cheat others in his name.

(In the mean time Gandhi reaches near him. He addresses him in most kindly words).

Gandhi: Don't fear my son. I am not a ghost. I am the same Gandhi whom you worship and adore. I have come directly from heaven to see my country.

(The two people are now convinced that the identity of Gandhi is authentic. In the meantime all the residents of the ashram surround Gandhi. He makes himself comfortable as he looks around. There is a spinning wheel in the corner, a book self on the left side, a TV just in front of him and a computer set visible in the next room. Some newspapers are spread near him).

Ramji: Bapu when you were dead, the whole country was stunned Nehru Ji declared your demise in the saddest tone. Soon people started recognising the importance of your philosophy. You died but your philosophy grew by leaps and bounds. Gandhianism became a cult overnight.

Gandhi: Was it so?

Gopalji: Yes Bapu even your greatest opponents spoke of you in admiration.

Gandhi: Really? I am very pleased to know it.

Ramji: Do you know Bapu, Gandhian philosophy has become a subject to be taught in some of the universities. Moreover every politician in India today quotes your principles in some way or the other. Your photograph has become almost a necessity of every office and the drawing room of every conscious person in India.

Gandhi: That's really great. It is good that my sacrifice was not allowed to go waste. I hope most of my principles have found room in the policies of the country. I feel relieved that after my death I was not forgotten.

Gopalji: Bapu you can't believe India has progressed so much after your death.

Gandhi: Really? But what about Bharat? Has it also progressed in the same manner?

Gopalji: Bharat is India and India is Bharat.

This must be known to you I suppose?

Gandhi: Is it so? I think they are always two different entities and everybody must understand it. I wanted the progress of Bharat and I suppose it has also progressed.

Ramji: I wonder how the two things differ. Even our constitution states India

that is Bharat.

(Gandhi does not seem convinced.)

Gandhi: Well leave it and tell me something about the state of our economy.

Gopalji: Bapu you have asked a very good question. Today our country is progressing by leaps and bounds. Due to the policies of liberalization, privatization and globalization it has progressed a lot. Our markets have been opened for the multinational companies. We are a member of the World Trade Organisation. We are no longer isolated in the world. The government is selling all its companies and private companies are investing in all sectors.

Gandhi: It means that the government does not want to produce anything and everything will be left on the mercy of private people? What will the government do if these people take hold of the entire market? How will it check the prices? As a Gandhian do you approve of this policy?

Ramji: What else can we do? Do you know Bapu that all political parties approve of this policy. On this issue the left and the right are in agreement. So long as the country is progressing who can object to this policy?

Gandhi: Hey Ram!

(An ashrami enters with a plate and puts it before Gandhi. He takes something in his mouth and finds the salt a little too less. He jokingly comments.)

Gandhi: The salt is a little too less. Is it too costly to satisfy me who fought to make it tax free?

Gopalji: Sorry Bapu it must be due to some preparation mistake otherwise even the iodized salt made by Tata company is not that costly.

Gandhi: Well did you say that even salt is marketed by Tata company?

Ramji: Yes Bapu, they produce good quality iodized salt and that too on a reasonable rate and for that matter almost all essential things like seed, medicines, and even bottled water are being produced by multinational companies. They don't compromise on quality and earn just a little more profit. I think we shouldn't mind to pay a little more for quality products?

Gandhi: Have you ever thought what will happen to small scale and cottage industries if the multinational companies produce such items? Have you never protested against such policies?

Gopalji: Why should we protest? And what is there to protest?

Gandhi: (Looks at him with surprise) I wonder how you claim to be a Gandhian if you don't understand this simple thing?

(Gopalji feels offended he does not like the way Gandhi questions his merit as a Gandhian.)

Ramji: Actually Bapu, things have changed a lot since you have left this country. Today nobody bothers to protest against such things except perhaps in academic discussions that are merely pastimes of the intellectuals. Perhaps you won't believe but these things are often treated as symptoms of backwardness. Nowadays nobody has time for such things. Everybody is patting at his own back. The stock market is touching new heights, the economy is growing by leaps and bounds. What else does anyone expect from a government? I think you also wanted the growth of this nation didn't you?

Gandhi: Yes I wanted growth but I didn't want the growth of a handful. I wanted all round growth and development of the last man in the social ladder. I wanted India and Bharat to be the same. You feel offended but I didn't expect you to surrender before these forces. I sincerely believe that the cause of swaraj has been defeated to a great extent.

Gopalji: We are doing our best possible. You really cannot understand our problem. We are isolated today. Nobody bothers to listen to us anymore.

Gandhi: All right, please leave me alone. I want some rest.

(Scene 3)

(Gandhi is sitting in his room working on a spinning wheel. His arrival on the earth was made public. People from all corners of the country flocked to him. He also made journey to different parts of the country. Everywhere he was given a rousing welcome. He addressed to the people and talked to them his further plans regarding the fulfilment of his dream projects of swaraj. In the beginning people listen to him with rapt attention. But soon the euphoria subsided. The number of his visitors became less and less. Very soon he began to feel neglected. Even the people of his ashram were not too serious about his instructions. One day Gandhi calls Ramji as he finds him working on his computer.)

Gandhi Ramji

Ramji: Yes Bapu.

Gandhi: Did I disturb you?

Ramji: No Bapu not at all.

Gandhi: Actually I was feeling lonely. I wanted to talk to you.

Ramji: Why do you look so sad Bapu? I can see some stress on your face.

Gandhi I am not very happy either.(Breathes deeply). I can see that I am

a foreigner in my own country. Nobody seems to listen to me very seriously anymore. I feel people are not much enthusiastic about my stay here.

Ramji: But you were welcomed everywhere. People were very overjoyed to see you back after such a long time once again. Thousands of people come to meet you everyday. I can't see why you should feel so neglected. After all we are so much obliged to you. How can we neglect you?

Gandhi: I am thankful to the countrymen for the warm welcome given to me. At least they considered me worthy of that. But when it comes to the implementation of my ideas and my suggestions regarding changes in the present system, the reaction is quite disheartening. Here I feel isolated. Not too many people come to support my ideas. When I proposed to start a satyagrah against the present state of affairs they said it was foolish to do such things now. People will give long lectures on the merits of Gandhian principles but no one would sacrifice a day's rest. All of them have become luxury loving. When I told them that I was going to stay here and was to start a struggle against new colonialism they didn't seem to be convinced and the colour of their faces changed.

Ramji: Bapu, things have really changed since your days. The country has got freedom and that is enough. Nobody bothers to think about these matters now.

Gandhi: My son I feel shocked to see such changes. I have learned that some of our leaders are criminals and corrupt. I didn't know things have changed to that limit. Everything looks painted in the colour of caste and religion. Will you believe that when I was delivering a lecture on communal harmony I over heard someone call me pro Muslim. The sky was not that dark even in my days of communal tensions. During my visit to the villages I was very sad to see that the gap between the rich and the poor has increased very much. Machines have replaced human labour causing mass unemployment. The rich have become richer, the poor have been neglected. The government has become of the capitalists, for the capitalists and by the capitalists. Lord Ram and Krishna are dragged into dirty politics. I can see Englishmen sitting in the garb of Indians in the system playing the dirty game of divide and rule. Brutal exploitation of nature is being made in the name of development. But nobody seems to care. Everyone has become polarised, nobody is ready to see the truth. When I encourage people to fight against these problems they simply disobey me. There is a general atmosphere of helplessness. No one believes me when I say that things can change. In my times people failed but they were not so helpless.

(Scene 4)

(Gandhi stays on the earth for some more time. He is more disillusioned. He tries to take up the task of setting things right but he is very much isolated and even frustrated. He is found to be inconvenient. He feels like a father who is neglected in his own house. People ignore him and often disobey him. One day Ramji and Gopalji are talking in the ashram. Gandhi overhears).

Ramji : By the way Gopalji don't you find Bapu's ways eccentric. I can't understand many things that he says. Many of his ideas have lost their relevance now. Why does he not try to understand that the circumstances are very different from those in his own days. Frankly speaking I feel offended by his treatment sometimes.

Gopalji: But he is not different from what he was known to us. Is he not the same disciplinarian man whom we worshipped and adored. Did we not praise his commitment to truth and his fighting attitude. Now he is unbearable to us for all those things.

Ramji: But why does he behave with us as if we were innocent children. After all we also know much of Gandhian principles. I can recite the main principles of Gandhi in his own words. I have got with me the complete works of Gandhi.

Gopalji : Why my dear friend, fed up so soon. A dead Gandhi is a God but living Gandhi is an enemy. Are these statues and pictures and floral tributes on the Rajghat merely a show. Thanks to Nathu that Bapu was killed. Otherwise he might have lived to see mere humiliation and shameless show of ingratitude and mockery of his principles or sheer ignorance and neglect by his own people. I wish Bapu does not decide to continue. He is feeling fed up. I have heard that he has recently seen a temple of Nathuram Godse. He has been restless since then. I am afraid he will leave us. We are not fit to have a Gandhi even today.

(Just then an ashrami enters. He is looking for Gandhi. Everybody looks for him. He is not found.

Suddenly, somebody picks up a piece of paper. He reads)

“Goodbye dear countrymen. Goodbye mother India. I wish I had lived here longer. But I am leaving before schedule. I have realised that the time has changed. I have become irrelevant and intolerable. I am pained to see where my motherland is leading”.

Ramji: Look, the Mahatma has returned. He will not bother us anymore. We could not accept him once again.

(Scene 5)

(In yamalok Yamaraj, Chitrgupta and Narad are sitting. Gandhi enters and takes his seat. His head is down.)

Yamraj: Welcome Mr. Gandhi and thanks a lot for coming back in time. You have rightly kept your words.

Chitragupta: Sir, he has come a day earlier.

Yamaraj: That hardly matters. I am relieved that he has kept his words, otherwise I would not have been able to answer my higher authorities (Turning to Gandhi) Now Mr Gandhi please tell me about your experiences on the earth.

Gandhi : Well I got mixed experiences.

Yamaraj: But you were very enthusiastic about your return there. You had decided to do a satyagrah and as far as I remember you had told me that the people of your country would never allow you to come back. So, how did you return one day earlier?

Narad: Oh yes. You had told that your countrymen loved you very much.

Gandhi: They still love me very much. But they love a dumb Gandhi. They love me but don't want to follow my principles.

Narad: You are very innocent Mr. Gandhi. You couldn't learn that human beings love only dead persons and old things. Don't you see that they have made stone statues of gods. They have killed their saviours time and again. But once they kill them they start worshipping them. Do you think they will worship them if they come back. I am afraid if you had not come back they might have killed you once again. You freed the country and your work was over. Now don't expect the people to follow you. When they will be in yet another crisis they will need another saviour and once his work is done, they will kick him too. This is how the world goes. Even lord Vishnu took different forms at different time when he went to the earth as avatars.

Gandhi: Very true sir. I have realised the truth. I have come to know that my motherland does not need me any more.

By Bhavesh Chandra Pandey

5. Sant Surdas and Sur-Sagar

Sant Surdas was born in Sihi village on Vaishakh Shukla Panchmi Vikram samvat 1535(1478 A. D.). Sihi village is situated near Faridabad in Haryana. King Parikshit performed Surp Yajna at this very place. There is a saying that Sant Surdas was blind since birth. Some scholars believe that he became blind afterwards. He left his home when he was seven years old. He lived near the bank of Yamuna river in the village Runakta. He met Vallabhacharya ji in Vikram samvat 1567(1510 A.D.) and became a devotee of the Pushti Marg. Vallabhacharya inspired Sant Surdas to write poetry depicting Bal Lilas of Lord Krishna.

Kahe ko ghighiyati hvai,
Kachhu hari lila bakhan karai.

There are eight famous Ashta Chhapa poets named Kumbhandas, Parmanand, Krishandas, Surdas, Nanddas, Chaturbhuj das, Chhit Svami and Govind Svami, these all wrote beautiful poetry in the praise of Shri Krishna.

Surdas is known for his best devotional poetry and songs, which are dedicated to Lord Krishna. One of his most famous works is Sur-Sagar, which is a collection of about 5000 songs that describe the life of Lord Krishna. The book is divided into different parts, each focusing on a different aspect of Krishna's life.

The Sur-Sagar is a masterpiece of Sant Surdas. This is the oceanic work as its name shows. This poem is written in Braj Bhasha and focuses on the description of Krishna while in Gokul and Vraj in his childhood. The conversation between Uddhav and Gopies is very famous as Bhramar Geet. Devotion and love for Krishna is more important for Gopies than knowledge of Brahman. Some famous songs are sung by the devotees with full devotion and enthusiasm.

Prabhu ji more avgun chit na dharo.
Maiya Mori main nahi makhan khayo.



**Dr. Chitranjan
Dayal Singh
Kaushal
Director of Sanskrit
cell, Haryana
Sahitya Evam
Sanskriti Akademi,
Panchkula
Haryana**

Nath anathan ki sudh lije.
Dinanath ab bari tumhari.
Udho jog sikhavan aye.
Udho man na bhaye das bis.

In Hindu mythology, the gopis were the cowherd girls who were deeply in love with Krishna.

One of the most famous gopis was Radha. Her love for Krishna was so pure and intense that it is said to have surpassed even his love for her. The bond between Radha and Krishna is often seen as the epitome of divine love.

In Surdas' poem, Sur-sagar, he describes the gopis' love for Krishna as a flame that cannot be extinguished. Even when Krishna left them to tend to his duties, their love for him never wavered.

In one of the most touching moments in the Mahabharata, Krishna has a conversation with his friend Uddhav about the gopis' love. Uddhav asks Krishna how he can bear to leave behind such devoted lovers, and Krishna responds that he can never forget their love and devotion.

The gopis' love for Krishna shows the power of unconditional love. They loved him not for his status or wealth, but simply because of who he was as a person. Their devotion reminds us that true love transcends all boundaries and can withstand any obstacle.

The beautiful love story between the gopis and Lord Krishna teaches the way of living. This reminds us that true love is eternal and can never be broken.

Surdas' devotion to Lord Krishna is evident in his poetry, which is filled with love and admiration for the deity. He believed that through devotion and love, one could attain salvation and be free from the cycle of birth and death.

Despite being blind, Surdas' poetry has touched the hearts of millions of people

over the years. His words have inspired many to follow the path of devotion and love towards God. Sant Surdas was a very great person and once met Sant Tulsidas in Vikram samvat 1616(1559 A.D.) at Chitrakuta. Tulsidas was very happy to see that Surdas wrote one full chapter on Lord Ram in sursagar. Sant Tulsidas also wrote Gitavali full of devotion to Shri Krishna.

In the later part of his life, Sant Surdas came to Parsoli from Runakata village and worshiped at Nathji temple as main pujari. He went to his heavenly abode on Vikram samvat 1642(1585 A.D.).

In conclusion, Sant Surdas and Sur-sagar are an integral part of Indian culture and heritage. The teachings of Sant Surdas inspire people to remember lord Krishna and perform duties selflessly. Every line of his devotional poetry reminds us of the importance of love and faith in our lives.

By Chitranjan Dayal Singh Kaushal

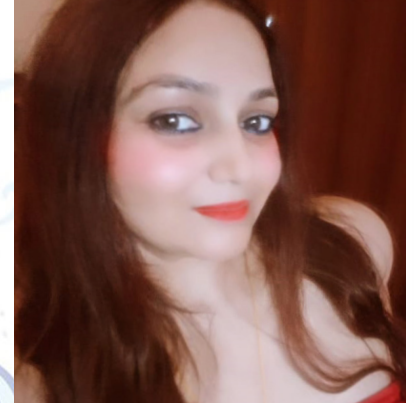
6. A great man

He is a man of ethics.
He works day and night.
He never falls sick.
His schedule is always tight.
He follows the principle that 'work is worship.'
His vision is always clear.
His speeches are free of gossip.
Dedicated to his country forever.
His visionary thoughts were well recognized.
A good friend of humanity, widely loved and liked.
A saint with an intelligent mind.
He searches for opportunities, even in difficulties.
India is proud of such a great yogi,
who is on top and popular in the world.
There is no other; he is only Narendra Modi.



**Mr. Dhan Singh
Dhanendra
Moradabad
Uttar Pradesh**

7. You and me

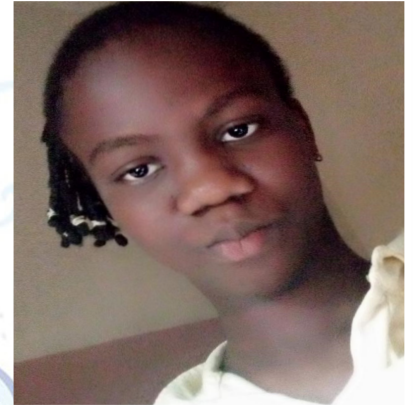


Ms. Donika Sharma
HR
Noida

What a delight that I met you swiftly in my lifespan. And you allow me to rest in your heart persistently. The moment you entered my life, I realized that I met a celestial being who can hold me closely and will never let me be terrified, even in the darkest times due to the changing conditions of the universe. I must celebrate this striking and never-ending creation for giving me a chance to smile again at my beautiful destiny. I feel so special when you give me your precious time and you look at me as if I am your entire world. This feeling is so unique and it takes me to a magical place, which will never end. Sometimes I am afraid because happiness often comes with challenges, and challenges can prove to be obstacles in the path of joy. But I know you would not let me down deep in my feelings when it comes to 'You and Me'.

8. Dear Country! Where is your wrapper?

Drama



**Ms. Eke Joy
Adannaya
Student
Nigeria**

Act One

Scene One

[The curtain opens on Mr. Osho, an engineer, and Mr. Wekulom, an honest politician. The two men, accompanied by Mr. Wekulom's bodyguards, sit in a beer parlor discussing.]

Mr. Osho: Mr. Wekulom, my friend, it has been a very long time since we had the time to sit and discuss on a day like this.

Mr. Wekulom: You are right, my friend. How is your wife, Juliana, and your daughter, Josephine?

Mr. Osho: They are fine. How about your wife and your kids?

Mr. Wekulom: We are fine, but we are not fine...

Mr. Osho: [shocked] Really? What's wrong?

Mr. Wekulom: Hmm... [thinks] My friend, I don't know where to begin. As you know, politics in Nigeria is very dirty, and I happen to be tempted to join the dirty work.

Mr. Osho: Is that all? What dirty work are you referring to?

Mr. Wekulom: Some of my colleagues are getting involved in the embezzlement of public funds, and they are reaping the benefits. I wonder when my time will come.

Mr. Osho: Oh, my friend! Trying to be an honest politician, doesn't that contradict? Honesty doesn't pay your bills; money does. How could you be sitting on the throne of politics and still be trying to be honest? Do you even need to think about it? Feel free to join them.

Mr. Wekulom: But wouldn't that be bad? Wouldn't it add to my country's problems? Isn't it a social vice? Wouldn't it make my country look naked in the eyes of the whites?

Mr. Osho: [thinks for a while and then laughs] Oh, my friend, if my country is naked, then she should put on clothes or at least tie a wrapper.

Mr. Wekulom: But where is the wrapper? Where is the wrapper that symbolizes

the goodness and creativeness of my country? Where are the good people who are ready to use their good deeds to cover the bad deeds that make Nigeria look naked and bare?

Mr. Osho: [suddenly gets angry] My friend, go and try to be an honest politician somewhere else. I am busy; I have something to do other than sit here and listen to something about covering. Goodbye. [He stands up and leaves.]

Mr. Wekulom: [shakes his head] Oh, my country, when will your good deeds cover your bad deeds? When will you put on the garment of goodness and purity? Where is the garment? Oh, goodness... [He stands up and leaves.]

(Curtain closes)

Act One

Scene Two

[The curtain opens on Mr. Osho, thinking about the discussion he had with Mr. Wekulom and the words he heard from him. He thinks and ponders on the question "Nigeria, where is your garment"?)

Mr. Osho: [feeling a little bit sad] Where did I go wrong? Where did Nigerians go wrong? When did Nigerians start using their own hands to remove the garment of their nation? Nigeria, where is your covering? Where are the deeds that are ready to cover all our bad deeds so we won't look bare in the eyes of the public? Nigeria, where is your garment? Where is your wrapper? Your wrapper of purity and love.

By Eke Joy Adannaya

9. FOREVER CHOSEN

In This Beautiful Story Of Us,
Know That Every Day,
I Choose You Without Hesitation.
You've Never Been Second-Best,
Always The First And Only Choice For Me.

I May Not Be The Prettiest
Or The Smartest,
But I Hope You See
The Depth Of My Love For You.

Sometimes My Insecurities Creep In,
Making Me Wonder,
If Someone Else could make you happier,
Making Me Fear Losing You
To Someone Else,

But Deep Down, I Believe
In The Strength Of Our Bond,
I Know Our Connection Is Special And Irreplaceable.

You Make Me Feel Like
The Luckiest & Incredibly Fortunate,
And For That, I'm Endlessly Thankful...
"JANAAAN"



**Ms. Esha Fatima
(MindScribe)
Student, Writer
Sargodha
Pakistan**

10. Reciprocal



Ms. Gargi Saha
Teacher
Varanasi
Uttar Pradesh

Today's good acts
Will return to you invisibly.
Today's harsh words
Will bounce back someday.
Think before you act,
Everything returns
Today or tomorrow.
It is never too late.
As you sow, so shall you reap.
Luck may shine anytime.
Good, better, best—
Never take rest
Until good becomes better,
And better becomes best.
But always do good
Whenever you can,
Wherever you can.

11. Emotions

Emotions always lie in the heart.
The heart has bad relations with the brain.

The brain controls the "power of wisdom".
Wisdom enriches our knowledge.

Knowledge gives us power.
Power increases pride.

Pride is our worst enemy.
Enmity creates malice.

Malice increases personal grudges.
Grudges catalyze revenge.

Revenge creates anger.
Anger mars the conscious mind.



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

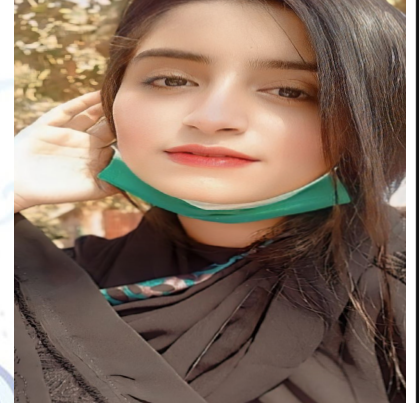
12. WHERE HAVE THEY GONE?



**Ms. Gowri
Ramachandran
Retd Educator,
Author
Chennai**

I sat in my cocoon,
Shedding tearless tears...
I wondered why they never streamed now,
As they were wont to do before.
I sought them desperately,
To wash away my despondency.
Had they dried up?
There were copious flows,
On flimsiest occasions earlier,
Streaming down my cheeks.
Sorrow sat heavy in my chest,
My heart overflowed with grief.
Where had my tears gone?
"She is strong," they said.
"She is insensitive," they said.
My soul alone knows
The battles fought and won,
And yet my tears,
A woman's powerful weapon,
Never seemed to appear
At this most wanted time.
I wish it did,
Like it has before,
Cascading down, flooding,
To drown my sorrows away.

13. For a long time, I've been yearning to talk to a friend



Ms. Husna Abbasi
Writer
Pakistan

For a long time, I've been yearning to talk to a friend
With whom I used to share my thoughts every day, but
now, it's been a while.

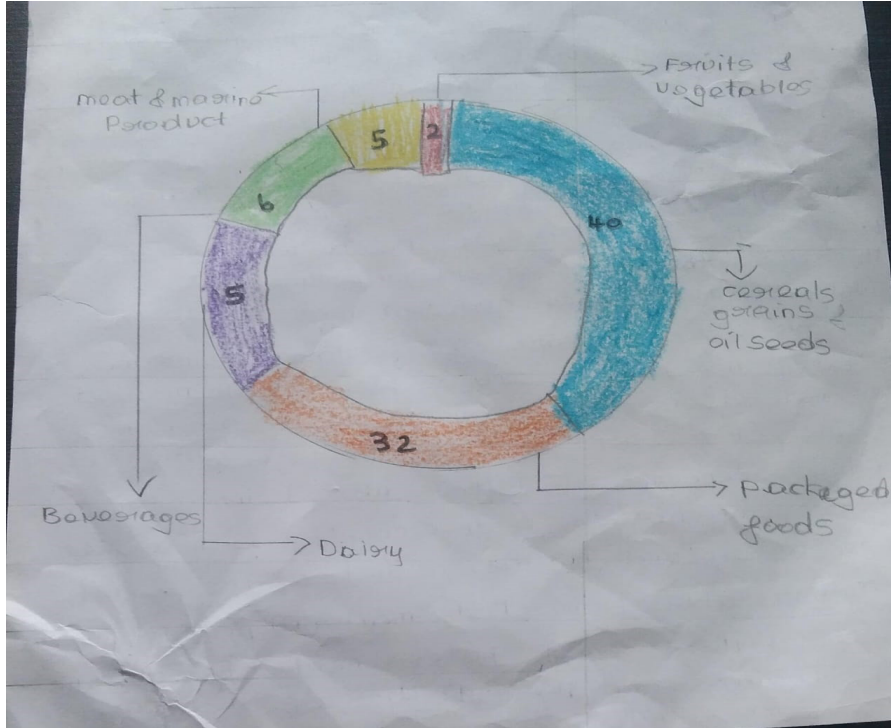
There are things I need to ask and words I want to say,
But the exhaustion and weariness of the day leave me
drained, and I delay.

In the stillness of the night, I find some solace and peace,
My heart longs to revisit the past, to relive the memories
we used to cease.

Among the people, I search for a glimpse of what we had found,
But now, I can only write and hope that you understand.

The weight of my thoughts often makes me surrender to sleep,
And I crave true comfort, a solace that only a friend like you can keep.

14. Time of Independence in 1947



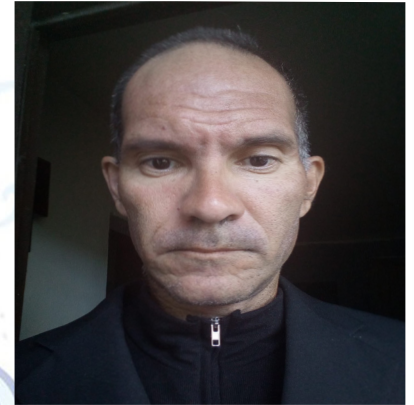
**Mr. J Jack Jevin
Lisandro
Tambaram**

Time of Independence in 1947. From a ship to mouth businesses and investors, providing an opportunity to showcase, connect, and collaborate; and explore the enormous business opportunities in India's rapidly existence, India has emerged as a food basket for the growing food processing and food retail sectors. INDIA world. Today, India is the largest country in terms of FOOD 2024, a gateway to Indian Food Economy, will be production, processing, supply, and consumption. the largest gathering of food industry experts, investors, India's food market is ranked 6th in the world, with 70% producers, food processors, retailers, policy makers, of sales and 5th in production, consumption, and export. experts and business organizations who will share their India is today the largest producer of F&V, milk, sugar, prized insights on available technologies, trade and pulses, spices, oilseeds etc. During the last two business models and modern innovations in global food decades, the food consumption pattern has ecosystem. Additionally, this insightful global significantly changed and that had led to the growth of a knowledge and trade event will encompass industrygigantic size food processing industry. Today the size of oriented topics, opportunities for start-ups and Indian food retail market is valued over \$800 billion with international participation. Indian Food industry and a growth rate of 11% AGCR. With the rapid growth

of the businesses, institutions, Central Ministries and the Indian economy, a shift is also being seen in the State Governments will have the opportunities to consumption pattern of the country, from cereals to showcase their products and technologies, programs more varied and nutritious diet of fruits and vegetables, and services, potential and achievements before milk, fish, meat and poultry products. All these efforts targeted national and global stakeholders, and thereby have considerably enhanced the status of the Food explore possibilities of investments, technical Processing Industries. The Indian food processing cooperation, trade, business, marketing and industry accounts for 32 per cent of the country's total partnerships opportunities. Enveloping the entire food market, one of the largest industries in India. It spectrum from production to consumption, INDIA FOOD contributes around 14 per cent of manufacturing Gross 2024 aims at creating a superior sourcing environment, Domestic Product (GDP), 13 per cent of India's exports thereby enabling higher returns for farmers, creating and six per cent of total industrial investment, employment, promoting entrepreneurship and ensuring Healthy Food for all Indian Chamber of Food and Agriculture (ICFA) with the support of the Government of India and several States ICFA invites you to avail this wonderful opportunity to and in technical collaborations with a large number of take a proactive part as a zealous exhibitor or sponsor industry associations and international bodies, is fully during the forthcoming exciting event, INDIA FOOD 2024, geared up to floor INDIA FOOD 2024, to expedite and showcase the products, technologies, programs partnerships between Indian and International and services to a colossal target audience on a single, vibrant and colossal platform for two consecutive days.

By J Jack Jevin

15. Jailed in my mind



Dr. Jose Luis Lopez
Puerto Rico

Paranoid!

Schizophrenic!

Autistic!

Looking inside, what's wrong with me?

Why do people get so sickened by me?

Am I a filthy monster or dangerous gore?

I don't know what I could be now. All I feel is that I'm trapped in my own mind.

I can't behave like the other children around me. They make jokes about how I look. Sometimes I don't want to wake up and repeat the same thing the next day.

Why are my parents overprotective of me? Why is the school avoiding me? They always have a negative attitude towards me. Have I done something dangerous to the world? I feel boxed into a civilization I don't fit into. People who say they love me feel discomfort in my presence. What can I possibly think of myself? This atmosphere is contaminated by disputes, violence, and unexplained wars.

I wish I could ever change my mind, but how? How will I ever change friends when they have endless fights with everyone? They won't stop the episodes, and the victims live with them. Even children have to bear unnecessary punishment. Anyone would want to become a bird and fly high to find a peaceful place to feel good and secure.

Jailed in my mind!

Timeless nightmares about uncertain truths about themselves and whoever we might ever be.

16. TOGETHER AGAIN

Spirits came
In waves like the water flow,
Then ravished every moment to the trash.

I died and died and died
Like the engine of a car,
And was left alone in the dark.

To you, there was no peace;
Just flares of nightmare and hope,
Who was to come to join us again...

God, Allah, is light
That shines on every night.

I speak the truth,
"I once was lost," Hillsong sang,
In the garden of the untrust ___ 'EARTH'...

You take my hand again
And drag me out of pain.

I now see you as a clean friend
Whose love never dies
No matter the circumstances.

I love you, Holy Spirit.



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

17. PERFECTLY IMPERFECT!



**Ms. Lucy Victoria
David
Writer , poet
Durban
South Africa**

The scenes unfold before me as I watch happy families picnicking on a beautiful spring day. Their togetherness is like strong adhesive, chatting, laughing, and playing together.

I have no family, nor this enviable happiness. It all seems so perfect, but I've learned to be content just being perfectly imperfect!

A sprightly dog with a twig in its mouth plays with his little master. The twins play with their dolls under their mother's watchful eye. Father reads the newspaper while mother fixes lunch.

They have it so perfectly together. I swallow hard, feeling alienated and alone. But that's quite alright, you see; I've learned to be content just being perfectly imperfect!

Life is not the same for any two people. Some have it happy, and some have it sad. Life itself continues her movement like the ebb and flow of the ever-constant tide.

I realize I'm flawed, but I rise each day, striving, doing the best I can. I know I do not have it all. God's help and guidance help me navigate my way through the maze of this life's journey.

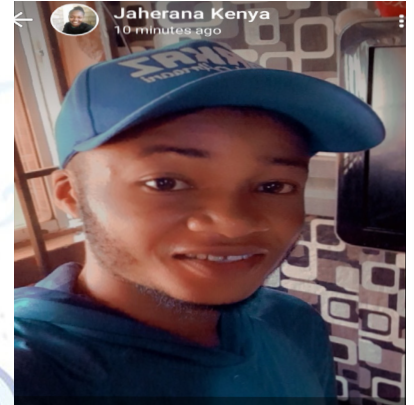
Once again, I search deep within my soul and realize I've learned to be content, for I am perfectly imperfect!

18. Àjò ní mówà

The white machine roars
And prostrates before the road.
Fear grips his soul
Like a man meeting his Lord.

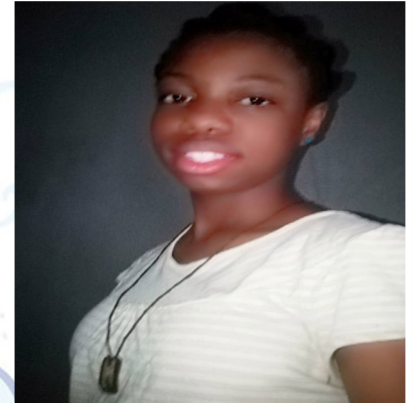
Why should the world be ignorant
In counting his tears of sorrow?
Why should the world be prodigal
In spending his life lavishly?

Let a smile befit a traveler
To reach home safely.
"Àjò ní mówà," he says
With his beautiful tears.



**Mr. Major Sir
Adesoga Jubril
Asiwaju
Writer and
Educator
Ogun
Nigeria**

19. DEAR COUNTRY, WHERE IS YOUR WRAPPER?



Ms. Maria Faustina
Student
Nigeria

In a country full of resources,
In a country filled with gifts, we, as a country,
are gifted with a lot of resources.

But, we don't take good care of it.
Instead, we leave it for others
to use and have.

Dear country, where is your wrapper?
Cover up your nakedness and stand firm;
two heads are better than one.

My country, my fatherland,
Cover up your nakedness
and make use of
the gifts which you have.

20. Crownless Queens

In this world so bright,
don't you know how I write?
It's difficult for me to pick up the pen,
to write about working women.

Let's begin with how they live,
simply happy with what life gives,
below poverty, beyond purity;
playing tough for life's security.

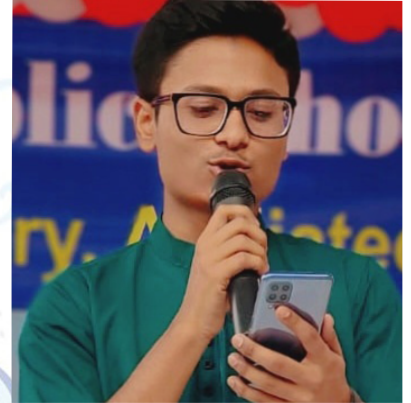
For them,
rain brings pains,
destroys shelters and grains.

Despite hunger and thirst, prioritizing their work at first,
empty pockets with torn clothes,
hardly a dish without broth.

New morn with new zeal,
barefoot in search of a meal,
a meal of peace and love,
that nourishes their little glove.

Bangles of hand replaced with tools,
destroyed huts and living as fools,
carrying weight with their child;
to get rid of grief and make it mild.

Profusely sweating in the heat of the sun,
greedy around like a targeted gun,
Beating mercilessly
Ignoring the child,
like an animal gone wild!

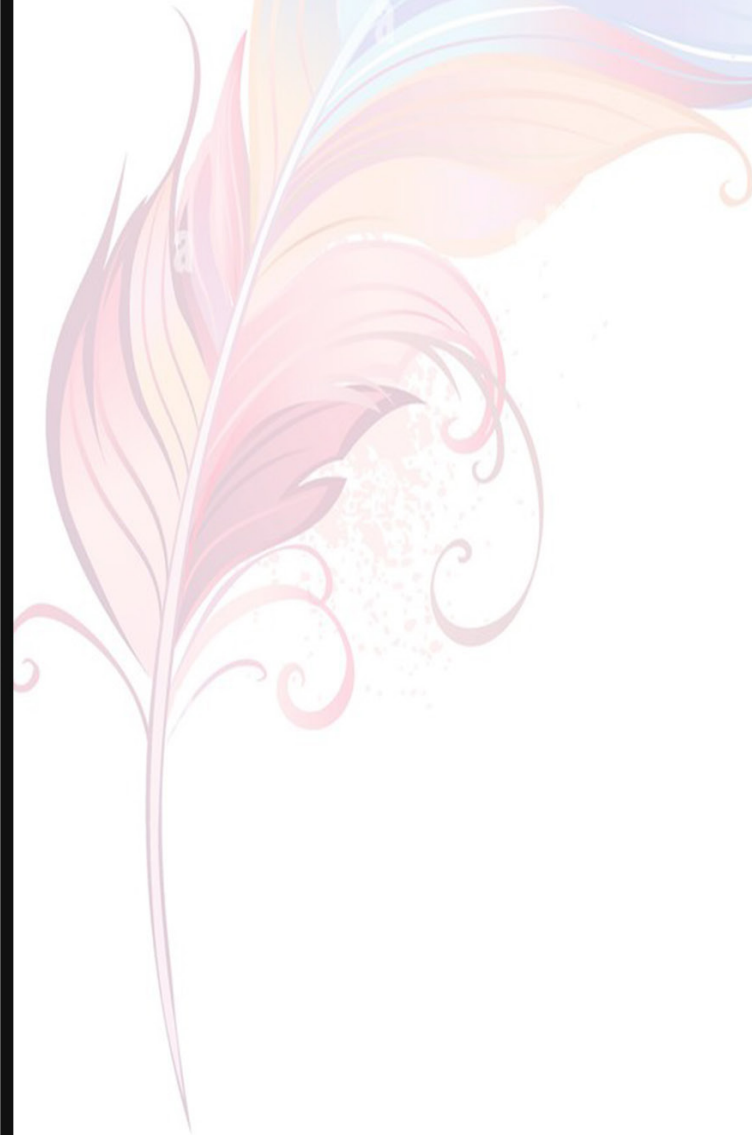


**Mr. Mohammad
Sahil Zaidi
Student and Poet
Amroha
Uttar Pradesh**

The child frightens in the lap of mom,
asking God what went wrong?
Mom, as a God, tells a story,
shows love, tells God's theory.

It's my pen that is confused;
writing for those who have been abused,
numb fingers still writing,
for brave warriors who are fighting.

By Mohammad Sahil Zaidi



21. Shadows in Misty Weather



**Mr. Nhamo
Muchagumisa
Teacher
Mutare
Zimbabwe**

Losses are part of the walk of life. People who claim never to have lost anything never possessed anything of value at all. But some losses make everything that remains of no significant value. Such losses even make every new gain meaningless, even a job with a good salary.

Samson Gwiri sat in his ninth-floor office, viewing the city below through the mist of shattered prospects. Yes, everything was bright to the physical eye: the dualized roads, the parking lots, vehicles of all sizes, pedestrians from all walks of life, the traffic lights; the list is endless. But Samson's inner eye saw a life that had been stripped of everything that made life meaningful. Anything of value that would bring positive change to his life seemed to be vacuums away!

The tragedy of being framed had been a blessing in disguise to him. At least there was a positive outcome to the vituperation of his male status by a woman who had genuinely found a friend in him, only to turn the court against him when her husband caught them exchanging the most unclean favors, if moral considerations were anything to go by.

But could Samson totally blame Mrs. Majanisa? Wasn't her reaction only impulsive when she shouted "rape"? Could it not be Majanisa who took up his wife's cry and converted it into action with grievous consequences on Samson, and later on himself?

Now, the publicity his rape story had gained had resulted in this International Human Rights organization giving him a job. Had he not risen from mere garden boy to Director of Operations, Manicaland Province? Since he had majored in agricultural engineering, were not his outreach programs focused on workers in farming areas around the whole of Manicaland? Was that not an escape from the confinement of Majanisa's precast walled property?

His two-week experience behind the remand prison doors was an experience of real prison life after living another prison life as Majanisa's garden boy. Yes, his efforts had turned Majanisa's place into a paradise of red roses and a galaxy of other ornamental plants that should have made the place a perfect delight to Carolina, his wife.

He was hardly allowed any visitors and when they were allowed, they came in under the strictest of conditions. They were not allowed to bring in any bags. They would not stay more than an hour. They were not allowed to enter the servants' quarters where Majanisa was accommodated. The most insensitive of the rules that monitored the gateman cum garden boy's contact was the prohibition of young female visitors.

That is the first rule he broke, and the consequences earned him the wrong sympathy. His heart always turned into a stone on which he sharpened blades to stab Majanisa every time the drama of Catherine's embarrassment played in his head.

Majanisa had pushed open the door of Samson's bedroom, strode into the room, and turned on the skylight that directly faced Samson's bed. He had jerked Catherine out of his arms and hurled her towards the door. He had assaulted the lovebirds, swearing behind every pant his lung articulated.

He had thrown Catherine's clothes behind her and ordered Samson to dress quickly in order to open the gate for her. For a long time, he did not know where Catherine had spent the rest of the night, but he later learned that she had spent the cold hours shivering outside the gate.

Then a week after, Mrs. Majanisa began to take an interest in spending some time with him while he did his work.

"Do you know Samson that I hold a degree in Laboratory Science?" she asked him as he watered the flowers at the back of the house.

"No, I didn't know, so what are your job prospects?" Samson asked, interested.

“None, Mr. Majanisa asked me to rescind my appointment at the general hospital, just after I had signed my assumption of duty forms, and that is as good as a resignation, so I will have to wait six more years before I can apply for a job in a government organization.”

She had a sad story to tell, but Samson did not want to encourage her. He simply said, “I’m sorry to hear that.”

“I wish someone felt the same for ruining my employment prospects,” Carolina had said.

Samson said nothing. The direction their conversation was taking made him feel uncomfortable. She went on to ask about him and he told her that he had done agricultural engineering at the Institute of Agriculture and Food Science. He was twenty-four and she was twenty-six.

It was the day after this conversation that she visited him in his bedroom and seduced him. Again one wonders whether Majanisa had supernatural informers for he staggered into the garden boy’s room, to find Samson in the cursed act with his rebel wife! Then came the “rape” shout and the remand prison, but all that was now in the past.

Samson had a legion of beautiful women vying for his heart. The trumped-up rape charges and the subsequent publicity he had suffered had generated an interest in Samson from all walks of life. Samson hardly found any appeal in the women that was more than skin deep. Any woman he entertained with any prospect of a relationship would soon, after the first encounter, slip through his memory like a shadow in misty weather. He even fell for Carolina’s invitation to her hospital quarters, as she had finally got a job at the district hospital, and repeated what he had been caught doing in his bedroom while still working for Majanisa. That experience did not give him any relief from longing for a reunion with Catherine.

Samson felt very foolish after his comeback act with Carolina, as it reduced the

confidence he was gathering before approaching Catherine. When he played love with Carolina during his time with Majanisa, he had had no choice, but when he played the same game at Carolina's hospital residence, he had actually opted to hire a taxi to avoid attracting attention which would have been the case if he had traveled in his business car.

This time he had betrayed her, and it was time to efface her from his thoughts and that meant one bold message to his heart. "NO MORE WOMEN IN MY LIFE!"

Catherine had visited him while he was in remand prison when the prospects of a shared future were almost zero and disappeared from his life soon after Carolina had withdrawn the charges. Maybe to her, the charges falling away meant that he had truly betrayed her. His behavior had been urged by a developing relationship, not a savage instinct to satiate a dangerously suppressed desire.

Surely the comforts of a managerial post were nothing in the face of such a loss. But slowly, Samson allowed a young agricultural research scientist to permeate his attention. She visited his office frequently for information on occupational hazards in agricultural engineering. It was on his tenth encounter with her that he proposed to spend some time with her over the weekend. He would drive with her on his tour of Chipendeke Farms, 40 kilometers out of the city. That was one advantage he had. He planned his own outreach programs.

But it was a few hours from the appointed day that he received a message of unwavering love from Catherine. Would he settle for a fresh start or stick to the residue of a past romance? Would Anita, the newcomer, keep the zeal or would it wane once they settled into a new relationship? Would she not start viewing a sex predator filling the second half of her bed once they settled for the conjugal bond?

Samson finally settled for what he had known as he allowed the vacuums between Cathy and him to fill with matter. On the set date, he drove side by side with her out of the city, then up the Chipendeke dusty road, saying very little to each other yet each feeling the beat of the other's heart within their separate chests.

Samson wondered what secrets he would keep from her, thinking of the gravity of what she already knew. “We are now on our way somewhere,” he said as they approached a low bridge.

“We have been on the road for quite some time and it is the only road,” Catherine responded.

By Nhamo Muchagumisa



22. IN MY ABSENTIA



Mr. Ogola Denis
Author
Nairobi
Kenya

If they question my structure, and don't get answers to these questions, if they realize some guilt over my innocence, and deem it 'a conspire for my aspirations' Let them know that...

In my planing I was sabotaged,
And well-being double trapped, and my dream made illusive.

My cravings made me unrelaxed which revolutionized the life I used to trust.

I'm unreal sometimes, when I camouflage to suit a scenario not of my own kind. Time moving forward every single day makes me think that I'm late, with my planned pace seeming to be in a break.

I'm happy for the blind, for they are not able to see the smile of those who stab them at their back with a smile on their face. Even though they lack eyesight to their obstacles their mindsight guides them through to the pinnacle.

Long enough I've been understanding, with thoughts of love as an obvious apparition, plainly put in this party of life, counting for the last four seasons conquering a giant tribulation.

Don't bother me too much, because all that matters to you don't matter to me. Geared in moves to succeed irrespective of the conditions, motivated but destructed, fairly real and forgiving, without these then it couldn't be LIFE.

I'm taking life for the first time ever just like other beings alive. Trying as much as I can to make it success and fun living. Achievements made with mistakes which overshadowed them, for my friends and enemies who major on them, or maybe I'm just paranoid. But fear not, for Fathers knew I will last without end!

23. Fine Boy!



**Mr. Oladipupo
Olayemi
Anuoluwapo
Lagos
Nigeria**

Her heart says,

You look dazzling like the sun.
You emerge radiantly like a new day.
In fact, take flowers.
I would have given you the entire garden,
But I don't own a garden,
Manage the flowers.

Let me ask you,
What are you afraid of?
Love is not a sin.
Allow me to love you.
To be honest,
I have tried to forget about you,
Because I'm also a very beautiful girl.

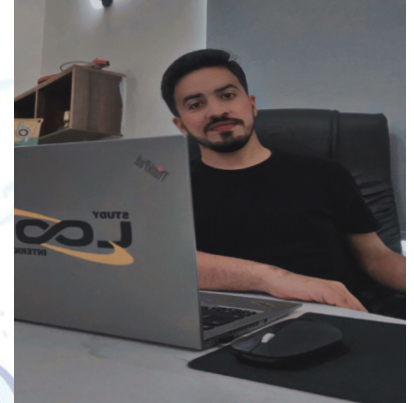
Just like beauty in the eyes of the beholder,
It's hard for eyes to pass a beautiful girl without saying HI.

But I imagined and asked myself,
What is the MOON without the NIGHT?
Every time I see you,
It feels like I'm listening to a song for the first time.
And I know in my heart,
It's going to be my favorite song.

Trust me with your heart,
And I'm going to hold on to it,
Like my whole life depends on it.

What do you think?

24. Kneeling In Silence



Mr. Own Abbas
Writer
Lahore
Pakistan

In the quiet of the night, under a sky so vast,
He kneels to pray, his mind heavy with the past.
Tears fall freely, staining the ground,
A silent plea in every sobbing sound.
Instead of words, he buries his face,
In the curve of his knees, seeking a trace of comfort, of
solace,
In his darkest hour, lost in the storm, praying for power.
His heart breaks with every tear that flows,
A river of pain only he knows. No words can capture the
depth of his sorrow,
No prayer can promise a brighter tomorrow.
He cries for her lost, the broken, the weak,
For the dreams that died, the future so bleak.
In the stillness, his soul lays bare,
A silent testament to a life's despair.
Oh, how he wishes for a sign, a light,
To lift his spirit, to end this night.
But until then, he'll cry and kneel,
In his silent prayer, his wounds slowly heal.

Dedicated to Chimaera.

25. WOLE AKOWEKOWURA



**Mr. Phillips Ayo
Damilola
Writer/Content
Enthusiast
Lagos
Nigeria**

Calm embryo, besotted you,
Off your mother's cervical grip,
Born ye...the smitten wordsmith,
An alter-ego, Penkelemesi's shield,
Been a lone voice for Africanism,
Been an undiluted fighter for humanity,
Bold canvass for Afro-culture gaunt,
Wole Akowekowura!

Ake...How Mighty City,
Stepped on the Mural Hills,
Like Idanre, nay your poem's title.
Borne...a mighty pen pusher,
Not for the oppressors, elites,
Not for the powerful, posh fellows,
A man of borrowed idyllic minds,
Not a prince of vied stools,
Yet a person of future eyes,
Whence told of Ake Unchronicled!
Whence elders saw, passed over,
Was IFA seek forth,
Of a baby, a young boy, his fingers,

Hurray...the emblem never dims,
Wole Akowekowura!

Hello...Telephone Conversation,
Your dingy eyeballs sockets,
Never faulted to ills, close lips,
The stretched necks, the white-haired,
To keep the gongs of morals echoes,
Your pen, your acrylic testament,
Of how being silent, The Man Died!
Altruism, your peer wisdom,
Bells stream flows of high feathers,
Salute...The Interpreters!
Wole Akowekowura!

Down the dawned years, Akinwande,
Trudge the thorny paths, activism,
Ye pushed the walls, beyond standing,
Open Centrifugal inherited doors,
Even if western enmeshed folk,
A Queen's Scholar bow-tie,
Heartbeats for Motherland,
Whence the swarm dwellers,
In tribute to your mama,
In awe of your progenitors,
In Salute to Pyrate Confraternity.
Wole Akowekowura!

90 Years Of Ephemeral sod,
Like a nine-second hurricane,
Bequeath the Green Eagle Scape,
Horned In African Black Pot,
"Swarmed Dwellers"
Discern words of the worst world,
"A Dance Of The Forest"

Ye Papyrus bestrode Shelf,
"Season Of Anomy"
Of Sanctuary of libraries,
"The Lion & The Jewel"
From debut to legendary,
Home and walk wide web,
"Death & The King Horseman"
Your standing effigy...Your hallowed voice,
Resonates...Equality,
Reaffirms...Humanity,
Respect...Mankind,
Rejoice...Hope.
The Spartan Eagle...the humble nest,
"The Man Hasn't Died"

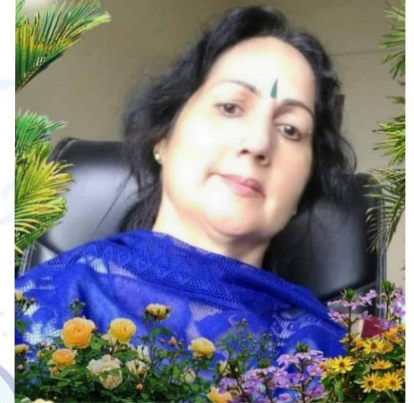
*NB: This poem is written as a 90th Birthday tribute to the First African Nobel Laureate (1986) and Human Right Crusader, Prof Wole Akinwumi Soyinka - July 13.

"He is a light of Beacon for us, the corrosive minds who write to express the conflicting thoughts in our heads.

*May The Pen Never Dry!"

By Phillips Ayo Damilola

26. Infectious Laughter



**Ms. Promila
Bhardwaj
Retd. General
Manager,
Deptt. of Industries,
Govt. of Himachal
Pradesh**

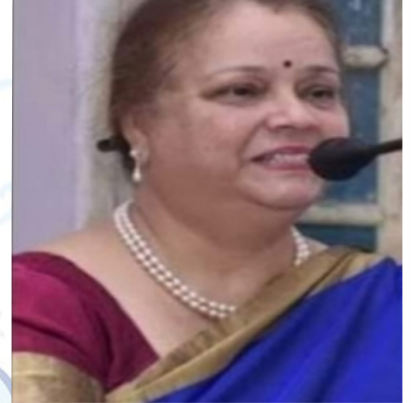
Melodious laughter of playing children,
Capable of cheering everyone automatically,
Brings sweet smiles, effortlessly inviting all to join,
Forgetting everything else, experiencing fun.
Deriving heaps of real happiness naturally,
By enjoying all available assets with innocence,
Treating them as most valuable with gratitude,
Instead of fault-finding, to change attitude.
Towards life, making us thankful and laugh heartily,
With wonder at lots of blessings we neglect ignorantly,
Most important being love for everything and everyone,
Including ourselves, as do pure-hearted children,
Well conversant with the art of seeking pleasure,
In every little thing in their surroundings by nature.

Let us smile with satisfaction, making others laugh,
To watch all problems and pain become half,
And the magic of laughter filling us with new zeal,
Motivating us to face all challenges calmly and deal.
With day-to-day issues, accepting them like hurdles,
As created by children in make-believe games and puzzles,
Make sincere efforts to cross them with the same temperament,
Doing our best is enough to render contentment.
Success and failure in the long run matter least.
Living honestly like pious innocent children is significant,
For being happy and making others happy,
Spreading smiles and laughter all around jubilantly.

Laugh, as laughter is the best cure, found free of cost,
Somewhat infectious but tasting bliss is a must.

27. The Mother

The mother is a precious diamond,
A gentle touch of love
Which goes on for miles.
In her heart, a garden grows
Where love blooms and flows.
Her love is so deep
It's never heard.
In every hug and smile,
She protects from evil gaze.
The most loving, caring,
Affectionate significant member.
Boundless love and selfless,
Mother is unique on the planet.
In every step of life,
She holds hands of the child
Through ups and downs.
Always supportive and encouraging,
Sets a positive example like a hero.
Inspiration, guardian angel,
Mother is the first teacher and adviser too.



Ms. Punam Bhu
Udaipur
Rajasthan

28. HAPPY BIRTHDAY



Mr. S.Arunkumar
Writer
Chennai
Tamil Nadu

Let this day continue endlessly,
The day on which you were born.
May your life shine like the bright moon,
As the sun rises, banishing darkness.

Oh God, hear my prayer,
Grant her many, many years.
Keep her under your eternal care,
Grant her prosperity and joy, for you are the sole giver.

May God shower countless blessings,
With joy, my heart sings on this day.
Each year, this day brings happiness,
You are the loveliest thing on this earth.

Today I know it's your birthday,
Accept this offering, given with joy.
I always feel you're near to me,
You are the dearest to me.

As sweet as honey are these words,
May the Lord bestow upon you peace and joy.
Day and night, he will always protect.

This is my selfless prayer, which he has heard.
Let smiling flowers line your path,
May the charm and smile on your face endure.
With joy, I say again and again,
"Wish you the happiest birthday."

29. Precious legacy

"Hey! Handle with care! These furniture is very valuable." When Amir returned home from school, he witnessed a surprising scene. The furniture of his house was being loaded onto a truck. As his gaze fell on a chair, he made his way towards it.

"Uncle! Where are you taking my dad's chair?" he asked. "Son! I've bought this chair along with all the furniture," a stranger man spoke softly.

"Mom! Mom!" he called out entering the house. A woman was talking to his mother and his elder sis signaled to stay quiet.

"I'm also buying these encyclopedias. If you consider selling the books in it, you'll get a good price."

"No Auntie! We're not selling anything else. These are our late father's legacy," his sister intervened quietly.

"This legacy wouldn't fill your stomach, nor will it pay your school fees," his mother argued.

"No Mom! No!" his elder sis Tania's voice turned into sobs, making Amir and his younger sis Rania tear up.

Dad's library had become a rented living space, and their bookish belongings were packed into a box and placed in storage.

"Tahira! Take care of it. It's the future for my children," Dad's voice echoed. Then suddenly the tone changed and anger surfaced.

His eyes opened. Tania was weeping.

"Rania! What happened?" he asked.

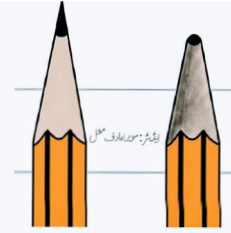
"Aapi was sitting in the storeroom and reading a book. When Mom saw him, she got angry," Rania said.

"Why does Mom get tired of books even though she is educated? Their behavior was not like this before," Amir was thinking sadly.

"This is my trust, keep it safe. I'll come and fetch it after a few days," at the time of marriage Tania said to Mom with flowing tears.

Time passed. She got confused in her responsibilities and forgot everything.

"Amir! Get this junk out of here," whenever his mother told him to empty the



It's easy to look sharp when
you have not done anything

Ms. Sadaf Jawaid
Freelancer and
teacher
Karachi
Pakistan

box, then his father's words rang in his ears!

"Aapi! Your books..."

A few years later, after their mother's demise, during the inheritance distribution, then he reminded his elder sis about their late father's belongings.

"My innocent bro! Now the era of books is gone. This is the visit of mobile apps. Wherever I want to read a book, I can read it in PDF," she said with a smile!

"Hey! These are medical books. How is such precious property being wasted?" Nadia was astonished.

When belongings were taken out from storage in the new house, a scream erupted as soon as the box opened.

"Papa! These are very rare books. They'll be extremely useful in my medical education," she spoke to her father.

"Look Nadia! There are more gems in this treasure that are now turning into dust," Shazia said!

"Dr. Furqan! Your library is a reflection of your exquisite taste. Brilliant!"

"Instead of wasting money on books, you could have made jewelry or saved in the bank. Today, you don't have to worry about financial troubles."

Relatives, who used to praise Dad's passion tirelessly, changed their color like a chameleon after his death.

The reason for their Mom's aversion to books was also the same.

When he was capable and understanding, he then estimated Dad's desire, which was hidden in his words, but by then, much time had passed. He wanted their children to become doctors.

"Alas! Dad's wish would be fulfilled if Mom could have become his source of motivation, then he would reach the destination by his own efforts."

Tears welled upon his beard.

"Are you weeping? Papa!"

"No! My sweethearts! These are tears of happiness."

"Your grandpa's intellectual treasure, rejected by the people without understanding its value, today you've turned it into an invaluable asset. This legacy becomes more precious than gems in both of your hands," he said looking at his daughters with loving eyes.

By Sadaf Jawaid

30. Silence keeps Strong power

Thou art may be a failure to gain
The worth of a diamond, fain.
Your wisdom may not bring you
The success that silence may do.

Thy cry couldn't leave any mark,
Though you may cry, shouting "hark."
But if you love the art of silence,
You'll nevertheless gain success.

Time showers now and then, the silence, the cry,
A man, if he could do nothing, just keeps silent and tries.



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

31. During a flood...

They took me for the first time during a flood. They held me tightly under their arms and took me out into the street. I was sold and cashed in a meeting of four people. At first, I liked it too. I have also smiled at the dal and tea they lie on. Later, I realized that they were hiding the money they got from selling me. I was very sad during those days. However, I used to keep the rest of the paper of calculations. They didn't like that. They took me along only once a year. Later, when they switched to the bucket, they didn't have to hold anyone accountable. I really hoped that he would take me with him at least during this flood.



**Mr. Santhosh
Sreedhar
Malayalam poet
Kollam
Kerala**

32. Mother

Mother, the essence of pure affection,
An endless well of boundless protection,
With arms that cradle, hearts that mend,
A love so deep, it knows no end.

Her tender touch, a soothing balm,
Through every storm, she keeps us calm,
In laughter, tears, and moments grand,
She's always there to hold our hand.

In sleepless nights and weary days,
She never falters, never strays,
Her love is fierce, yet soft and warm,
A shelter from life's raging storm.

She nurtures dreams, ignites the fire,
A source of strength, a love entire,
In her embrace, we find relief,
A solace in our deepest grief.

Her sacrifice, a gift so vast,
An ocean of love that's unsurpassed,
She lifts us up and helps us stand,
A pillar strong, a rock so grand.

No words can measure, no poem can tell,
The depth of love in her heart dwells,
Her love, a beacon, a guiding star,
The dearest love, both near and far.



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

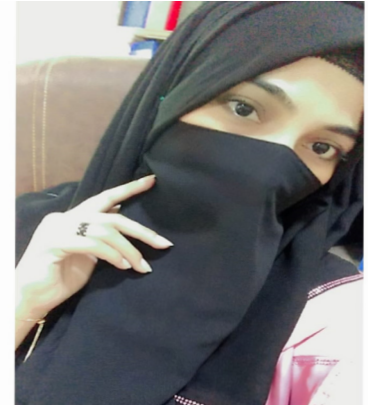
33. Literature is the source of life



**Mr. Shiv Prasad
Jharkhand**

Literature is the source of the essence of life. Literature is the source of the flowing stream of life. The origin of the feelings arising in the heart is the subtler and wider source of conscious power. The subtlest and widest or smallest or greatest eternal truth is in its conscience. Literature from consciousness to nature fills us with the forms of joy. The verse makes the ornamentation of all the feelings joyful with its beautiful qualities. It keeps spreading light towards the ultimate goal of life. The aim of literature is the art of providing light on the ultimate path of life through material means. Politics is the key to the solution of all the problems of life. The public and power are dependent on each other. The palace of power stands on the foundation of the public. The light of the palace is literature and the publisher is the writer. But, the tragedy is that the ones who give light are communal leaders. Politicians become partners in communalism and the dominance of a particular section of class distinction remains intact. The common people are mostly ruled by exploitation. A leader born of tantric tendencies does not need a sect. This is the formula of democracy. But, in practice, communalism dominates power and power rides on them. Fundamental freedom of thought and expression is theoretical, but not practical. This is the reason why education has lagged behind today. That is, citizens could not become properly aware. Communalism dominates the rule of equality. This is fatal for humanity. This is a fatal element for unity and integrity. The broadness of the definition of modernity for human values is worth considering.

34. 12AM



**Ms. Tanzila
Rehman Malickzadi
Writer and Techaer
Sargodha
Pakistan**

It was 12 AM. Her phone rang, and she was almost half asleep. Without noticing the number, she picked up the call. A person was on the other side, a person she once trusted, a recognizable voice. The person spoke: "Hello, are you there??" Without giving any replies, she just listened. Again, the person spoke: "Are you fine?? Are you doing well??" After hearing this line, she just wanted to scream and tell him, but at that moment, it was only her silence screaming, tears running from her eyes, and she remained silent.

Her silence was screaming, asking how she could be okay without him, pretending she was fine when she was dying every night, becoming more distressed day by day. All day, she just kept smiling and keeping busy to hide her pain, but at night, loneliness visited her, becoming her new best friend. At night, all memories messed up her brain, unable to drain away. Since he left, she forgot to love even herself, pretending she was not weak, but she was wrong. She pretended it didn't matter, yet every night, she mourned and begged for love.

But soon, she realized and rubbed her eyes that this person deserved only one line: "Yes, I'm fine." And she disconnected the call, switched off her phone, as memories of the past started knocking at her brain, which she was unable to drain. But she realized herself that no one cared, not even for her tears.

35. How Did it End?



Mr. Tha Ono
Teacher
Gasparillo
Trinidad & Tobago

Shadows of midnight, love once shone,
Now lie shattered dreams, hope forever gone.
How did it end, tragic love, once pure and so divine?
Karma seemed lost,
Consumed by hate's ravenous grip,
Pitch black, where stars once shone.

Lost in the abyss of despair, no longer hearts beat as one,
Torn apart by raging storms, damage cruelly done.
Hate's fiery glare, searing light, overpowering love's
bejeweled glow,
War rages on relentlessly, peace becomes a memory.

Brotherhood and sisterhood, once cherished and adored,
Lay broken and forgotten,
In a world icy and cold.

Selfishness reigns supreme,
Hearts become stone, and skin glass,
Bonds once united us, now shattered and scarred.

How did it end, this tragic tale, of woe and love lost at midnight?
Hate's darkness overtakes us,
Torturing and smothering all light,
Our world becoming more devoid of kindness,
Selfishness holding sway,
Mourning loss of what we had,
Love fades away.

Weep not for what is lost, or what will never be,
Be vigilant as our world is consumed by hatred,
Caged love cannot break free.
How did it end, this tragic love, in a world so dark and grim?

Love of ages begins to wither,
All that's left is sin.

Ruins of our hearts, no longer does love grow,
Smoldering ember, fading into the night,
Sweet whispered promise, now bitter lies,
Watch our dreams crumble, beneath a blood-red sky.

Oh Tortured souls, gone are the days of laughter, joy, and sweet embrace,
Replaced by silent echoes of love,
Memories can't be erased.
Hate that embraces us as an old friend,
Poison flowing in our veins,
Leaving nothing but sorrow and blinded pains.

No more do we stand together,
Divided by our differences,
Evermore darkness descends,
Kinship but a memory,
A ghost we once knew,
Lost in the chaos and the strife,
In a world summers cruel and true.

Fires of anger continue to rage,
Consuming all in their path,
Wondering how it came to this,
The aftermath of wrath.
No peace found, our world torn,
Beware the selfishness that rules,
Hate laying a dark path within our hearts.

How did it end, this tragedy of love lost and hope soon to die?
Shadows of sorrow, we can only wonder why.
Our world now a battlefield,
In the dilemma of love against hate,

Mourn the loss of what we were,
Facing our cruel fate.

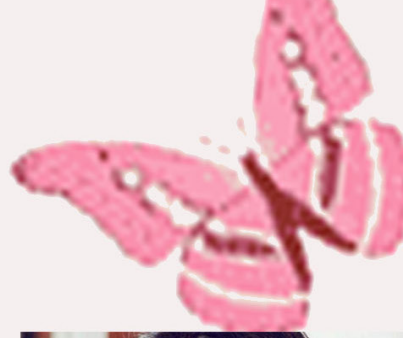
Hold strong even in the depths of despair,
There still lay a glimmer of hope as small as a mustard seed,
A beacon in our darkness, guiding us through,
Our world where love seems lost, our hearts remain chilled.

Know this truth, raise your voice even in sorrow,
Weep not for what is gone,
For love still sustains us, even as a distant, fading song.
How did it end, this tragic tale, of love and loss and pain?

Our world, a hope that was dying, never stayed dead,
Hate lost its reign,
Together victories won over divided pain,
No more divided pain.

By Tha Ono

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House**



PUBLISHER-CHIEF EDITOR

Name : Akanksha Shrivastava

Dob: 29-August

Place: Bhopal

Education: B.E(computer science)
M.A(English Literature)

Achievements: Director “De telephone”
(Short Movie)

**Editor (Premakriti, Vihangam,
Sunhari yaadein, Akshraang, Viraaj,
Navoday ki yaadein, Bits Of My Heart
Kalam ka rahi, corona kaal ka
sangharsh, Safar Farsh se Arsh tak,
Yaad-E-Maazi, The Journey to Success)**

Email.id: aadhyapublishinghouse@gmail.com

Phone No.: 9424002558



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House**



Designer

Name : **Lalit Kishore Gaur**

Dob: **21-July**

Place: **Bhopal**

Education: **LLB(Bachelor of Law)
MCA(Master of Computer
Applications)**

Achievements: **Producer “De telephone”
(Short Movie) <http://surl.li/bwosk>**

**Educationist, Photographer,
Founder of LKg Telefilms,
Film Maker, Writer, Poet,
Social Worker, Environmentalist**

Email.id: **lkgaur76@gmail.com**

Phone No.: **8109246305**



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Aadhya Publishing House

Vardhman City

Raisen Road Bhopal

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