

E-MAGAZINE IN ENGLISH FOR AN  
INTERNATIONAL CIRCULATION



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# PAANOCHIEF

CLASSIC

LITERATURE | INTERVIEW

**GUEST OF THE MONTH**

Jubril Asiwaju Adesoga

Line Editor

Aadhya Publishing House

VOL 3, ISSUE 11

**CHIEF EDITOR:**

**AKANKSHA SHRIVASTAVA**

**AADHYA PUBLISHING HOUSE**

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# Preface

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

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

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



# **AADHYA PUBLISHING HOUSE**

**PRESENTS**

## **PANACHE** International Magazine

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Chief Editor**

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9424002558

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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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# PANACHE

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**CELEBRATING THE EXCELLENCE AND HARDWORK  
WITH HONORABLE MR. JUBRIL ASIWAJU ADESOGA  
(LINE EDITOR, AADHYA PUBLISHING HOUSE)**

**1. Can you tell us about the start of your journey in the world of writing?**

Jubril: My journey into writing began in 2011. It was a natural pull toward self-expression and communication. I found that words could create worlds, inspire thought, and build connections. This became my passion, and it hasn't left me since.

**2. You've received several prestigious awards, including the Global Poet Award multiple times. How have these recognitions impacted your work?**

Jubril: Being recognized by institutions and organizations like the World Poetry Fraternity is a humbling experience. It has strengthened my commitment to producing impactful, authentic poetry that resonates universally. Each award is both an honor and a reminder of the responsibility I hold as a voice in the literary world.

**3. You mentioned that you're the CEO of Asiwaju Concept and Prolific Writers Life. Could you share a bit about what these organizations aim to achieve?**

Jubril: Certainly! Asiwaju Concept and Prolific Writers Life focus on nurturing talent and fostering a deep appreciation for literary arts. Through Prolific Writers Life, I offer training in literary appreciation, writing, public speaking, and etiquette. We strive to create a community where learners transform into eloquent communicators and critical thinkers.

#### **4. Your works include titles like 31st February and Do Not Be Proud Death. Do you have a personal favorite?**

**Jubril:** That's a tough one! Each piece holds its own meaning for me, but Do Not Be Proud Death is special. It challenges the traditional perceptions of mortality, exploring the concept with a sense of defiance. I think it resonates with readers because it speaks to universal experiences with a raw honesty.

#### **5. How does your experience as an educator shape your writing and approach to poetry?**

**Jubril:** Teaching has deepened my understanding of communication and empathy. As an educator, I see firsthand how words can empower, educate, and transform. This perspective pushes me to write in ways that are accessible and thought-provoking, always keeping in mind the impact words can have on individuals.

#### **6. You are also a bibliophile and a philomath. What are some books or authors that inspire you?**

**Jubril:** I draw inspiration from the works of Achebe and Soyinka, who have an authentic voice and a profound understanding of cultural identity. Their works resonate with my love for language and the search for truth. Reading widely, from classical to modern works, fuels my curiosity and keeps me connected to diverse perspectives.

Papers, YouTube and other multi-media channels and from National News.

**7. What's your approach to teaching online, especially in transforming timid speakers into eloquent ones?**

Jubril: Online teaching has been a fascinating journey. It demands creativity to keep sessions engaging and meaningful. My approach is to create a safe, supportive environment where students feel empowered to express themselves. Gradually, with practice and encouragement, they gain confidence and embrace their voice.

**8. As a member of the Editorial Board at Panache International Magazine, how do you contribute to its mission?**

Jubril: Panache International Magazine has a powerful mission to showcase global voices, and being part of the editorial team allows me to support this mission by selecting works that resonate deeply with our readership. I enjoy guiding writers, curating content, and bringing fresh, inspiring perspectives to our audience.

**9. You identify as an ambivert. How does that affect your work as a writer and educator?**

Jubril: As an ambivert, I find a balance between introspection and social interaction. Writing requires solitude and deep thought, while teaching is interactive and lively. My ambivert nature helps me adapt to both roles, allowing me to connect with others meaningfully while also reserving time for reflection and creativity.

## 10. What are your future goals for your unpublished manuscripts and your writing career as a whole?

Jubril: I'm working towards publishing my works in hard copy format, as I believe that holding a book can be a powerful experience. I want my works to reach more readers, inspiring them to explore their own truths and connect with deeper aspects of life. My goal is to leave a legacy of authenticity, resilience, and beauty through the written word.

*Jubril Asiwaju Adesiga*

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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. Find Your Voice

In a world of competition, comparison, and complexity,  
find your voice—  
beyond the silhouettes of imitation  
and the conveyor belt of mass hysteria—  
find your voice.

For it is in the nuances and timbre of your voice  
that your whisper reverberates,  
commanding attention from the discerning.

Find your voice in the cacophony of status  
or the dissonance of distrust,  
for the essence of your voice is in its truth  
and fruit.

What color is the voice of reason?  
Would you respond to you?  
Or is the narrative a response to a lesser-known voice?

Find your voice  
above the roar of the ocean,  
its unique rhythm and motion  
devoid of self-devotion.

Find your voice  
before the podium steals its innocence  
or the spotlight its presence,  
for therein lies the mystery and mastery  
of the voice within.

And when you've found it,  
rediscover and redefine it  
again and again,



**Mr. Alvin Fredericks**  
**Author, Musician,**  
**Pastor, Poet**  
**Johannesburg**  
**South Africa**

until it is in sync with your heartbeat,  
pulsing with purpose.  
Until your voice courses through your very being,  
find your voice—  
on purpose,  
for purpose.  
Find The Voice  
beyond your voice.

**By Alvin Fredericks**



## 2. In the Dark Room, I Feel Fear



**Mr. Anmol  
Shrivastava  
Student  
Vaishali  
Bihar**

In the dark room, I feel fear.  
There is so much hesitation,  
And my eyes fill with tears.  
I hear strange noises in my ears.  
In the dark room, I feel fear.

At midnight,  
When darkness fills the air,  
In that moment,  
I feel fear.

The darkness is the home of ghosts and monsters,  
Or so I thought, when I saw the poster.  
I love listening to songs,  
But in the dark room, I feel fear.

I feel fear when the wind blows through the window  
And hits the curtain hanging near.  
The curtains are green,  
And I get frightened,  
When I see ghosts in my dreams.  
It's hard to bring me cheer.  
I always feel someone passing near;  
In the dark room, I feel fear.

In the darkness,  
I feel like I'm blind.  
I am shocked to think about those without any light.  
Finally, I write that,  
In the night, I begin to fight  
Against my thoughts of hesitation and fear.  
But in the dark room,  
I always feel fear.

### 3. Best View

By the shadows of trees and rays of sun,  
I crossed between mountains with fun.  
The grassy bushes and terraced plains,  
Across some rivers, including fountains.

The cotton clouds with a gentle breeze,  
Soothing air gives me such peace.  
Glimpses of animals with the music of birds—  
It's all like heaven, the heaven of my world.

Fresh scent of flowers and bees nearby,  
Adoring the moon and stars in the night sky.  
Nothing much, just penning down  
The feeling of butterflies that I found.

And among all this, I sit at the edge,  
Enjoying it all, from sunrise to set.  
This colorful life, with the truest hue,  
Gives me hope to live a life with the best view.



**Ms. Ayushi  
Khawade  
Student  
Bhopal  
Madhya Pradesh**

## 4. On Flattery



**Mr. B. C. Pandey**  
**Associate Professor**  
**English**  
**Munger University**  
**Bihar**

To flatter or not to flatter, that is the question.

Flattery is a priceless gift of gab, a magical verbal skill and a shrewd linguistic jugglery. It is the craft of using most pleasant words to often the most unpleasant person and showering a verbal bonanza on the most undeserving. It is possibly the most profitable investment of words.

Flattery is perhaps one of the oldest verbal arts. It started with the flattery of Gods and tickled down to that of the kings, and to the bosses of institutions and finally to wives in household. Flattery was thus born in the form of prayers, then it took the form of the paeans of court poets, then to the generous eulogical verbosity of the subordinates in the offices and finally to extravagant appreciation of wives by husbands.

Flattery is a wonderful lubricant. It can get you something that hard labour, honesty, sincerity and often money cannot get. It is the art of inflating and once you inflate a person, the window of his wisdom is shut and then you can make him do what you like.

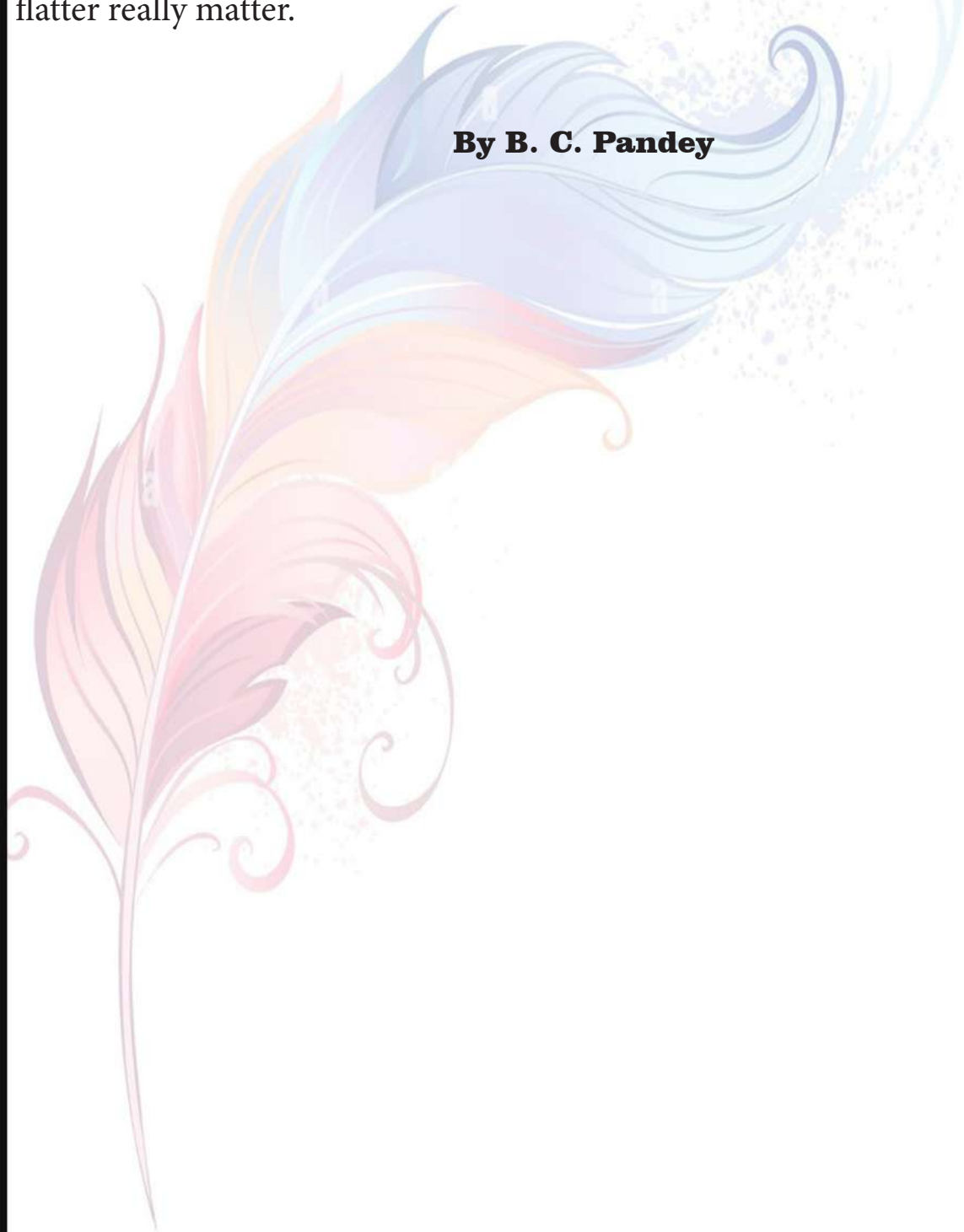
Flattery is a great success agent. If you don't know how to flatter or spoon-feed you are very likely to miss many buses of opportunities. One who knows how to flatter, holds the key of the system. One who flatters well, flourishes well. Flattery influences great men sooner than gold. The rule of the system is pretty simple-flatter or suffer; so, all wise people flatter.

Flattery, spoon-feeding, buttering and sycophancy are synonymous terms. The more you butter, the smoother things become. All you need is to have an oily tongue and a good stock of soft and smooth words and an aptitude for using them at the right moment. Sometimes you also need to tame the sense of abhorrence for the person who matters and mould it into a sense of appreciation. Often it is not so easy. But once you tame your conscience, things become easy. After

all nothing succeeds like success, and it is not unwise to set aside conscience for success. Sometimes it pains to wear a pleasant face while flattering a person whom you otherwise regard as a monster. However, you need to think that every gain needs some pain.

Once you learn how to flatter, you hardly need to learn anything else. Those who flatter really matter.

**By B. C. Pandey**



## 5. The Hidden Quality Of Art



**Mr. Binod Dawadi  
Nepal**

Art makes me an artist;  
it brings me happiness.  
I share the world's stories  
through my art,  
expressing them in writing

as well as painting.  
I lose track of days and nights—  
time flies by,  
and I'm unaware of its passing  
in the world of imagination.

I am grateful to be an artist;  
I don't waste time  
in idle talk or  
useless pursuits.  
I understand the value and importance of art.

## 6. A Cry for Food Security in Nigeria

To Nigeria's leaders, we plead,  
Hear our voices; heed our need.  
Food security—a right, not a deed,  
For citizens striving to succeed.

Our plates are empty; our bellies ache,  
Hunger spreads, and hope starts to break.  
Farmers toil, yet their produce goes to waste,  
While imports threaten our future's haste.

Corruption and inefficiency remain the bane  
Of agriculture's promise, pursued in vain.  
Policies falter, promises fail,  
Leaving us vulnerable as our spirits pale.

We urge you, leaders, to take a stand,  
Prioritize agriculture, hand in hand  
With farmers, investors, and experts too,  
Craft policies that yield anew.

Increase funding, infrastructure, and might  
For irrigation, storage, and market light.  
Encourage youth in agriculture's fold,  
Empower women—the backbone to hold.

Diversify crops, adapt to climate change,  
Embrace technology, exchange, and range.  
Foster partnerships, regional and global,  
Ensuring food remains reachable and local.

Nigeria's rich soil, a treasure untold,  
Can feed Africa and beyond, if bold,  
With leadership, vision, and will as key,  
To unlock our strength and set us free.



**Mr. Boto Ahmad**  
**IT Consultant &**  
**Student**  
**Maiduguri**  
**Nigeria**

Hear our cry, leaders, act today,  
Food security, a foundation to lay.  
For a prosperous Nigeria, we pray,  
Where every citizen eats, come  
what may.

## 7. My Unspoken Pain

My heart is full of pain today.  
Words are not enough to express it.  
I am dying inside in grief,  
longing to hug you tight.

A deep regret fills my heart  
whenever I think of you,  
for I cannot give you enough time.

Am I chained by circumstances?  
Am I bearing this pain?  
Why must you suffer because of me?

My love for you is endless.  
This is a tough time for both of us.  
May God be your protector.  
My blessings are always with you, my child.



**Ms. Dikshya  
Sarangi  
Teacher  
Bolangir  
Odisha**

## 8. These Little Tears of Mine

How often have I been sad?  
How often have I felt very bad?  
How often have I been down?  
How often have I had to shed  
these little tears of mine?

Why did I let you come close to me,  
when I knew you would eventually leave me?  
Why did you become my friend  
if you wouldn't stay until the end?

Why can't I just be happy,  
not insecure and not worried?  
Why can't I be the smiling kid  
who's never broken by soulful cries?

Oh, I would have pushed you away  
if I knew I would be in pain today.  
It's done now; what other choice do I have  
but to shed  
these little tears of mine?

Now, I've learned to rise,  
to feel joy and not to cry.  
I've learned to smile and be glad.  
With that, I can finally hold back  
these little tears of mine...

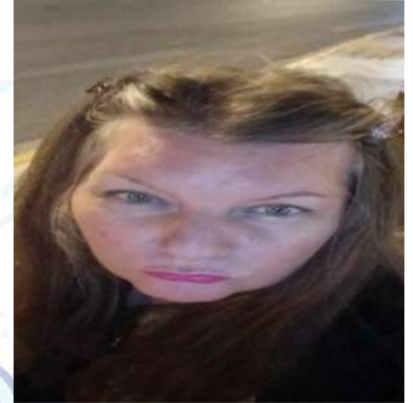


**Ms. Eke Joy  
Adannaya  
Student**

## 9. Strange Days

Strange behavior,  
People are not going in the right direction.

Like birds or whales,  
They've lost their orientation.  
They are hurting each other,  
They are jealous,  
They don't want the best for their neighbors.  
Earth is tired of humans.



**Ms. EVA  
Petropoulou Lianou  
International poet  
Activist  
Greece**

## 10. Beauty of Nature

I like to hear  
The buzzing bees,  
The chirping birds,  
The croaking frogs,  
The gently flowing rivers,  
The rustling of the trees,  
The ocean's roaring—  
Different sounds of nature.

And the noises of the human world:  
The honking of cars, buses, and trams,  
Factories emitting fumes and gases,  
Crackers bursting loudly.  
It makes a lot of difference.  
We should not forget to listen to our inner voices  
Amidst myriad noises...



**Ms. Gargi Saha**  
**Teacher**  
**Varanasi**  
**Uttar Pradesh**

## 11. Resilience

Resilience is the mental reservoir of strength.

This strength paves the way to handle stress and adversity.

Resilience creates problem-solving skills.

Resilience also requires flexibility.

Resilience always faces bold challenges.

Optimism acts as a catalyst in resilience.

Resilient skills lead to confidence.

Resilience helps us cope with life's struggles.

Resilience can be built by finding purpose.

Resilience is the capacity to adapt in the face of threats.

Resilience helps in building self-esteem.

And above all,

Resilience is the ability to bounce back from difficult experiences.



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

## 12. Shimmering Globules

Like the focus of an electronic torch,  
Your rays bathe me in a steady glow,  
Bringing globules of health, happiness, and  
prosperity—  
Love, success, and power flow.

When I seek in my imagination  
The source of this radiant focus,  
I'm left amazed by what I see:  
An unfathomable ocean of shimmering globules,  
Waves of energy sparkling bright,  
Like diamonds, opals, and moonstones' light.  
Pearls, sapphires, and aquamarines gleam,  
All casting a celestial dream.

At the center, a dazzling beam of light  
Forever recharges my weary soul,  
Filling it with endless might.  
And as this vision strikes my mind,  
A gentle smile spreads across my face,  
Like the soft curve on a sleeping baby's lips.



**Mr. Harvendra  
Singh  
Lecturer  
Jaunpur  
Uttar Pradesh**

### 13. When Life was different



**Dr. Jailaxmi R  
Vinayak  
Poet, Singer,  
Writer, Teacher  
Bhopal  
Madhya Pradesh**

Gone are the days  
When I walked  
On lonely roads,  
When there was no pollution,  
No traffic,  
No crowd of people,  
When I was safe and secure.  
Eve teasing was never heard of.

Gone are the days when there was no rat race,  
Either for admission to colleges  
Or for a job in any institution.

Gone are the days  
When there were avenues of trees,  
Big sprawling houses,  
No felling of trees,  
No urbanization.

Gone are the days  
When there was no adulteration,  
No insecticides,  
No unknown scary diseases,  
No load shedding,  
A simple, virtuous, pious life.  
When parents had time for their children  
And children respected and listened to their parents.

When religion was not an industry.  
It was just folding hands  
Seeking blessings from the Almighty.

## 14. Velvet mouth

You cover my body with your veil,  
you absorb my sleepless breath.  
You snuggle within me as I dream,  
that someday, somehow, I can be yours.

Soft, subtle, like water that flows  
freely on my skin,  
bathing it in honey,  
like a flower—innocent, fragile—  
that with a breeze sheds rose petals  
and unveils itself,  
like dew spreading its fragrance  
throughout my room,  
so as not to feel alone.

Your velvet mouth,  
you, fairy of fantasies,  
take me wherever you wish.  
I want to know your world,  
where joy and peace reside.

You are everything I have longed for  
since your shadow faded,  
for without you near,  
my sorrows weighed heavy,  
lacking your comforting presence.

You are mine, velvety mouth,  
because without your presence,  
I would drown in the infinity  
of my loneliness.



**Ambassador Dr.  
Jose Luis Lopez  
Writer  
San Juan  
Puerto Rico**

## 15. A Sister's Heart Without Her Brother



**Ms. Koral shailen  
Asher  
Student, Writer,  
Author  
Mumbai  
Maharashtra**

They say a big brother is a priceless gift from parents, a guardian and protector, no matter the distance. But what about the girl who stands alone, without a brother's bond by her side?

She watches friends with brothers by their side—protective, caring, a love they can't hide. She longs for that comfort, that deep care, a hand to hold when life makes her weep.

She wishes for someone who calls her his own, a brother with whom to share a heart fully grown. But in the quiet, she learns to be strong, to face life's challenges, even when things go wrong.

She imagines the warmth of a brother's love, someone who'd fight for her, laugh, and tease—all with a heart that aims to please. Though she stands alone, she knows she's had to grow resilient, fighting without a shielded arm, protecting herself from harm.

While friends may stand by her, filling some of the gap, she dreams of that rare, irreplaceable bond. In her quiet moments, she feels incomplete—a puzzle missing a vital piece. Though life moves around her, she wrestles with a longing that only a brother's love could fulfill.

## 16. Could you confess me?

A long time I passed with you but you couldn't understand me,  
I thought & thought about you that you would realise me;  
You couldn't touch my feelings and emotions.

How I rushed behind you  
but you used to throw tantrums,  
You tried to put me down in conversation  
as if I were a voiceless creature;  
How could it be in such a way to live with my side.

You forgot my faithfulness with the blind eyes,  
And for that you chose a miserable life with cries;  
Tell me ! Tell me !  
Who is responsible for that row?

If you were an emotional brain  
it would not be happened,  
But you crossed all limits of not understanding me;  
Was it really my fault or yours?

Living together for so long taught me this lesson,  
What I thought was true love was just regret;  
You sowed the thorns of infidelity in me and let me helpless to repent.

I wish that you had shown as much love as me,  
Then the immortal vine of love would have remained green even today;  
But now we can't change the path of time - neither me nor you.

Come, there is still time to confess me and hug me,  
Say once that you were mine, are mine and will always be mine;  
Tell me whether you will come or not -

I am waiting for you like that unknown star in the sky which shines with the light of its beloved moon.



**Dr. Kuldeepsingh  
Sisodiya  
An educationist &  
acclaimed poet  
Kota  
Rajasthan**

## 17. Life in the Real World!

I have lived many years, and as I reflect on life as we know it,  
there has been a change, an evolving of man and mind.

Higher thinkers have no time for drama,  
nor for any song and dance.  
All they passionately pursue is quiet, calm, and serenity.

Like a fresh canvas, waiting in anticipation of what to thoughtfully, intentionally create—whatever that may be.

It must be insightful, making an indelible impression as it enters the delicate portal of the soul.

Through the years,  
I'm thankful for all the valuable lessons I've learned,  
for all the people who rejected me, and for all the mistakes I've made.

Life in the real world has made me stronger yet careful,  
resilient yet without prejudice,  
savvy yet wary,  
knowledgeable yet ever thirsty for more,  
confident yet not condescending.

Gradually, I have come to understand so many things.  
I am forever grateful that I get to see and be a small but integral part of the real world, in real time!



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

## 18. Àjò Ní Mówà

The white man's machine roars  
And bows low before the road.  
Fear stirs his soul,  
Like a man meeting his Lord.

Why should the world be so blind  
To his tears of sorrow?  
Why should the world be so wasteful,  
Spending his life carelessly?

Let a smile grace a traveler,  
So they may reach home safely.  
"Àjò ní mówà," he says,  
Through his beautiful tears.



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

## 19. Love Broke Up

Oh dear,  
I am sad.

Feeling perturbed,  
Sorry—you're different.

You broke my heart  
Because of you,  
My mind changed  
By your words.

Oh dear,  
I am sad.

I am not begging for love.  
It's you that put me on a high.  
I'm always on the drunkard's list,  
Following the path of a lover like Devdas.

Oh dear,  
I am sad.

I keep thinking,  
What to do next.  
I went mad for your sake—  
This isn't love for a thorn.

Oh dear,  
I am sad.

My heart has become heartless.  
It never listens—  
It's a heartless love life,



**Mr. Mantri Pragada  
Markandeyulu,  
Litt.D.,  
Author and Poet  
Hyderabad**

Driven to madness in this world.

Oh dear,  
I am sad.

I am no longer among the thorns,  
Nor in the race.  
Life feels burdened,  
My love lost in the folds of nature.

Oh dear,  
I am sad.

Your promises reversed,  
I can't bear these foolish turns.  
I walk and think when alone—  
Leaving the world of love behind.

Oh dear,  
I am sad.

It's a loveless world,  
And my heart's at fault.  
My love faded,  
I don't seek the thorn.

Oh dear,  
I am sad.  
Feeling perturbed,  
Sorry—you're different.

**By Mantri Pragada Markandeyulu**



## 20. It's the Hardest Goodbye



**Ms. Nafja Fatima**  
**Faisalabad**  
**Pakistan**

Clouds cover the moon,  
Rays finding their way,  
Thoughts are rattling,  
Tears are gathering.  
It's the hardest goodbye.

Dipping a pen in emotion,  
Giving a last blow  
To the past.  
My body trembles—  
It's the hardest goodbye.

I want to show my love,  
But I'm lost within the words,  
Roaming like a madwoman.  
It's the hardest goodbye.

Taking a deep breath,  
I close my eyes,  
Tears find freedom.  
I make a wish—  
It's the hardest goodbye.

It's the hardest goodbye.

## 21. Fear Of Tragic Death



**Mr. Nasir Musa  
Yusuf  
Teacher  
Kano  
Nigeria**

"Your paradise is under my feet, these feet! This is what God says! Don't murder me, please! For the love of God! Spare my life, take all my belongings, but leave me alive. Leave me naked and take away everything I possessed. You see that we have spent our lifetime together in love, peace and compassion. What bad did I do? Tell me before you do it!"

This is the second time I dreamt of my wife, grabbing a naked and flashy knife, chasing me, with her teeth clenched and attempting to slaughter me like a goat. It was a terrible dream, more of reality than a dream. Because of this terrifying dream I decided to divorce her. She was a feeble woman, with a blurry sight, wasted body and shaky limbs. She was too weak to do anything, including crying. The innocent old woman was speechless, breathless and thoughtless for a moment before she began to sob. She wanted to utter some words but was repelled by her inner sadness. Her words were not clear and understandable. Why divorce a woman who throughout her life had been such a gentle creature, soft, calm, reserved, reticent and didn't utter a single word for nonsense sake.

Despite her emotional fortitude, her body suddenly went limp. She fell down to the ground even though she tried her hardest to remain reasonably unreactive. Was I doing this to avoid the unavoidable? I know with every sense that a woman who cried when a bird is injured would never think of killing the man she reveres man most on earth, let alone carrying out that sinful offence in reality. But my doubt about man's nature of his abrupt spontaneity and the accumulated fear I had, prevented me from believing in her innocence.

I knew deeply the spontaneity of man's mind, its uncertainty and how it changes swiftly, especially to something bad, ugly, unlikeable, unreliable and unfathomable. Some days after divorcing her, other sets of nightmares came to me ceaselessly one after the other. They were more unpleasant, uglier and more deadly than the previous ones. In a single night, I dreamt twice or more.

There was a night I dreamt of physically tall and strong creatures who looked more like human beings than any other creatures of my knowledge. Their fullest

nature I couldn't precisely describe. What I only noticed from the very time of their appearance was their cruelty, pitilessness and lack of attention for my worlds. They chased me and caught me despite every attempt to escape the lethal weapons they were carrying. The place was bushy, dark, rough and hot. They began to slash into pieces my weak and trembling body. I couldn't imagine the blood I lost from my chest, my head and my legs.

They did this without saying a word to me or to themselves. One of them hanged me on his shoulder and took me to a far distant place bushier than the place I was caught. I wanted to watch the sky but it was also dark. When all my attempts to escape had failed they threw me down an abyss of endless depth, darker, hotter, nauseating and smelling of corpses abandoned for a long time. I woke up shouting, with my fragile body numb. My heartbeat was fast. Exceptionally fast! I'm an old man; very old indeed. I'm not certain of my age. What I only noticed is the grey hair of my balding head, armpit, chest and probably the abandoned hair of my ass. I was born at the time when the record of a birth was given no serious consideration. I look decent in my attire, calm in appearance and kind in my deeds but I know I'm everything horrible inside me. I look a reserved, calm and nonviolent folk. The outer part of me is a combination of jewelry, gold and other precious things.

I was uncertain about the day I was born, but it was said to be during a serious draught and hunger. Many were famished and went to the grave with an empty stomach. So, I came to this world in the period of hardship. Only a few or none celebrated my birth. I lived longer; I have outlived most of my friends. I don't know any of them who is still alive at the moment. I think they are all dead. Lucky them! They died peacefully, the type of death I everyday implore for.

I'm afraid of nothing but tragic death; ugly death. Many People respect me. Inwardly, I know I'm a worthless old man whose life was ruined by lust, who deserves no respect. I don't even like it. I prefer harsh treatment because it suits me best.

I was a man of powerful physique, beautiful face, broad shoulders and strong feet. I was a charmed chap devoted in my life to everything that was a pleasure giving. I did not care much about the impending horror of the future.

Every passing day, I live in consternation and solitude, consumed by the thought of the gloomy days I spent and the useless ages I enjoyed. Now the pleasure of youthfulness is turning against me in form of terror and pain. If I can overcome

the ceaseless inner commotion in me, I can dedicate everything I owned; including this wide bed I lay on and spend all the night sleeplessly. If I have anything that I can't hide, pretend or deny it, is the aversion for the life which I lived, that uncontrollable aversion for myself, the hatred for the ugly future, which I cannot stop, the aversion for tragic death, which I can't avert. I can't reconcile to anything positive in the few days I would live.

How I wish I were a mere slave lived a life of misery, torment and constant punishment of my master, wept all day and night, deprived of happiness, slept on an empty stomach, lived through out in the bondage, servitude, gloom, hopelessness, and had a single fortune of dying peacefully. That is harmonious death!

The harshest time for me is equally the moment when everything is enjoying the apex of its inner moment. Whenever the weather is favourable and honourable, the reverse is always true with me. It is said that there is in a day a moment when even the wind blows gently, the moment when sickness comes with considerable relief, even though the moment is short. Every person enjoys it with the exception of me. I swear to God, nothing is silent inside me.

One thing I could not reveal voluntarily, and yet could not devoid my heart from thinking was the pain of the deep down wound I inflicted on myself, which I believed without the iota of doubt is incurable. At every impulse of my heart, I viewed it through clear lens in a magnified form. The fact that I didn't disclose the matter to anyone except myself didn't set me free. Rather, it remained permanently unresolved in my mind. It rotated unstoppably and restlessly in unknown speed, leaving no single joy in my mind, despite my material possession, which I initially assumed the zenith of human happiness.

My past was full of every horror I could remember, no part of it pleased my current feeling of torment, regret and hopelessness.

I'm overcome by this prolonged annoying solitude, which is intertwined with every form of unhappiness. I sat alone, deserted by the members of my family. I divorced the single wife whom I believed would never desert me.

I know a reader may get himself eager to know the nature of the offense I committed and why I considered it unforgivable and why, above all, I predict my death tragic and unlovable. Don't be too slow to read my story. Please make it complete by writing the story of my poor death. If this could be the only favour! Brotherhood and friendship are almost alike but completely different as in you

and ewe or flour and flower. I had a friend, a nice friend, the calmest and kindest creature I had ever known. He was physically strong, but shorter than me and less handsome. Unfortunately for me, he was more loving to people and more attractive than I. He had a hairless face, a serene voice and a big head.

We grew up together in love and compassion. We respected and defended each other in his absence. Nothing is difficult in being kind, but the struggle to accept it as a fact.

To abolish the monotonous hardship of life, we wanted to become independent and responsible enough for the life in the future. We decided to travel to a distant place as it happened traditionally. We made all the possible preparations in a short time and waited eagerly for the day.

The day was full of pleasure, strange feelings and the ecstatic imagination of our destination and the people we might encounter. We embarked on the journey to a distant land, where more riches were obtained to our own anticipation. Even though the journey was full of strange feelings and homesickness in the first days, the reasons behind it quickly dispelled the weariness. We instantly became occupied with the renewed feelings of the journey.

We were so much annoyed from the outset because every attempt to hit the nail on the head was unsuccessful, as it went simply in vain.

“Life is harder here! I think it is better either: to go back home or else leave for another destination probably better than here”. I suggested!

“No, let's try harder and wait a little longer”. He insisted.

Later on, the situation became more disgusting. We became familiar with every form of hardship; our mental consciousness of success was woefully injured. Things were always degrading from bad to worse; every good attempt was adding insult to injury that we had almost submitted ourselves voluntarily to failure. This undoubtedly disfigured the remaining existing desirable hope already installed in us, as it was followed by the persistent arousal of doubt. It seemed that in every aspect we were very much attached to the gloomier portion of providence. The oftener we tried the more frequently we failed! We both accused life of being unjust to us and unkind. “It only favours idle people, who work less, think less and have the least feeling for humanity despite the bounty of their gain.” We assumed! “Why do kind-hearted people like me remain poor?” I inquired!

We were on the verge of giving up, when the doors of hope began to open; gloom of despair, which for a long time hung over our minds started to quickly vanish.

Almost instantly, it was displaced by the light of hope and a better life in the future.

When we received the fresh news of our employment under the aegis of an old man, to whom in the end I became so much ungrateful, our faces brightened up with gleam. Our happiness could not be tampered with. Even though my friend and I wanted to express our happiness with control, it was beyond that. Soon after that, another commotion arose when we discovered that we were to work in different places.

In my own case, I was employed by white men who for a long time had intruded into our land and dominated many places they considered economically favorable. I was to assist them in running their business with natives. "Working under a white man was beyond the apex of my dream. It was what I had never imagined, let alone think about. "If you're so much loyal to the white man, you're likely to be rich soonest!" People told me. But others said: "White men are cruel even among themselves. They will never let you progress. You're to remain a servant under them forever!" When my elder brother heard about it, he sent for me a short letter to which I gave serious attention and thought about regularly. "I congratulate you for having the golden opportunity to work for white men. Work for them diligently. They are very special beings! But I repeat and repeat, don't wash their clothes for the fear of leprosy. Liti, who returned home after serving white men for two consecutive decades, recounted that: even though white men appeared physically neat, they smelled bad if you go very close to them because they don't use water to wash their assholes. Despite having a huge amount of money and bags of white men's clothes, Liti had now started developing some symptoms of leprosy. So, I urge you to be kind to white men! And again, Mama told me to command you against drinking their water."

There was a single word I would never forget from my friend: "White men are arrogant; be careful with them". He warned me before we departed from each other. I witnessed everything myself when I was taken to the leader of the white men. "The master" as they called him. Even though he had white skin, I almost laughed at his hairless head and his long and pointing moustache. When I arrived, he stood up quickly, offered me a seat and asked me to sit down. We sat down together. The master fixed his eyes on me, scrutinizing me from head to toe. He gently patted his bald head, bared his upper teeth and simpered mirthlessly like a little boy trying to disguise his inner worries. "The master is a nice man. I love

him." I uttered soundlessly in my mind, being so much impressed by the way the master himself welcomed me. I quickly started denying the ugly words people said about these honourable white creatures.

In full assumption of his humbleness and kindness, I stretched my hand to him, in full admiration to shake his hand. When the master noticed what I meant, he looked at me straight in the eye in a somewhat disgraceful manner. He remained motionless and speechless for a short while and answered, "The master doesn't shake hands anyhow. It is an honour which your hard work and dedication to white men's commitment provide". I felt very embarrassed and ashamed of myself! "If you learn our ways, you can even eat in the same bowl with us"! He continued.

I didn't sleep well that night. I spent almost the whole night thinking of the master's embarrassment. The scene kept springing in my head till I unknowingly slept.

My friend, on the other hand, was employed to work in the palace of his majesty, the king, whose name was never mentioned by his people under his kingship. He was employed to work in the fiduciary management of the city. He was an expert and undeniably trustworthy. Many were employed and tested in his position but failed woefully. "Things related to money and women are very difficult to handle!" While he was busy on his job, I was every day learning the maneuvers of white men, mastering their tricks, drinking their water, looking at the white thighs of their old women, who despite their age, which could only be understood by a reasonable man after watching them critically, had their breasts big and pointed. Someone said: it is because they do not breastfeed their babies. It was surprising how we spent a long time without meeting each other, almost three months. It seemed intolerable for us. I became very much anxious to see him to discuss one or two matters before they vanished. White men's job is time-consuming, hard and no excuse.

"Dear master,

I wish you long life. My regards to your wife. I pray one day you'll take me to your land, which you say is enriched in everything. By the way, I want a leave for two days to see my brother, who works in a mighty palace of a mighty king!

Thank you.

Yours,

Mato Audu.

The content of my letter vexed the white man. And he replied quickly, which was very unusual.

"We have received your letter. The master thanks you for good prayers and warns you to avoid asking about his wife. You're permitted to visit your brother but don't stay longer than a day! And be warned again that no man on earth is mightier than a white man! The last point I emphasize on you is that: TAKE NOTE THAT A WHITE MAN HAS COME TO YOUR LAND TO HELP. HE HAS NOTHING TO GAIN. HIS LIFE IS COMPLETELY A SACRIFICE TO HUMANITY."

I wondered how a white man's life became a sacrifice to humanity. Many things rushed into my mind. I wanted to tell him fearlessly: "Look, white man! You have to understand that your intrusion has messed everything up!" But realizing the cruelty of a white man, I rejected them instantly. In the end, the idea of replying his letter was abandoned.

I lived with him. I learned about him with all my senses. I learnt his illegitimate transactions, which is understood by no one except himself. When I realized that I could never make riches under him, I started to apply his ways in order to attain his position.

There was a calamitous incidence which stuck to my memory about a gentleman who served white men for many years. Many called him a friend to the white man. He spoke their language excellently and dressed like them. He was a bridge between a white man and native farmers, an interpreter and an agent. He was the voice of natives.

The master in the end stopped to like him when he became very assured that the man was not willing to change his ways to the white man's own. At the end of one rainy season, native farmers having their farm produce ready for market, they quickly brought them to the white man for cash.

Many days passed. The white men held different meetings discussing and planning a trick to coldly dispossess the bulk of corn in their wide premises. They finally reached a consensus. The master promised to handle the matter himself. A day later, he sent for the agent and ordered him to sit on a chair opposite to him. Without saying a word, the master started " You have an ultimatum: either to be shot with my gun instantly here (pointing the white man's gun at him) or else to confessed that you gambled with farmers' money and lost. The breathless gentleman accepted the second option without thinking twice.

The white men's residence, which is the same building with their office but only separated by a garden, was crowded with farmers, who had come for the legitimate fruits of their labour. The place was full, noises were heavy and laughter could be heard from every angle. When they started complaining about the monotonous waiting, the master's appearance along with other officials and interpreters was beheld. Instantly the noises vanished and the place was quieted by their appearance. "Hi gentlemen! You're the blessings of this land. God will never be angry with you because you get human beings out of hunger"! The crowds were familiar with these words, so they were no longer interested in them. Money is the only language they could understand. "MO-NEY"! One of the farmers shouted with the stress on the first syllable. And the crowds burst into uncontrollable laughter. Even the master had to wait for them to finish. White men's affairs are very mysterious in whatever phase and unpredictable in his choice, I thought.

"This man," The master started, through an interpreter, whose voice sounded womanish, pointing at the agent. "Has collected your money and gambled with the white men. He has little expertise. Therefore he lost and we won!"

The dog-tired farmers could not believe what they heard and started shouting in protest! "Kai mai jan kunne karya kake." "(You with the red ear"! Referring to white man, "You are lying".) Nothing could be heard clearly. Everyone was saying his own piece. Now, the place lost its order!

Before the agent could call their attention, make a clarification and defend himself; they began to beat him, blow him and hit him with whatever their hands grasped. In the shortest moment, he began to lose himself. They kept hitting him until he lost the energy to cover his face. He was now dead on the ground, with all his beautiful features marred. The master was nowhere to be found.

When I reached the palace, I was impressed by its tranquil nature. The massiveness of the building was elegant and the traditional decoration captivating. The mighty king had travelled.

Suddenly, my eyes wandered over a pretty creature. Silence hit my heart, and forced it to tremble with every volatile shake. Different utterances began to form in it. From the very first day I set my eyes on her, I felt as though she was created to quench my romantic thirst. I began to ecstatically imagine myself dwelling under her arms. Hidden to me, she was in love with my bosom friend. "How I wish she could listen to me!" I uttered unknowingly.

The office I found my friend was vast, well-ventilated and tidy, with plenty modern chairs leaned to the beautifully painted wall. He was as I always knew him, calm and paying much attention to his official tasks. When he noticed my appearance he quickly stood up to welcome me. He clutched my two hands merrily and entreated me to wait him a little, to settle some official matters.

I was warmly welcomed. I felt inwardly honoured. He was honourable to me. We discussed a lot of things: my boring service under a white man and my regular misunderstanding with "the master". He sympathized with me and remarked that working under a mighty king was the direct opposite of working under white men.

He told me how the king honoured him, after many tests to understand his control over money and women. "In the end, now his daughter would be married off to me", he said, trying to control himself. Like a white man, the feeling of envy began to rise in my heart. I myopically felt that his current position should be mine and my degraded position under white men should be his.

I continued my work under the master, resisting every form of boredom. I was lucky I never had the misfortune of washing his trousers. I learnt his maneuvers every day. I became an expert in manipulating things like him. I returned home unprepared when I punched the master's mouth, broke his cigarette-faded teeth. I was declared wanted. I was only saved by the intervention of the mighty king. They reconciled it when the master was given two oxen. "According to the law of our land, each tooth must be compensated by an ox." The master claimed.

No sooner had I returned home than he returned after only a four month interval. When he returned, unlike me, he was admired by all and sundry. They were celebrating and congratulating him for marrying the only daughter of the king. "He deserves more"! People said. That feeling of friendship in me began to cool, lose its vigour and direction. He neither understood nor noticed it. His kindness and generosity never stopped.

Now after every form of spitefulness I learnt from the white man, I began to plan against him (my friend). On the other hand, love for his wife was for every iota of a second magnifying, enlarging and exponentially increasing in my heart. In the end, I had a secret talk with her. She consented to my illegitimate affairs. It was a matter of hurrying. There was spring in every single step of mine, thinking deeply about an instant solution to get over any hurdle that might arise. Every step proved itself stronger and more exciting than the previous one.

The imagination to that I lie on her bed waiting for her to draw herself closer was what shortened the long distance to her house. As I was so much so fast to reach my destination with every form of physical and emotional eagerness, some portion of my heart told me that what I was after was a mere stupid thing, something of regret. I could not give it a damn. My heart would never listen to such provision, which would deter its happiness. Despite my inability to change my position my heart grew heavier and heavier. The feeling was now unpleasant and in an awfully bad taste.

When I reached her, she was already waiting for my arrival. In beautiful dress she was. Her hair was done in a charming style and half of which was exposed (as black as charcoal). The weather was lively. So cloudy was the atmosphere. The wind began to blow followed instantly by rain. I sat on her bed with confidence though it was intertwined with a little fear. I joyfully looked through the windows, Entertained by watching fluttering green followers. I watched carefully again as if someone had suddenly emerged, peeked at us and vanished into the darkness of a bunch of flowers.

“This is really a nice moment. Calm down”! She said. I approached her in adoration and vice versa. We began to undress each other in deep love. My hands began to wander over the nooks and crannies of her soft body and vice versa. She was a woman all men would love, very nice and romantic. We exchanged the blessings of each other. Our body got warm. If women are fruits, she's the best fruit you would love. In other words, she is the mixture of everything lovable.

I dressed myself and fled the house for the hospital where I left him taking care of my sickly mother who was admitted some hours back before I snuck up to his house and have an affair with his wife. It was my entire evil plan. I did all my worse to successfully deprive him of the quality of satisfying his wife's feelings.

Dear reader, let me give you a description of this gentle lass, so you can insult me less for hunting her and having an illegitimate affair with her. You might love her more if you were in my position. She is a beautiful lady, tall and charming and brought up by a mighty king in a distant land where trees were ubiquitously scattered. The temperature was lovely and lively throughout the year. She has a pointed nose, white eyes with a zero spot of red. A small mouth she had, but very soft lips and wet. This is only her face. Let me conceal the nature of her chest, waist, hips and legs. Briefly, lest I lure the reader to her fondness, I will not disclose the enchantment of her melodic voice and the beautiful arrangement of

her teeth.

For a few days, while my mother was still in the hospital under his care and sponsorship, I snuck up again to have ourselves rejoiced, but she refused to give her consent. She warned me, cursed me and called me names. Instantly she began to express her regret and sadness over her deeds. When I discerned that her regret was from the bottom of her heart, I started thinking of the white man's way, that is, to terminate her life. Like a white man, for my hidden affairs to be disclosed, it is better to terminate the life of a discloser. It was what I did some months later. It was never easy but I committed it. I can't express how, because I don't want anybody else to be like me.

Now that I have been penning this, I murdered him in order to get his wealth. Nothing there was that I suffered worse than my encounter with a white man, the ultimate destroyer of our land and humanity.

Dear reader, please I beg you to write about the ugly death I had after I died. I have realized that I have no way to escape the ugly consequences of what my hands did!

**By Nasir Musa Yusuf**

## 22. Reality Put To The Test



**Mr. Nhamo  
Muchagumisa  
Teacher  
Mutare  
Zimbabwe**

When he received her message his first impulse was to block her number, but upon serious consideration of her circumstances, he unblocked it. Everyone had a sad story to share, but hardly was such a story shared with the right person. If such a story was judiciously shared with the right person, the response was often not so encouraging.

"Kindly visit me at my place. I have matters of the heart to share with you," the message read, and despite not blocking her number he did not reply.

She was the only woman he had ever been intimate with, now happily married and living in an upmarket suburb. Fortune had given her a generous handshake and she was now married to a prosperous businessman. Sani considered it depraved to even be in touch on social media with another man's wife. But another imploration hit his inbox as he was getting ready to go to work the following morning.

"My dear first hubby, it would be unkind of you, not to even say no if you are not interested in spending just a moment or two with your childhood sweetheart," she had texted in bold print. The impulse to block her number surged through the hand holding the phone, but when it reached the tip of his index finger it rushed back the way it had come.

Surely Cecilia had a story to tell him and she told it. Her husband was gone six months. He was in South Africa on business and expressed not the slightest intention to come back home. He sent money back home to his wife of two years, but not the expected love or the reassurance of its longevity.

Now she wanted a repeat of what she had done with him when she was his parents' housemaid. Sani had never looked back on their clandestine bedroom adventures with fondness. She was seven years his elder, but at the age of 14 he

lacked the literacy of turning down her advances. Their relationship had reached a stage whereby Sani would ask for her favours and she would leave a pot of rice boiling on the electric stove, without turning down the heat to be with him, and of all the places, his parents' bedroom.

Sani was now old enough, being 26, to stand up against exploitation by a lascivious woman. He was not in a relationship and was not in a hurry to get trapped into one. If he should get into another relationship, it should not be recycled residue from the past. Sani finished up his preparations for the new workday, skipped breakfast as his appetite had left him, and left for work. Work was the only sensible thing he could do, so he was eager to be in a positive working mood the whole day.

The demons vying for Sani's soul proved to be driven by a strong force, most probably of the underworld. Towards lunch break he received a female visitor whose mission was probably worse than Cecilia's. Mildred had disgraced him two years before and had influenced his decision to shut women out of his orbit forever.

Now here she was, the unmistakable beauty that had nearly transformed the narrative of his life. She was the woman who would have effectively disinfected his memory of Cecilia, whom he now wanted to label an abuser, but when their relationship lasted, he had considered her the miracle of his pleasures. In comparison, Mildred had done a worse thing to Sani than Cecilia. His relationship with Cecilia had expired when he was sixteen, when Cecilia had won a scholarship to go and do a nursing course at one of the country's largest hospitals.

Sani had started regretting his relationship with Cecilia after a team of human rights activists and health officials had visited their school to teach about child sexual abuse. Even now his resentment for Cecilia did not strike deep enough but was only guided by his consciousness about how the law defined sexual relationships.

Now standing in front of him was the woman a relationship with whom had

nearly earned him a two decade jail penalty. He had however survived the ordeal after a night in a police holding cell, infested with lice, bed bugs and a host of other blood sucking monsters. She was a she devil incarnate, yet three angels more beautiful than she had looked during the night she had roused the entire Zimunya Township to come to her rescue at the incidence of an attempted rape.

"You had invited me for...", he began to say and halted in the middle of a phrase, remembering that he shared his office with three other workmates.

"Let's go outside for a moment and talk," he said, suppressing a surging anger that would have made him shout swear words that would pass as irrational. On the other hand, Mildred detected a mildness in her manner that she found encouraging.

Outside, they stood face to face under a jacaranda tree. "I give you exactly one minute to say what you want to say and leave," he said, omitting the term "beast from the deep" which he knew would not be appropriate this time.

As she started talking, Sani's attention switched off. The memory of their relationship reeled in his mind, especially the night she had invited him for a sleepover at her residence in Zimunya Township. He recalled how she had showered and wrapped her nudity within a thin cloth, and how she had gone on to prepare a meal for both of them in her kitchen cum bedroom. He remembered how after she had cleared the supper table he had drawn her into the embrace of his arms and how the drama had begun.

She bolted out of the room shouting "rape" and the whole of Zimunya Township had turned up to deal with the love predator. Before he knew what to do, there was a mob in front of the house. Two men got into Mildred's room and dragged him out of the house to meet the excited crowd outside. Blows had rained on his head like meteorites.

The mob dragged him to Zimunya Police Post where he was locked up for the night. The following day Mildred came to withdraw the charges.

End of relationship.

What did Mildred want now?

"Excuse me, did you say you are now married?" Sani asked as he emerged from his reverie.

"Yes, and I repeated what I did to you on my wedding night."

"I'm really sorry but what business is that of mine?" Sani asked, gesturing that she had wasted enough of his time.

"My mother, my sisters and I visited a spiritual healer and we were told that my late father had used charms to preserve our virginity until marriage. Unfortunately he died without undoing the charms. So my strange behaviour will also affect my sisters should a man touch them even in a consensual relationship."

"Why do I have to know all this?.." Sani said.

"You don't understand Sani. The healer told us that I should be intimate with you and marry you. Otherwise I get another man, and the problem will continue."

"How about your new husband?" Sani asked, Cecilia totally forgotten.

"We have agreed to annul the marriage. I have told him everything that the spiritual healer said. If he really wanted to continue with me, it would only work after my being intimate with you. He could not buy the idea, and who can blame him?"

There was a sudden rush of blood in Sani's body, and for a moment, he did not know what to say.

"I think I understand, but I will have to take you to a place without people for another attempted rape," he finally said, realising that he still loved her. Reconnection with Mildred rekindled his social media involvement, but 90 %

of his time on sm was spent in chats with Mildred. He did not want to hurry her into his arms as he feared that a repeat of what had happened during the sleepover night would cut short the revival of their relationship.

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Reality had to be finally put to the test and within the confines of a private lodge, Sani and Mildred sat on a bed. He allowed Mildred to unfasten the buttons of his shirt...then slowly, their bodies got entangled in a bundle of savage intimacy. This time there was no shout for help.

**By Nhamo Muchagumisa**

## 23. It's the Hardest Goodbye

There she stood, scared and small,  
Not ready to leave the room at all.  
Her little paws begged him to stay,  
But they dragged her out and threw her away.  
She wondered if this was her fate,  
What had she done to earn such hate?  
A year with love, now cast aside,  
Was it time for her to leave this ride?  
He took her leash, threw it away,  
She fetched it back, but he didn't stay.  
Her master gone, no trace, no sound,  
She cried, lost on unfamiliar ground.

Yet God was kind, and soon she found  
A family where love did abound.  
Two brothers to play with, a home to share,  
But still, her heart held a lingering care.

She woke at night, stared at the wall,  
Fearing they'd leave her after all.  
But little she knew, in their hearts so deep,  
This family had a vow to keep.



**Ms. Priyanshi  
Shrivastava  
Assistant Manager  
JSW steel / Writer  
Karnataka**

## 24. Slumber's Canvas



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

There's a wall in my chamber, one I gaze upon,  
When wearied eyes and limbs are nearly gone.  
Noon's weight, school's debates, all laid aside,  
My lunch consumed, prayers whispered, I step inside.

The wall, a canvas rough with dust's dark stain,  
Marked by pale water, like tears from sorrow's rain.  
Yet, as I watch, a vision starts to seep—  
A creature grazing in green fields, soft and deep.

Now small, now large, its form shifts, ethereal,  
A mother tender, young ones at her heel,  
Or a lone wanderer, roaming wild and free,  
Leaving me to ponder, what do I see?

Is it a deer, with eyes so gentle, bright,  
A buffalo, sturdy, in the golden light?  
Or a goat, with agile leaps and nimble grace?  
Or a hidden symbol, in some secret place?

I know not, yet my heart doth ponder space;  
My gaze, a brush, painting scenarios' pace.  
Imagination's colors on the wall unfold,  
A reflection of life, where truths are left to mold.

But the wall speaks, whispers secrets untold,  
Of cycles, seasons, growth, and stories yet to unfold.  
The grazing one—a metaphor I now divine,  
For life's own journey, where meaning is left to design.

And I, a seeker, questioning, exploring still,  
The hidden truths within, upon the wall's chill,  
For in that vision, a truth I did discern:  
A reflection of life, where love and loss concern.

## 25. Children's Park

In a children's park where dreams run free,  
Laughter echoes from each tree.  
Slides and swings in colors bright,  
Children's joy, pure delight.

Tiny feet on paths that wind,  
Exploring treasures and sights to find.  
Climbing high, reaching for the sky,  
Imagination's wings let them fly.

Sandcastles built with careful hands,  
Stories told of far-off lands.  
Tag and chase in open space,  
Every corner, a hiding place.

Parents watch with loving eyes,  
As dreams are born beneath blue skies.  
In this haven, young hearts play,  
A world of wonder every day.

Here, the future starts to bloom;  
In the park, there's always room  
For every child, a place to grow.  
In the children's park, love's light will glow.



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

## 26. Little Birdie



**Mr. Shraddhanand  
Srivastava  
Lecturer  
Jaunpur  
Uttar Pradesh**

Opening the fragile little beak  
With the crimson shade within,  
Tweet, tweet, tweet, O little birdie!  
The parents have come from afar,  
Carrying grain for you to eat;  
Now they fly away to the field  
To pick up the worms,  
Amongst the furrows they tread.  
Tweet, tweet, tweet, O little birdie!  
For they've come for you to eat.  
There in the yard of a slum,  
Scattering the crumbs,  
Awaits an aged old lady.  
O, the sparrow flies there  
To bear the crumbs  
And back for the little birdies to feed  
As they tweet, tweet.

## 27. Thank U

Walking the lonely road, whispers screamed in my head...

I became a ghost, spiked with grief...

Fingers pointed; laughter sharp as blades...

A symphony of scorn, my hope often faded...

Teachers, peers, strangers alike...

Wrote me off with a flick, a quick strike...

Yet in their shadows, I learned to stand tall...

Each cut a brick, a lesson, a call...

Days when the sun felt heavy and cruel...

Longing for stillness, a sweet escape from life...

To stop being everybody's fool...

I felt it in silence; yes, in those moments of silence, a spark would ignite...

A flicker of strength, a flicker of light...

Every stone hurled in disdain...

I gathered them close; I embraced every pain...

Each one a foundation, a part of my frame...

Building my skyscraper, kindling my flame...

The world saw a child, frail, broken, alone...

Deep in my cold heart, resilience had grown...

I reached for the sky, where dreams dare to soar...

With every step, I felt my ascent, finding something more...

Thank you for the struggles, the trials, the tears...

You forged my spirit through the fire and countless fears...

Every moment I felt like a ghost...

I became a phantom of the dawn...

I became my own mortal host...



**Mr. Tha Ono**  
**Teacher**  
**Gasparillo**  
**Trinidad & Tobago**

Raising my glass, here's to the laughter, the scorn, and the pain...  
Thank you for the stones that were thrown, the lessons I gained...  
Now I stand a skyscraper, bold, proud, and free...  
Thank you for shaping the best part of me...

Past me, thank you for whispering softly, "You're meant to break through..."  
Recognizing that every jab and jeer was the chisel to my stone...  
Sculpting my spirit, carving me whole...  
Finding hidden strength, discovering my place in this cruel world...

The world saw a child, frail, broken, alone...  
Deep in my heart, resilience had grown...  
Through storms of rejection, through fires of doubt...  
I continue to appear a phoenix, with strength to shout...

Thank you for the struggles, the trials, the tears...  
Looking back, I see the cruel jest...  
Truly the fire fueling me, the grit in my chest...  
Whispers no longer can dim my light...  
I am the captain of my own flight...

Every step I take, I build higher and higher...  
I let them keep throwing stones, let them keep sneering...  
I shall take every stone cast; my skyscraper grows higher and higher...

I rise not just for me, but for all who have been midnight torn...  
Who felt like a shadow, a ghost silently dying...  
Together we will shine; we will aspire to Saturn...  
Thank you for the struggle, for teaching us to fly...

**By Tha Ono**

## 28. I wish for those days



Endless talking with dear friends,  
The swift thrill of climbing hills,  
Collecting little treasures, small curios of delight,  
Joyful evenings communing with wildflowers in sight.

Eager attempts at baking mud pies,  
Time spent with crayons, colors, and expressive skies.  
Heartfelt moments of tales with dear Mom,  
And Grandma's enchanting stories that went on and  
on.

Days filled with whimsy, bound by no plan,  
Squabbles that ended with a forgiving hand.  
Silent pauses when caught in playful pranks,  
Efforts to be in everyone's good graces with thanks.

Smiles that bloomed from an innocent place,  
How enriched were my childhood days!  
Evergreen memories I hold so dear,  
Sweet reminiscences that linger near.

Oh, how I wish those days would return!  
To walk those well-trodden paths once more,  
To feel the boundless joy of being a child again,  
With cherished moments that forever remain.

**Mrs. Usha Krishnan**  
**Educationist, Life**  
**Coach & NLP Coach**  
**New Delhi**

## 29. The Symphony of Time

In the cradle of dawn, where the sky meets the sea,  
Whispers of ages sing softly to me.  
Through the veil of morning, so tender and bright,  
Time weaves a story in the first kiss of light.

The rivers of time flow silent and deep,  
In valleys of memory, where shadows still sleep.  
Each ripple, a moment; each wave, a year,  
Yet the future remains just out of sight, near.

The mountains stand tall, their crowns touched with  
snow,  
As echoes of centuries from their peaks flow.  
They've witnessed the birth of a thousand new springs,  
And the fall of empires, the rise of new kings.

The trees in the forest, their roots intertwined,  
Speak of the past, with no need to remind.  
Their branches stretch high, reaching for grace,  
Yet grounded in soil, in the old earth's embrace.

The wind is a traveler, swift and unseen,  
Carrying secrets where it's never been.  
It hums in the canyons, it laughs through the trees,  
A melody ancient, riding the breeze.

Oh, Time, you great sculptor, so patient, so still,  
You chisel the mountains, you bend to your will.  
You soften the edges of stone and of heart,  
With each passing moment, you play your part.

The seasons, they dance to your infinite tune,  
The sun bows at dusk, while the stars rise at noon.



**Ms. Vaishnavi  
Shrivastava  
Student  
Vaishali  
Bihar**

The petals of flowers open and close,  
In rhythm with Time, where all life flows.

The autumn leaves fall, crisp and aflame,  
Returning to earth from whence they came.  
Yet in their descent, there's a beauty so deep,  
A reminder that nothing's forever to keep.

In winter, Time whispers with frost on the glass,  
Of moments so fleeting, of days that must pass.  
Yet beneath the cold snow, the seeds lie in rest,  
Waiting for spring, for life to be blessed.

Time's not a river that flows in one way,  
But a circle unbroken, in night and in day.  
Each dawn is a promise, each dusk a farewell,  
Yet in every ending, new stories dwell.

The hands of the clock, they never slow down,  
Yet within each moment, eternity's found.  
For Time is not measured in seconds or years,  
But in laughter and love, in joy and in tears.

So dance in the sunlight, and sing in the rain,  
Embrace every moment, both pleasure and pain.  
For the symphony of Time is a song ever true,  
A melody endless, composed just for you.

**By Vaishnavi Shrivastava**

## 30. Reality of Social Morality

Do you find it hard to understand us?  
Do you think we, as a generation, are getting out of hand?  
Do the social media culture and hookup tactics bother you?  
Do you feel that K-Pop and K-Dramas are destroying our cultural roots?

With cosmetic surgeries on the rise  
To achieve a "perfect" figure and glass-like skin,  
We seem to suffer from an external locus of identity  
As the line between our fantasies and reality grows thin.

On one end, you put extreme pressure on us  
To excel in extracurriculars and academics,  
And on the other, you complain about student suicides,  
Yet consider our anxiety and depression as gimmicks.

You say your time was different,  
That we have barely any innocence left,  
But you weren't judged by the entire society  
The way the digital world causes emotional theft.

The pressure to be perfect among peers,  
To post reels and photos to attract followers,  
Is the new scale we are weighed upon,  
And though exhilarating, it is also a curse.

We want to be accepted for who we are,  
At least by our family and close friends;  
We want to share our deepest secrets with you  
If you promise not to judge and to support us till the end.



**Ms. Vizzmaya Jalal**  
**Student**  
**Mumbai**  
**Maharashtra**

Try to be our friend;  
Try to treat us as people, not projects;  
Negative habits only latch on  
When loneliness pushes us towards rejection.

A mother can be a friend,  
A father can be a mentor,  
A teacher can be a counselor  
If unconditional love and guidance unlock the door.

You can vent the molten lava in your heart,  
But you can't change reality;  
So let's build a better future together,  
Meeting in the middle on the bridge of social morality.

**By Vizzmaya Jalal**

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