Write Son, Write

(A Collection of Poems)

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K. V. Dominic



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Dedicated to My Beloved Mother

(Late) Rosamma Varghese

Kannappilly

Preface

This is my second anthology of poems, an outcome of my fourteen months' poetic voyage from September 2009 to November 2010. My first anthology, Winged Reason, was the outpouring of my five years' itching mind. The long difference in the tenure shows that my mind has been becoming more and more unrestful. Naturally, the more unjust and disquiet the world becomes, the more distressed and desperate would be the poet's mind.

As poetry is the shortest form of literature, most captivating and didactic, I believe that in this busy, hustling world, people should have a special attraction to poetry. Since reading habits of modern man diminish considerably and she/he substitutes that habit to watching TV and such visual media, I believe that it is my duty as a writer to promote poetry at any cost. I have already published four edited books consisting of innumerable critical articles on the poetry of established and emerging contemporary Indian poets in English.

People today are crazy after materialism, and divinity in them is being lost to such an extent that they give no importance to principles, values, family and social relations, cohabitance with human beings and other beings. Instead they are trying their maximum to exploit their fellow beings, other beings and the planet itself. If it goes on like this, total destruction is not far away. It is the duty of the religious leaders, political leader, and the intelligentsia to inject the lost values to the masses, and thus preserve this planet and the inhabitants from the imminent devastation. Instead, a majority of these leaders become mafias, and inject communal and corruptive venom in the minds of the masses. Corruption has become the hallmark of these leaders, and influenced by them the masses also deviate from the right track to the evil track. And who will save this society? My answer is: writers, particularly poets who are like prophets.

Though the present century, like the previous one, is that of fiction, there are innumerable great poets and great poems in English literature as well as in literatures of other languages. Fiction has become an addiction to the present readers. The publishers and the award committees are responsible for this addiction. They can very well change the tastes of the readers if they will. Let me emphasise and underline once again that there have been greater poems to the great fictions which have won the awards in this decade as well as in the previous ones. Save a few established Indian poets in English, a majority of the Indian poets writing in English publish their excellent anthologies spending thousands from their pockets. Journals are their only haven where they can post their individual poems just taking the subscriptions. Indian poetry in English should be promoted by the governments, both central and states, by giving awards and grants to the poets because it is the mouthpiece through which India proclaims her great values, ethos, cultures, traditions, myths, legends, landscapes, faunas, climates etc. to her own children and people abroad. Schools, colleges and universities in India should include more of this poetry in the textbooks.

There are thirty-nine poems in this anthology. The opening poem "Write, My Son, Write" is indeed the manifesto of my views and philosophy. Divided into twenty-one parts, it declares my views on God, Man and Nature. There are two poems in this book which were born out of my tears. My mother, to whom I owe all my virtues, departed from me on 14 October 2010. From the deep sorrow came out the poem "An Elegy on My Ma." This book itself is dedicated to her. A month later, my neighbour, a man of high rank in the society, poisoned to death all my four favourite cats which had made our house a heaven. This massacre was as shocking as my ma's death and it gave birth to the poem "Massacre of Cats." Even now I am drowned in agony whenever my mind draws the to those tragedies.

Before winding up my preface let me express my deep gratitude to Sudarshan Kcherry, of Authorsptess, New Delhi. He is a mentor to me in shaping my philosophy. I have put into the poems whatever philosophy I could absorb from him. I don't believe there is any other publisher in the world who inspires his writers with their works and publishes their books, never worrying about the material gain. The contribution this man does to Indian literature in English, particularly poetry, is greater than that of the greatest English writer in India. Hats off to him, and let his breed multiply!

Finally I present a bonquet of thanks to Mr. K.K. Anas, the cartoonist of this book. He is my former student who is doing Ph.D now in France. Anas is an acclaimed cartoonist who drew illustrations for my first collection of poems, Winged Reason also. Thanking once again everyone who inspired me and helped me in the composition of this book and wishing my readers a mental feast, I wind up.

K. V. Dominic

Foreword

In Write, My Son, Write K.V. Dominic is truthful and gracious to artistic ingenuity like his earlier collection of poems Winged Reason. Here, the poet appears to carry forward and strengthen the argument of social reform he initiated in Winged Reason. This provokes man to think deep. Contemporary times are a challenge to true art and creativity. An age of crisis at multiple levels with epileptic anarchy defies definition. A simple living is gravely imperiled by impatience and frustration particularly at the grassrootsstage. If life is observed intimately, the crisis appears forbidding. Dominic's social consciousness is his chief forte. Not for a moment, he diverts attention from the simple and innocent activities of ordinary human beings. From his lyrics originate feelings of eternal sympathy, peace and fraternal unity.

One discerns a distinct pattern in thoughts and feelings. Deep down, one finds a divine presence in each part of the body. One is stunned by an immensely touching verse, "An Elegy on My Ma." The lyric, if at one level, speaks of an intense personal tragedy; it also generalizes a man's attitude to relations and thus a callous truth is revealed. Its delicate treatment stirs sensitive hearts, and delicately but brusquely speaks for all of us. How children worship and then ignore Ma. Perhaps, in oblique words, the poet laments at the

heartlessness of children. A similar fate visits a man at the fag end of life but still one rarely learns to value relations, the poet appears to say. Write, My Son, Write is a long engaging verse that celebrates creation's inherent blessings in living and non-living. Nature is not only a symbol of destruction but it is harmony and symphony incarnate with a profusion of love. The poet wants vividly to acquaint the growing son about nature and the world of man. Nature is caring, divine and loving whereas man is violent, cruel, selfish and egoistic. At another level, it is God's divine dictates to His children on earth to work in the spirit of prayer and it will lead man to meaning and fulfilment.

Man never quite easily works for peace and love. Religion and knowledge look empty. Political weapons and corporate culture humiliate creations of God, and if one tries to unearth solutions with the power of intellect, an absolute hypocrisy drives man to imminent disaster, he appears to say. Rhythm in each particle, molecule and atom of this world is what a man must understand, and there exist peace, harmony and symphony of life. The poet is not irrelevant when he speaks painfully about the role of intellectuals and religious people while observing in Write, My Son, Write":

Intellectual mafia
assumes omniscient;
exploits innocent people;
detracts them
.....
imposes their
obsolete philosophies.

He is sensitive and fairly poignant while observing the miserable living conditions of man, and suggests that when man refuses to fall back on dead and archaic ideas, he can certainly touch borders of benign culture and civilized living because there is hardly any difference "between religious/ and intellectual mafias." This long lyric reveals the poet's philosophy of education. The poet's anxieties about human life and destiny are genuine when he experiences the violent and inhuman, unsympathetic and callous attitude of man.

Man does not grow with puffed up ego and pride. By killing egoistic mindset, life turns evocative. The poet's sympathies are reserved for women. He cannot withstand any harsh treatment meted out to women irrespective of age and status. A girl is glued to the book in difficult times in an effort to realize aspirations of life when even nature in the shape of a cuckoo: "prays for her perseverance./The gentle breeze strokes her/and soothes her tense mind." ("A Desperate Attempt") It provokes the poet to warn man of an unkindly approach to life and indirectly the poet wants man to listen to nature and learn. As a firm humanitarian, he cannot hate God's creation, and so love for the animal world is immense. He loves birds, insects and little flying objects. One gets a clear message - if man loves all, he will never hurt or impair even beasts or snakes, for love knows no barriers.

The poet believes in the eternal principles of love, sympathy and non-violence. These are unifying forces and man lives harmoniously if he learns to love that is strengthened in the school of life. "Write, My Son, Write" is one of the finest poems, for it is also a testament on life in gentle words. There is nothing intellectual or ethical or religious or political here. If man learns to live beyond hate and tyranny, violence and exploitation, possibly a better world would emerge. Even trivial acts or words do not escape the poet's keen eyes and he cagerly scrutinizes low

and high, small and big, the poor and the rich with impartiality. Abundant miseries and sufferings, in the life of the poor disturb.

That women still live in subjugation with fears and uncertainties, create upheavals in the mind of the poet. He condemns this attitude of male-dominated society. Poverty, hunger, corruption, sufferings, exploitation, inhuman outlook, waste of public money, subtle atrocities resorted to by the intellectual and political mafia cause agony to him. Uninterrupted and perpetual concerns about man's life on earth make his poetry unique. He is sensitive, eager and compassionate and is anguished at the all-consuming sufferings.

The symbol of crow highlights the venomous racial thinking proving to be lethal in the progress of man. Man may profess humanistic thoughts but the truth cannot be ignored that inherent battles among the white and black infect the world with hatred and violence when he says: "When will the Black and the White/dwell in the same house/...When will we behold God's creation/with impartial eyes/and find His beauty in all forms" ("Crow, the Black Beauty"). This sacred wish is the grace and nobility of a man with a humanitarian outlook. The poet is pained when he finds that the mother earth has been destroyed and contaminated. Nature is the worst sufferer. Man is injured within and disturbed outside. Though he often reflects on the fake contentment in life yet he is totally distraught and lives a mentally disjointed life. Even God feels vulnerable when the little kids pray. But nothing can be done to avert natural calamities.

The poet is obsessed with the thoughts of honesty, welfare and stately kindness. If he writes about hunger, it is

a prayer to the rich. If he speaks about the sufferings of the poor, he also nurses a desire within which man should put an end to spending national wealth on items of destruction. Deeply hurt and ironical, he pleads to eliminate hunger and destitution with the weapons man creates to kill enemies. This is a mild outburst perhaps to strike an inert man. It is a call to the soul of man a to awaken to harsh truths, for, if sufferings visit man, none can be prosperous psychologically and materially. He is piercingly acerbic and hurts sensibilities when he observes:

Isn't poverty the greatest enemy? Why not fight against it and wipe out destitution, pointing guns, rifles and missiles at the chest of the poor?

("Hunger's Call")

These emotionally disturbing fulminations are genuine when he watches apathetic people. The poet understands the pretense, so even if he condemns man's attitude in highly incisive tones, he suggests solutions to rampant poverty, hunger, greed and exploitation when he says: "God, kindle love/in the minds of all rulers./Had they spent those billions/to feed millions' hungry mouths,/could save several millions/dying famished year after year" ("IAF Vayu Shakti 2010"). Very rarely do creative artists display courage in terse and strident words. Look at the following lines:

... a horrible sight.

The dropping of each missile, an explosion in my heart.

My mind can't conciliate

('IAF Vayu Shakti 2010'')

The poet's faith in God is amazing. He finds Him in each creation and if in the little kids he observes that "the creator is manifest in their faces", he speaks for all good souls reposing faith in God-a very quizzing and quibbling idea. His poetic characters are scattered around and he pays tributes to great souls, ordinary men and women who mitigate sufferings of mankind. In every living being he finds the spirit of God, and if progress and growth are hinted at, he dislikes machine-like precision. Here, one is reminded of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's pertinent observations: "We must not simply lose ourselves in the mechanical flow of Progress, but strive to harness it in the interests of human spirit; not to become the mere playthings of Progress, but rather to seek or expand ways of directing its might towards the perpetration of good...we have lost the harmony with which we were created, the internal harmony between our spiritual and physical being." The poet appears to resurrect the meanings of these words.

He is profoundly influenced by Gandhi and Ruskin, and believes that the true wealth of a society or nation is man. If society works for the happiness of man, it creates real wealth. Implicitly, the poet makes it abundantly clear that sufferings born out of hunger and deprivations can be reduced if work is thought as a prayer and each one gets due shares. Like the great social scientists Gandhi and Ruskin, Dominic appears to maintain that many evils and distortions of modern civilization are contained not in the poverty and hunger, but if everyone begins to take pleasure in the work and starts living life, it will make world, a better place to live. And here, he emphasizes the significance of the altruistic Karma's theory of the Gita.

There are very few poets who have shown so much anxiety and anguish towards the poor and the exploited. Dominic is a poet of the masses, it is evident, but he is not a philosopher. He wants social status with prestige to the poor and the miserable, and thus he is a poet of the downtrodden. And so, these beautiful lyrics reveal that he is an artist of social panorama. He lives where the heart of man is and that is the poet's real strength.

P.C.K. Prem

(Retd. LAS Officer), English Poet, Critic from Himachal Pradesb, India

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1. Write, My Son, Write

Part One

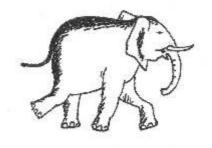
My son, I have a mission in your creation, God spoke to my ears. Why do you look up? Look at the tip of your pen. I am the ball of your pen; I am the ink that flows on the paper. Write, my son, write. Write till I say stop.

Part Two

Don't you feel the symphony of the universe? It grieves me that your species seldom senses my rhythm. Plants and animals dance to my number.

Part Three

There is rhythm and harmony in every molecule; every atom; every movement; the majestic tramp of elephants; dart of deer; trot of tiger; race of rabbit; lope of leopard; swoop of swine; scud of squirrel; canter of kangaroo; tear of bear, gallop of horse; bound of bull: dash of dog; flutter of dove: dart of cormorant;



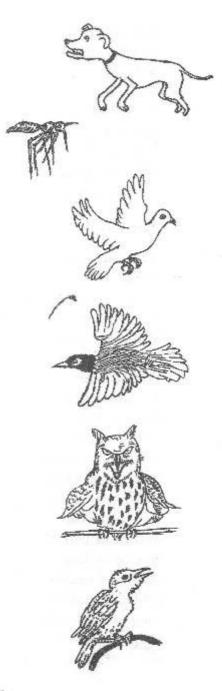




plunge of kingfisher; flit of swift, flap of crow; swoop of kite; plummet of eagle; wing of mynah; buzz of bees; drone of mosquito; motion of snake; march of millipede and centipede; and movements of worms and insects. Rhythm is there everywhere and creates the perpetual harmony.

Part Four

Write, my son, write.
How rhythmic is your body!
Rhythm is there in your breath; your heartbeats; your eyewinks; your walk and run; your chew and munch; digestion in

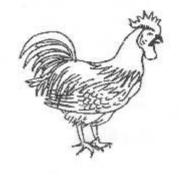


your stomach; your laughter and your cry; the words you speak; and even your flatus. Alas, you never feel this wonder.

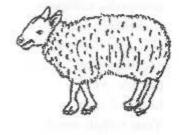
Part Five

Write, my son, write. Birds and animals play their assonant keys. Man alone strikes discordant notes. You do hear the music of birds; Hoot of owls: coo of doves; twitter of sparrows; cackle of chicken; cuckoo of cuckoo; crow of raven; squawk of parrot; pipe of skylark; chatter of magpic; gobble of turkey; song of nightingale; chirp of swallow; quack of duck;





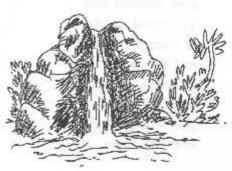
and crow of cock.
Equally assonant,
the cry of animals.
Bark of dogs;
meow of cats;
bleat of sheep;
bray of donkeys;
roar of lions;
howl of fox;
hiss of snake;
and neigh of horse.



Part Six

Write, my son, write. Living beings and lifeless objects all interrelated. Your existence depends on others; all my creations, useful and beautiful. It's your pettiness, viewing things in different ways, thinking in opposites; good and bad, beautiful and ugly. Snakes, worms, pests, mosquitoes, ants, lice, beetles,





centipede, millipede, cockroach, spider—all for me, good and beautiful; but for you, bad and ugly. Your selfish mind tries to ignore benefits rendered by these housemates.

Part Seven

Write, my son, write. Your species can't live alone. Cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys, dogs, cats, swine, fowl, I created for your company; neither can they exist without you. You speak to them in strange tongue, and they reply in divine speech; unintelligible, you scourge and even kill them.

Part Eight

Your species
is the latest
of my creations;
evolved after
millions of years
of progressive march.
Progression
or regression?
Was my plan
wise or folly?
Doesn't it distress
and boomerang?

Part Nine

I risked a test in man's brain. Filled some cells with seeds of knowledge. Alasl Vainglorious he thinks the master of all wisdom; tries to conquer the universe: landed on the moon, sent satellite to the Mars; he takes it greatest featl

The Moon and Mars
just two drops
in the ocean of
celestial objects.
Poor creature
knows not
his handicap;
limitations of
his reason.

He defies me, assumes my position, haughtily claims as the noblest of my creations! He gives me shape, and boasts, embodiment of God!

I breathed in him celestial values: happiness, beauty, peace, love, mercy; but he fosters hate and violence; kills his kith and kin; shows no mercy to animals and plants.

Part Ten

Christmas is your greatest festival;

greeting each other peace and happiness; blackest day for cattle, fowl and fish; billions butchered for your pleasure; you dine and dance, sing hymns of peacel preach gospel of love! Your happy celebrations: birthday, marriage, ordination, jubilee, feasts and festivals, doomsday for animals. Their cries resound like death knell and thus you try dissonance at my harmony.

Who gave you right
to kill my creations?
The way you torture
fowl and cattle,
beteft of food and water,
caged and chained,
gasp in sunlight;
you cut their throat
live to their eyes.
The fish you catch
struggle for breath
and cause your glee!





Part Eleven

Why don't you learn from Nature? Animals and birds present you models. Models of pure love, happiness, hard work, suffering, kindness, patience, sharing, fellowship, gratitude.

Part Twelve

Write, my son, write. Copy my symphony; the music of the universe. Show your species their deficiencies; you can't catch the musical charm of gentle breeze; the melody of falling leaves and petals; the stroking music of mist and snow; divine language of the insect world; the hugging tone of flies on flowers.

Part Thirteen

Write, my son write. You can't enjoy the beauty of lightning and thunder; your people think thunder is my sword of punishment. Tell them, son, their celestial Father never hates; will never punish; only showers love and looks after His creation.

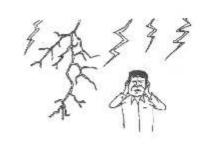
Part Fourteen

Write, my son, write.

I haven't given you reason to learn all my plans.

I speak to you and other beings in diverse tones.

None else shudder when I speak through thunder.



The sound of air produced in breeze, gale, tempest, all my diverse notes. The sound of water in brooks, rivers seas, oceans, also my own scales. What you hear is little; much more lies beyond your ears.

Part Fifteen

Write, my son, write. Your species needs humility. You are my own dear as mosquito is. The snake you fear; the pests, insects, rodents you hate; virus, worms and all you dread are no less dear to me than you. I speak to you through cuckoo; I lull you through owl.

Part Sixteen

Write, my son, write.
Teach your folk their position.
All other beings aware of their humble position; only your species ignorant of his position. religious mafia, political mafia, intellectual mafia, mislead your innocent humble folk.

Part Seventeen

Religious mafia
created thousands of gods.
Creator, creation, creature—
simple enough
to learn the relation.
Myriads of religions,
gods, saints, prophets;
religious mafia needs
them to exploit
innocent laymen.
Heaven and hell
they created
to frighten the masses.
Where is the heaven?

Where is the hell? They have no answer, they attribute to their Creator all their qualities: Angry God! Punishing God! To appease me they loot billions from the laity! Build palace-like churches, mosques, temples; decorate my fake images with rich ornaments and gaudy dress; they misguide laymen; make them believe I am fond of flattery; fond of hymns; fond of money; fond of food: and fond of jewellery. They never preach Karma is the best prayer; work is worship; service to the poor; service to the needy; service to the tortured: service to animals and plants and trees are services to me. Look at the birds:

look at animals; look at fishes; look at plants; they seek their food; strike the eternal note of happiness and never digress from the symphony. The religious mafia makes laymen blind; blind in their faith; they blind their reason; poor folk, they dance to their perfidious tones.

Part Eighteen

Write, my son, write.

I have created man herbivorous, like his ancestors, apes and monkeys.

The religious mafia spreads its fake ism: other beings and plants, all for man's pleasures; he is the king of animals and plants.

The universe bears sufficient food for human and non human beings. All other beings seek their food. I haven't given man licence to kill other beings as carnivores do. Being the creator I can't bear the way man rears, tortures kills and eats his domestic animals.

Part Nineteen

Write, my son, write. The political mafia exploits masses; dictates, strangles and make them slaves; imprisons, kills those who question their authority. It's really shocking your governments plunder your people, fill the exchequers with trillions to kill your own men beyond the borders. Political mafia supports corporates,

ignores common folk, sells land and resources to inhumane companies.

Part Twenty

Intellectual mafia assumes omniscient; exploits innocent people; detracts them from their Creator; makes them pessimists; imposes their obsolete philosophies.

No difference at all between religious and intellectual mafias; twin sides of the same coin.

Part Twenty-One

Enough, my son, enough; nothing more to tell your species. If they heed they will be saved; other beings will be saved; plants will be saved and the universe as such will be saved.

2. An Elegy on My Ma-

Ma, that smile on your face ripples down to a tsunami of grief in my mind. The glow in your eyes darts like lightning to my burning heart. Strange enough my sorrow mounts day after day you descended into the earth. My mind dissents your ultimate adieu. Ma, I do remember the brambly path you treaded for decades: How you raised your brothers and sisters when your parents died;

struggled hard for sustenance even after your marriage; How much you suffered bearing six sons in your womb! Ma, how can I forget the way you reared us? Dawn to dusk worked on the farm: made the field fertile with gallons of sweat. We were never starved, nor knew any poverty. Ma, I am speared with my haunting past. How ungrateful were your sons! How disproportionate was our love! How can your cent per cent match with our ten per cent? Truly mother's love is the purest love and divine love. Ma, your old-age ailments haunt me and torment me. The "Lassix" tabs which now lie on your table, for which you cried for when you laboured for breath well my sunken eyes. Your sleepless nights,

sitting and wheezing, when we were fast asleep, and struggling thus for long six years, bewailing often "Why doesn't God call me back?" and finally bed-ridden for a long week with no food but a little waterflashes through my aching mind to bleed it over my streaming cheeks. Ma, I couldn't be at your bed-side when you murmured throughout night "Call my children; ask them to sing." Ma, had you premonitions of death, or had you dreams of Death visiting you with your coffin? for you were whispering "Remove the box." Ma, were you reluctant to leave your children? Ma, you were never deserted by your children.

What would be our fate, Ma, when we become old as you? Who will care for us as we cared for you one after other? "It's better not to fret on morrow; Surrender unto Him who created you."

Ma, we will go ahead boosted by your divine words.

3. Victory to Thee, Mother India!

Victory to thee, Mother Indial For you did unite the races divided on religion, culture, language and colour. A hundred years back thy great son, Tagore sang in praise of you. Matha, you could rouse then the hearts of Punjab, Sind, Gujarat, Maratha, Dravida, Orissa and Bengal. Your face has turned now sad and gloomy, for thy children heed you not, but surrender their souls to communal devils. Patriotism, nationalism, secularism give way to terrorism, communalism, and regionalism. Matha, thy name was echoed in Vindhyas and Himalayas; birds, and breeze and leaves chanted your name.

but no birds are there now; neither trees nor pure air. Yamuna, Ganga and the oceans woke up then, cheered by your blessings. Bearing now carcass, plastic, garbage, and all such filthy human trash, thy rivers and oceans face their death. Matha, I know the cause of your tears: Religious, political, intellectual mafias tear thy heart and drink your blood. Tagore, Gandhi and Nehru were your great sons; no doubt, your womb will bear more great children, who will lift us from this trance and tether us back to the global home, and you will sleep on the lap fondled by your Mother World.

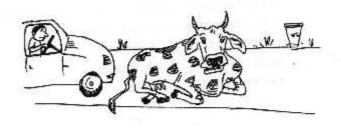


4. Massacre of Cats

My nextdoor neighbours, husband and wife. pious to the core, go every morning to church for Mass: offerings to God. Went this morning, offering delicious fish fry to all our cute cats: fish fry mixed with highly virulent toxin. Offerings at home; offerings at church. One after other, all the four died, struggling hysterically for water and breath. soft velvety fur drenched in saliva and excrement.

Heartbreaking carcasses welled our eyes and tears ran like rivers. With shaking hands, dug a deep grave and buried them. The neighbours celebrated the offer peeping through the window curtain. How could they do this demonic massacre? They had complained, the cats excreted on their vast compound. Cats always conceal their excrement with soil around. Man has to learn a lot from these humble beasts. Where will cats defecate? Where will all animals defecate? Is this planet man's sole property? My materialist neighbours go to church every day; read the Bible every day; but never read the part

to love other beings as fellow beings. Instead they believe, other beings are creations for their service and taste. God, instil in them thy creation's purpose; the need to love other creationsanimals, plants and the planet itself. Kindly teach them learning to live with the system. Let my neighbours expiate, dig out skeletons of my cats; tie them to their necks as Coleridge's ancient mariner did a century back since he killed the ominous albatross. God, open the eyes of all human beings and show them the flow of the universe and make them all as participatory beings.



5. A Cow on the Lane

The train will leave at 5 am; fifteen minutes remain, and five more miles to drive. Lo, a cow lies on the lane; the horn sounded stormily. The cow retorted smiling: "Don't disturb my slumber." Her posture reminds me of Hanuman blocking the journey of Bhimasena, seeking kalyanasaugandhika flower for his Draupadi; how elder brother Hanuman pricked his arrogant brother's bubble of ego and insolence. "Dear cow, kindly clear the road," I pleaded her with folded hands. "This world is not your grandpa's. It's so vast and wide. Can't you take another route?"

What she said is right.

Like Bhimasena, my ego crumbled;

I drove my car backwards;

took another lane and reached
the station just on time.

6. A Desperate Attempt

Nothing under the sky can distract Favitha; no vehicle, no pedestraian, no commotion, no photographer. She is intently preparing for tenth class exams. A milestone is her writing desk; a boulder her stool; a vaka tree gives her shelter from scorching heat. Nearby is her hut; thatched single room cell; living with her parents and brother; Illegal abode on roadside. The vaka tree blesses her, showering myriads

of yellow flowers.

The cuckoo in full throat, prays for her perseverance.

The gentle breeze strokes her and soothes her tense mind.

Favitha's dreams and aspirations have started to germinate.

Will it grow to a full tree, giving shelter to her parents' shattered life?

Won't her ambitions be pricked by today's capitalistic world order?

7. Attachment

Poppy, my dearest kitten;
God gave me through my friend.
Manifestation of Him in her face;
echoes my house with His sounds;
fills my heart with untold bliss.
Her serene sleep on my lap;
gentle bites on my fingers;
sharing of my own food;
football play to please me;
cause for me to immense glee.

My affection to Poppy no less than to my wife, daughter and son. What difference is there between men and animals? For He resides in all. Why should I seek Him in churches and prayer halls? I am much grieved by Poppy's loss; left me by chance in a friend's car; escaped from it on the way. Is she living or dead? Is she seeking still her mother who has forgotten her presence? Why is man so over-sentimental? Why is he too much attached to earthly and finite things? God, teach me how to detach; and also teach my neighbours and millions of my brothers and sisters to show love and mercy to all non-human beings



8. Aung San Suu Kyi-Asia's Lady Mandela

This is my prayer to you, Mahavishnu: will you descend to Myanmar in any perfidious guise you choose; as you descended in Kerala when Maveli ruled there; and envious of his golden rule, stamped him to the underworld. Here is your chance to expiate; dispatch the tyrants and release the dove from the cage. Let Suu Kyi fly over Myanmar shower rays of freedom; break the locks of the cells, and millions breathe the vibrant air of liberty. Suu Kyi, the epitome of valour, showed her people through her life liberty is born from the ashes of fear. Her twenty years of political life; more than fourteen in solitary cells.

Pledged to continue in Myanmar till the last compatriot exists.

Suu Kyi is the super-magnet; no cell can obstruct her power; millions are drawn to her.

She will turn to be an atom bomb, explode at the military headquarters and save Myanmar from the dictators.



9. Bravo Katie Sportz!

Katie Sportz, twenty-two:
the youngest solo across the Atlantic.
The entire human race
bows its head before you.
You are the icon of women's valour;
a scud missile darting through patriarchy.

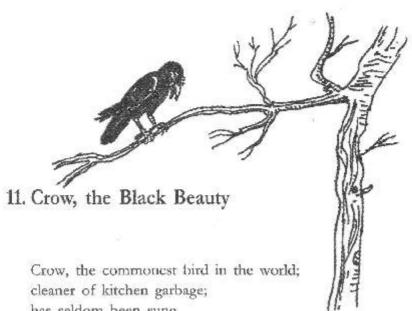
Long seventy days and nights, with only sun, moon, stars as companions; eating only freeze-dried meals and dried fruits; risking hurricanes of twenty-foot waves; reminding heroes of legends and fairy-tales; rowed four thousand five hundred and thirty-four kilometres with no help from mainland. Not only satiated thirst for adventure but raised seventy thousand US dollars for the project of Blue Planet Run Foundation, supplying drinking water round the globe. I bow my head before you; Let your race fill this planet.

10. Coconut Palm

Tall and majestic coconut palm shot like a rocket to the sky with a brilliant view of sparkling leaves and alluring nuts. Best friend of human beings; foot to tips not any inch useless. Standing erect on lean tall foot and growing up to hundred feet bearing tons of leaves and fruits. A marvel to all architects.

No human hand can build such a parallel pillar.

Kudos to the Architect of architects!



cleaner of kitchen garbage;
has seldom been sung
in praise by the poets.
The poets hail cuckoo, skylark, nightingale.
Parasite cuckoo lays her eggs
in compassionate crow's nest.
Unfortunate crow feeds cuckoo's chicks;
yet crow is not lauded
and cuckoo is extolled.
Crow's counterpart dove;
icon of love and innocence.
Why is white attractive
and black disgusting?

When will "crow-crow" be pleasing as "koo-koo"? When will the Black be kindred to the White? When will the Black and the White dwell in the same house and dine from the same plate? When will we behold God's creation with impartial eyes and find His beauty in all forms?





12. Flowers' Greetings

As I opened front door of my house, roses smiled at me and greeted, "Good Morning, Sir." I smiled back, locked the door and got down the steps. I noticed the petals waving at me "Bon Voyage!" The lilies then wished me. "Good Health!" Thanking them I drove to the University

On my return in the evening, parked at a bakery to buy some bread. Noticed a flower shop beside the bakery. Roses and lilies again; pale and dismal; decorated on a wreath. I looked intently; they weren't smiling; heard them murmur, "Happy Death!" I was stunned. Time for me to leave the world? No, they wish thus to all onlookers, 1 consoled myself.





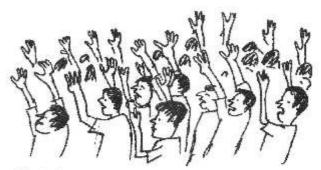
13. For the Glory of God

(Based on The Malayala Manorama Sunday Supplement Report on 25 July 2010)

Chellamma Antharjanam, aged seventy-five; widow, childless, weak and homeless. Rejected by relatives, neighbours and society, decides to end her life on a railway track. Counting down minutes, she timorously waits; the alien Death will arrive in train and take her to a happy abode. Then Resiya Beevi, member of Panchayat, drags her out from the claws of Death. Risking taunts from kith and kin takes her home to support her. Resiya lives with her spouse and four kids. Takes her guest as her own dead ma. Service unto her, service to Allah. Chellamma being a vegetarian Brahmin, Resiya takes her to an old-age home; bears all expense for her happy residence.

Meeting Chellamma's wish to live her end in her own soil, Resiya buys a plot and builds a small house, awailing government's grant. Resiya spends for the food which Chellamma cooks and eats. Ten long years have passed since heaven thus exhibits here. An exquisite model of communal harmony! Resiya's life is an ideal Muslim's life; all will agree that God is pleased. Resiya's own State witnessed another act: religious extremists hacked off a professor's right palm and cut his legs to slaughter him.* And they did this to please their God!

^{*} The unfortunate incident took place on 4 July 2010.



14. God is Helpless

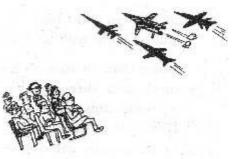
The congregation wailed after their parish priest: "God, save us from this extreme heat; save us from the drought; Merciful and Almighty God, grant us rain, and save our land." Suddenly heard a sound from above: "I am helpless, my beloved children. I did supply whatever you needed; The same I gave to all non-human beings; I created the earth, an oasis for men, animals and plants;

unlike others, you are selfish to the core; despite your reason, you are a nincompoop; who will axe the branch he sits? How will you survive without plants and trees? You get rains since trees are there; where are the forests which blocked the clouds? The sun is the same; its heat is the same. Who told you to emit toxic gas and defile the sky, pure and clear? Your wells are dry, Rivers are dry; I am not responsible. You have dug your grave, And what am I to do? Petitions come to me one after another from plants and animals. All complain of your cruelty and torture: they have no food; they have no water; they have no shelter; and not even air.

They plead to me to call you back; save their lives, and thus save the planet. Kindly tell me, children, what shall I do?"

15. Hunger's Call

A startling news with photos from Zimbabwe! Carcass of a wild elephant consumed in ninety minutes! Not by countless vultures but by avid, famished men and women and children. Even the skeleton was axed to support sinking life with soup. Impact of globalisation, liberalisation and privatisation? Or effect of hyperinflation and economic mismanagement? Billions are spent by developed nations on arms and ammunitions. Isn't poverty the greatest enemy? Why not fight against it. and wipe out destitution, pointing guns, rifles and missiles at the chest of the poor?



16. IAF Vayu Shakti 2010

Indian Air Force demonstrates Fire Power at the desert of Pokhran: "Vayu Shakti 2010." President, Defence Minister, officers, VIPs fix their eyes on the sky. Proud moments for them and for several millions sitting before the TVs.

But for me a horrible sight.

The dropping of each missile,
an explosion in my heart.

My mind can't conciliate
though only a parade.

These aircrafts have been built;
these missiles have been made
not for just a display.

One day or the other
my sisters and brothers

in Pakistan and China will be burnt with such missiles.

Major share of nation's budget, much more than spent on food, amassing arms, ammunitions, missiles. Billions have been spent by my country and my neighbouring countries and all developed countries to kill their fellowmen abroad: upright men and women and children. Who are major victims of wat? Civilians as innocent as lambs: ignorant of the bogus rift between border nations. Even the warriots who die: die martyrs for their motherland; have no rancour for their opponents; they are all puppets in the hands of vile rulers.

God, kindle love in the minds of all rulers. Had they spent those billions to feed millions' hungry mouths, could save several millions dying famished year after year.

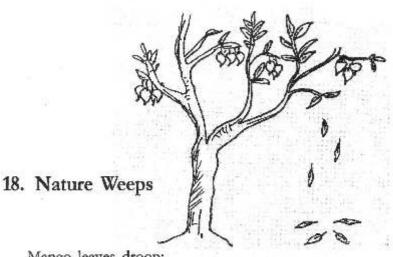
Vaya Shakti: aeronautical power



17. Musings from an Infant's Face

(Composed on 8 March 2010-International Women's Day)

An infant over her mother's shoulder looked at me from the front seat of the bus I travelled. Infants always tempted me like bloomed roses. Babies-human and non-humanare embodiments of grace and innocence. The Creator is manifest in their faces. Blake's poems of Innocence and Experience flashed through my mind. I tried to smile at the infant, she didn't smile back. Might be my smile is guile and vile. Her eyes seemed to tell me something. Her mother's appearance foretold the infant's lot. Born to poor parents, how thorny would be the path of her life! She is yet to toddle; I could vision the blood oozing from her soft feet. Being a female, black and dark, poor and low caste, discriminations, humiliations. abuses and tortures, will come in battalions to give her Guard of Honour and lead her along the brambly path. Lame and tottering she will struggle along till she reaches her terminus, death.



Mango leaves droop: irrational man ill-treated gods of summer showers

Paddy fields lament: none to reap ripened corns sprouted and heavier

Lilly flower looks reddish and morose: had a shower in acid rain

Baby's incessant cry makes her ma moan: mercury reads forty-two

People got out of their houses at midnight: electricity failed

Tigers started roaming seeking food in villages: people killed their preys Crows and mynahs stopped visiting me: papaya trees bear no fruits

The sun is angry and merciless to man: man goes on felling trees

The child is reluctant to go to school: teacher welcomes with cane

Lotus bud weeps: Furned, cloudy firmament hides the sun from kissing

Morning sun gloomy: scattered dead bodies killed in bomb blast

Cuckoo sings at midnight: festival lights and fireworks tumble cuckoo's slumber

Roses aren't smiling: stinky insecticides keeps flies from embrace

Spring's birth very late: winter's blanket turned up ice sheet

Mellow mango clings to branch: man will destroy its nut Cow cries continuously since calf doesn't suck: artificial cattle feed

Cuckoos sound changes: inhaled plastic fumes spread in the sky

Gandhi's statue smiles: could serve as seats for birds longing for a birch

Cuckoos don't wake me up in morning: they have no trees to sit on

Rainbows appear only on papers: no moist in the sky

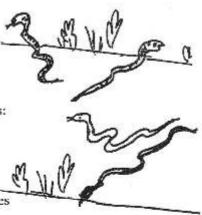
Snakes appear on roads and lanes: their havens are furnaces

Mice and rats multiply and trouble human beings: man litters food around

Mosquitoes accompany man day and night: man breeds them unawares

Parents are very sad, for little daughter has period: hormonic chicken daily food





The boy goes to school stooped and exhausted: ten kilo books on his back



19. Resolution

I couldn't believe my eyes; neither the pedestrians gathered. All eyes were fixed on the sky. A woman on a tall thorny tree; sharp spines covering trunk, branches and twigs. Standing on a bamboo ladder, a score feet high, shaming men she's felling thorny branches; support trees for pepper cuttings. When few men risk such hazardous labout, necessity goaded her to fight against fate. Bed-ridden father and mother; husband eloped with a harlot, leaving her three daughters, ten and twelve and fourteen. She can earn more money

without such risk or pain.

Dignity and self-respect—
she takes as greatest wealth.

Her resolution reminds me
of Wordswroth's Leech Gatherer
and Hemingway's Santiago.

20. Rocketing Growth of India!

Rocketing growth of India! Overtaking America, surpassing Europe, competing with China. The tornado of recession, evolved in America swept over Europe, dashed towards Indian continent, but drowned in the Indian Ocean. Boasting and celebration from government and ruling front! Eyewashing by all media! Statistics never fails. First in population growth; first in number of poor; top in ignorance and illiteracy; top in superstitions and fundamentalism; very low standard of living. Rocketing growth of the rich; express growth of the poor;

multifold growth of their gap. Slumdog Millionaire is criticised: exposed real growth of India. Another tragic proof last day; disproved country's bogus growth. Thousand swarmed at ashram:* poverty induced them to rush there for a free square meal and a present worth ten rupees. Surging crowd collapsed entrance gate to ashram. Sixty-three women and children died in thousands' stampede; many were injured and hospitalised. Shocking news, details and photos covered front page of newspapers. PM announced ex gratia of two lakhs each for the dead; fifty thousand each for the injured. Had the government granted half the amount when they were alive; had the government shown half the love they shower to the rich, many such tragedies be averted. Still government and leaders beguile innocent millions: rocketing growth of our country, a wonder to the whole world!

^{*} Reference to the tragedy at Mangarh in Uttar Pradesh, India on 4 March 2010.

21. Sister Mercy

Sister Mercy, thias Daya Bhai; a life worth her name.
Enticed into nunnery;
God whispered in her ears:
"Daughter, service to the poor is superior to prayers and hymns."
Risking rebukes and abuses from parents, kith and kin, quitted the four walls.

Devoted life for the tribal; A lone fighter for their right; fought against slavery; fought against girls' trade. Hunted by the police; torture in barracks; Took LLB for self pleading.

Awards and honours embraced her. Even in her late sixtics this brave woman from Kerala shines like the sun; illumines thousands in Bykal, A village in Madhya Pradesh. Daya Bhai shows by life that path of Karma is nobler than other paths; serving God in human form is more rewarding than serving Him in abstract terms.



22. Teresa's Tears

Teresa in tears counting thousands of rupees. Part-time sweeper, sweeping classrooms, verandahs, campus; cleaning dirty bathrooms, stinky urinals. First salary after twelve months; lumpsum arrear thirty thousand. Bed-ridden husband, paralysed by accident; two little daughters in primary school; life in a rented hut; debts to neighbours. Delicious food.

attractive dress. only in dreams. Counting currency again and again; tears running like a brook. "Teresa, why crying?" Compassionate headmaster enquired her. "Oh, nothing sir, these are the notes my hands worked for and longed for; but I have to keep my promise; a condition laid on by the manager; I have to donate one year salary." Government gives the salary but the building not its property; property of the people. Such forced donation a canker of Kerala.



23. To My Colleague'

(Composed on 15 August 2010)

India's sixty-fourth Independence Day. Celebrations all over the country. Dear TJ, you are still dependent; bed-ridden for forty-three days. Hacked-off right palm stitched to like a dry branch budded to a live plant. They axed your left leg from thigh to toes; cut three fingers and bones of left palm. Palms and foot in thick plaster. Physical pains playing like concert; added by arrows darted from all sides: colleagues, university, government. Helpless and sleepless, shedding tears often; boldly bore pains of battalions with convictions strong and unyielding will. You prayed to God to clear others' misunderstandings; pardoned the assailants who knew not

for what they had done it.
God heeded to your prayers;
removed all misunderstandings
from the minds of the millions.
They started showering
petals of love, sympathy and help.
TJ, you are a scapegoat;
people take you as a martyr.

India, my independent country!
Largest democracy in the world!
Largest secular State!
Equality, fraternity, liberty.
Liberty to do anything?
Where is freedom of speech
and expression?

India, my motherland.

Land of corruption, terrorism and religious fundamentalism.

Religious fanatics resort to violence; kill innocent masses to appease gods in heaven.

TJ, you have become an icon; an icon of suffering; an icon of courage; an icon of convictions, and icon of forgiveness.

^{*} The reference is to Prof. T.J. Joseph of Newman College, Thodupuzha, Kerala, India. Religious fanatics hacked off his right palm and threw it away when he was returning home after Sunday Mass on 4 July 2010.



24. Train Blast

Train blasted; A hundred and fifty died; All innocents; Set out for nearby destinations; Ended at eternal terminus. Another heinous act of Maoists. End justifies means; Misquote Marx Lenin, Mao. Utopian ends; Diabolic means. Are their hearts made of stone? Have their tears dried in the furnace of spite?

Have they plugged their cars with their victims' bones? Heart-rending is the wail of that grandma: "Krishna, Why did you call back all my children? What have they done? Or their wives and their children? Couldn't you take me also with them? Krishna, why are you so indifferent? Can't you punish these terrorists as you punished Asuras? Or at least curse them as you cursed Ashwatthama? How can I ease in sambhavami yuge yuge?"



25. Tribute of Mohammed Rafi

Mohammed Rafi flew back to heaven thirty years back. Gandharva of music, he was sent by God to ease and solace burning minds. Greatest of all Indian singers, he was modest, dignified and humble. Blessed by goddess Saraswati, he practised hard for perfection. When he raised his voice to the highest octave, to sing "O duniya ke rakhwale," blood oozed out of his vocal chord. He walks with me in morning walks, amusing me from cell phone. His duets with Lata Mangeshkar, his melodies that raise us to heaven, impel me to call him: "Immortality, thy name is Rafi."

26. Wagamon

Wagamon, Kerala's beautiful bonnet; a spectrum of spectacular scenes carved all around it.

Steepish street
runs like anaconda;
sky-high precipice
on the right side;
hell-down caves
on the other side.
Miles long canvas
black and high;
green patches
here and there:
God with His brush!

A series of cataracts; thin, thick, tall, short; some like white paint oozed from His brush; others like curtains slowly falling. Eternal curtains, cternal falling; reminding us the curtain of life.

Mounds after mounds: green spongy eggs placed in His large tray; dawn to dusk kissed by the sun; the moon and the stars embrace at night; descending clouds cleanse the dirt treaded by humans. Lying helpless people speak to Him; pray to Him to case their minds; none will doubt here the therapeutic power of Nature.

Pine valleys of Wagamon, an exotic wild beauty. Tall and thick pine trees support firmament from falling. God has spread a fantastic carpet knitted by dry pine leaves; lying relaxed, people draft requests, and angles descend through the pine trees and take these requests to His office. The sun is always gentle; always seems an evening; nocturnal music of crickets. resounding hymns of angels, and semi darkness lift our minds to an eternal abode of repose.



27. Water, Water, Everywhere . . .

(Composed on 22 March 2000-World Water Day)

This day:
World Water Day;
tosses my mind
to the next century.
Water, the source of life;
Omnipresent and abundant
like its parent oxygen.
Free and 'insignificant'
for millions;
going to be more precious
than gold and diamond.

Absence of rains and trees, enhanced by global warming, exterminated millions of lives. Lifespan dropped to thirty-five; thirty five looked eight-five. Dehydration caused wrinkles; smooth skin turned sore and scaly; lovely long haired women appeared shaved-headed ghosts.

Desalinated water, the elixir of life. In place of shower, sponging with mineral oil. Disposable dress; heaps of garbage everywhere.

Water rationed; per day quota half a glass. Kidney failure, major cause of mortality. Water stolen at gun point; armed forces guarded water reservoirs of nations.

Sea level rose every day; low lands disappeared one after another. Enactment of Coleridge's lines: "Water, water everywhere Not a drop to drink."



28. Wolfgang, the Messiah of Nature

Wolfgang, the messiah of Nature heard the silent call of plants and animals; flew from Berlin to Kerala at the tender age of twenty. Long forty years in the midst of dense forest; forest vast as fifty five acres; Wolfgang's gift to man and Nature; Swamy to the neighbouring people; God to plants and animals. Twenty species of snakes, fifteen types of amphibians, two twenty species of birds, sixty varieties of butterflies, two thousand kinds of plants. He has created a heaven; a haven for his fellow creatures. Snakes never bite him: play with his children.

Birds never fear him; always feast to his eyes and cars. Butterflies weave him dreams; a blissful dream which blocks others' realities. He has realised the truth, the truth of eternal relations: between God, Man and Nature. Wolfgang is Nature's Christ; born to redeem Nature; his life is a sacrifice; atonement for human cruelty; expiation for felling and killing

29. Work is Worship

My parish priest advised me once: "Sir, I rarely meet you at Sunday Services." "Right, Father, I have little time to waste; IGNOU students wait for my classes; for they are free only on Sundays; and for me work is worship." ("You are right, my son," whispered God into my ears, "I've never asked my children to waste a day flattering me.") "Waste? Prayer is waste? And work on Sabbath days?" "Father, when God is with me why should I seek him elsewhere?" "But collective prayer is stronger than a single voice." "Prayer? If prayer is communication with God, don't we need some silence? How can I talk to Him. when hundreds roar insincere words?"

("You are right again, son," whispered God into my ears, "I am shuddered by their cries which never come from their minds. My dear son, live in Karma, love all creations, for I am in everything.")



30. To my Deceased Cats

"Lo, our Rocky is struggling; God, is he departing us?" Pussy cat cried to her friends. "Has cruel man poisoned him?" Pretty raised her doubts. "Friends, my master, Mathew mixed toxin to my dinner since I excreted on his front yard," Rocky groaned while gasping. "What a devil!" they exclaimed. "Friends, I deserve this death. I was a human in my last birth; A medical practitioner by profession who hated cats and dogs. I had a neighbour, a poet and professor who lived with his family and half a dozen cats. The cats knew no boundaries and they often defecated on my vast compound.

One morning before going to church arranged for them delicious breakfast: fried fish mixed with toxin. I felt restless at church: Christ on the cross murmured to my mind: 'Is this the way you love your neighbour? Aren't cats and all other beings your own neighbours? Aren't animals and plants our Father's creations? Haven't they the right to survive? Vowed to save lives how can you destroy life?' I tried my best to detract my mind; turned my face from the crucifix; calculated the profits amassed from the rubber estates! The Mass being over, I returned to my house; found my neighbour digging graves for his pet cats. The professor might have cursed me, for he loved them as his children. My happy life continued as I was immensely rich. Nothing happened to me, But I couldn't rid His punishment; and was reborn as a cat ... to be killed by my own master." Rocky ended with a loud wail; his body shuddered and died.

31. Lines Composed from Thodupuzha River's Bridge

Looking down from your girdle bridge
my eyes and mind bathe in thy morning beauty.
Invigorating cool water gushing through your vein
overflows my mind with eternal realities.
Every second passed in our lives
is irredeemably lost forever.
Invisible Time flashes in meteoric speed;
the waters I gaze now also flow beyond my eyes.
Unlike the flash of bygone Time
it is never lost but remains immortal.
Born from the eternal Sahyas
it merges into the eternal ocean.
The Creator thus reveals To His creations
His perpetual relation and incessant love.
Rivers and oceans are embodiments of cosmic reality.