

BOMBAY TO MUMBAI

POEMS



Mysore Diwa Swapna

BOMBAY TO MUMBAI POEMS

A collection of poems on MUMBAI

by M.D swapna

poems 1 B to 90 B

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PREFACE

Readers, please do not expect any new or old information regarding geography, history, economics, politics or even the public of Mumbai . This collection is simply poems written in the annual diaries of the author. Diaries had dates. The poems do not have any dates. They were written during the decades of the author's life in this city,

This author came from a great city, Chennai [Madras at that time] to another great city, Mumbai [then called Bombay] .

May 1 is the World Labour Day. It is also Maharashtra day. In 1960 the erstwhile Bombay was made into Maharashtra and Gujarat states and Bombay remained as the capital of Maharashtra. It is another historical bit of information that Bombay was given a new [or was it the old!] name of Mumbai only on 1995 Oct 6

This period was crucial to all of India with its ups and downs . We of that period had seen [or suffered] the extreme rationing for every essential item. A person carrying more than a few kgs of rice was nabbed while dons with Bombay chawls and slums as headquarters smuggled bullion and booze illegally and only rarely caught. In spite of such circumstances ordinary mumbaikar [the common man] lived a honest hard working life and many saw even a little progress in their own small fields. This author was one of them. A few poems may reflect this aspect.

In general these poems are not only ABOUT Mumbai but also thoughts during the author's stay at Mumbai . Soon after Bombay became Mumbai this author left the city . Hence the title of this collection is *Bombay to mumbai*. For the same reason

these poems relate to that period. A few or many landmarks may still be there. Many new ones might have come up. The readers may have to mentally go back a few decades.

Poems are in simple English [because that is all this author knows]. Not only ideas but many words and phrases used are also Indian. To help any non-Indian readers notes are given . Highly local words are given in italics.

Readers are welcome to give their opinions to the email given or message to any of the phone numbers. Certainly do if you find any errors or extreme [unnecessary] bias.

M,D,Swapna [pen name]

May 2025

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1 B BOMBAY THEN

Bachelors in Bombay could be found in large numbers if one looked around.

Young single men in search of job ended up here almost like a mob at every bus and train terminal with both luggage and means minimal

Some from the North
with ITI in welding or carpentry
Many from the South
with SSLC or stenography

Quite a few with only date of birth
just to show they were not juvenile
Their parents thought Bombay was worth
sending the vagabond son instead of exile
Cacophony of sounds gave rise
to a new dialect, *bombia hindi*
Bombayite said , why be precise
when he can understand you and me.

[bombyia hind-

Bombay Hindi often used in Hindi (Bollywood) movies has become popular though not approved by native speakers.]



2 B BOMBAY AND MUMBAI

The bourgeois Bombay
Is beautiful
With its marine drive
And the Malabar hill.

But the rest of Bombay
Is Mumbai which is
What I see
Where I work
Where I live
Whence my friends hail
Or just is where
I get my life's needs from.

The bourgeoisie
May be keeping
Their Bombay beautiful

But the rest of the metropolis
My own dear Mumbai
Smells of nature's odours
Sh ..! don't call 'it' sh.!
It is the smell of sweat

I wonder whether
The queenly face of Bombay
With its necklace and adornments
Can thrive, throb and exist
Without the body
Which Is Mumbai





3 B SINDHI

They owned land houses
And a booming business
Each one of them assisting one another.

One day London –educated barristers
Let all of them down at one stroke
Just to satisfy their own thirst for freedom
And early gain of power and fiefdom
A province which was known
By the perennial river
And the early civilisation
And also the name for the whole country.

And also for a persevering peaceful people
All who would not even hurt any animal .
were slaughtered , plundered , and their possessions
taken away and turned up as refugees in a land
Where they were once employers and supporters of
Of fellow citizens



Ulhasnagar has some small businesses manufacturing denims. Some of the manufacturers export jeans worldwide from Ulhasnagar. The city is also known for its furniture, cloth and electronics markets. [FROM INTERNET]

See also SION 41 B

4 B BOMBAY MIX-UP

Bengalis, Madrasis, Biharis,
Sikhs, Sindhis, Marwaris
Many from interior Maratha land
Could be seen in this mini island.

Each group finds its nook
Stay together as pages of a book
Skirmishes are rare and soon pacified
Each one fiercely busy and satisfied.

Smell of success and living well
Eating and resting as you will
Erases the odour and smell
Of the *chawl* and slum where you dwell.

Bombayite learns to live life
in spite of any struggle or strife
Thus he has no time for trivial
fights over faith or social rival

Call it togetherness or resilience
It is Bombay's basic trait, of brilliance
in brain or ritual or culture or amity
binding them all to one entity.



Rank	Language	2001 census ^[13] (total population 1,028,610,328)	
		Speakers	Percentage
1	Hindi ^[16]	422,048,642	41.1%
2	Bengali	83,369,769	8.11%
3	Telugu	74,002,856	7.19%
4	Marathi	71,936,894	6.99%
5	Tamil	60,793,814	5.91%
6	Urdu	51,538,111	5.01%
7	Gujarati	46,091,617	4.48%
8	Kannada	37,924,011	3.69%
9	Malayalam	33,066,392	3.21%
10	Odia	33,017,446	3.21%

हिंदी वाला गुजराती मराठी
 ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸਂਸਕ੃ਤ ਨੇਪਾਲੀ اردو¹⁷
 தமிழ் தெலுగு கன்னட மலയாலை

5 B BACHELORS

Bachelors in Bombay can be found
in any suburb if one looks around

Cheapest and the best \
Are lodges or paying guest
If lucky after a day's work
Come, eat and rest your head
Daily grind, no time to think ahead



6 B SLUMS

LL IT SMELL
 CALL IT ODOUR
 CALL IT STINK
 But I think

It is by the up-nosed urban elite
 Their way of slamming
 The fine art of blaming
 The slums of Bombay

Who is to blame?
 Is there any shame
 among municipal members?
 or the health and hygiene team?

I have a simple solution:
 Each one of the elite be given
 A house or a posh apartment
 In the middle of a slum settlement
 To reach which they should use and go
 The same method as the dwellers do.

You will soon see arrive
 to the place they live
 Fire engines and water jets
 Mosquito sprays and medical kits
 Garbage collected, pathways paved
 From infant ails children saved
 Until the elite gang succeeds
 In getting all their needs
 In the meanwhile the rest of the dirty

will savour the spill-overs and be happy



7 B BOMBAY DUCK

FOUR DECADES OF INDEPENDANCE
Yet retaining old names makes no sense
From Madras to Bombay I came
Look back; names remain the same

One day both will change
The locals will be glad
When oldies are gone, strange
It'll be if anyone is sad.

Yet doubt lingers in my mind
Old usage later too you may find
Some will stick to the old
nomenclature as I am told .

Bombay duck's taste as ever will last
Madras marina will be breezy and vast.





8 B BOMBAY MENU

Akhil BHARAT aahaar

Restaurants labelled Udupi
are great for dosa and coffee

Vaishnav Punjab is equally good
with *daal-maarke-chaawal* food

Homely *khanawals* are also great
waran- toop- amti you have to taste

Parsi great eats I can't touch
Some may be non-veg – ouch!

Cosmopolitan cuisine you may say
Akhil BHARAT aahaar it may
be called; I coined the word
Bombay or Mumbai belongs to the world.

[notes:

Udupi - typical south India style eatery , vegetarian

Vaishnav Punjab- vegetarian Punjabi type eatery , not many

Khanawals- usually traditional Marathi veg. style homely eatery

Parsi restaurants – mostly non-veg [tasty!] dishes]



9 B MEALS WITHIN MEANS

Taj and Oberoi for the super rich
 Nearby there are outlets which
 Have no ambience but in hygiene and taste
 And at ten percent of cost, as great.

My friend considers *vadaa- paav* as food
 I manage with *kela* and *bun* often
 Occasional *navtaal of malai-maarke-milk* is good
 Live within one's means is possible and fun.

[Notes: *Taj and Oberoi* – five star upgrade south Bombay hotels
vadaa- paav - local tasty affordable snack available everywhere
navtaal of malai-maarke-milk- exclusive milk stalls serve hot milk – *navtaal* is one- eighth of the unit of milk- here it means the vendor is willing to serve even small quantities -with cream on top free]
kela – or *keli*- banana fruit - usually big sized in Bombay – not costly]



10 B BOMBAY TRAVEL

I know a co-commuter of the fast train from *Borivli*
who owns a sedan and a bike in his home town

He says: " Why drive in the crowd , traffic jam , dustily
Trains take less time and money than a transport of your own , "

*[Borivli - a suburban train terminus – about 50 km from
the centre of the city]*



11 B RELIGION

Haji ali is a busy bus stop
 Also where visitors to Bombay stop
 to climb a hundred steps to *Mahalakshmi*
 from where one can see the *dargah* and the sea
 Here your religion disappears
 Almost all come to the dargah
 Only free pious spirit lingers

[*Mahalakshmi – a temple for a Hindu goddess*
Haji ali Dargah - a memorial for a Muslim saint]

Tuesdays in *siddhi vinayak* temple in the city

Fridays in a famous church in the suburb
 Eager crowds of either religion
 Among them single girls are legion

I asked my friends, a newly married couple
 :” How did you find each other?”

He said “She was standing tall in the line
 to pray to *Ganapathy* in the temple

The girl said ,” He was found by St Mary and my mother”

[note: *two religions two genders two locations all single young men and women hoping to find a mate*

Standing in a queue for 8 consecutive weeks - some will find a match –
By the grace of two gods]





12 B BOMBAY SPORTS

Two huge stadia in the city centre
 cannot stand at par with a tiny park
 Teeming with life in Western Dadar
 gave cricket stalwarts who made a mark

Khokho and *kabaddi* in humble *chawls*
 Excellent games in spite of occasional brawls
 Yoga and *mallakhumb* in open air gyms
 Just outside the temple chanting hymns

Borivli park and **kanheri** caves
 To *elephanta* in a boat battling waves
 For each his special liking
 Heritage , climbing or hiking



13 B BE SILENT - JOKE FILLER

On a Paris –Bombay flight I was sitting comfortably on the aisle seat.

Next to me was a foreign gentleman and on the window seat was a young boy.

As the plane was slowly flying down, the streets, buildings and beaches began to appear. The boy was pleased to view the scenery

In his excitement he got up and shouted “BOMBAY, BOMBAY” .
The embarrassed gentleman said “SH .. BE SILENT”

The boy in a louder voice exclaimed “ OMBAYOMBAY”
I asked “ Are you French?” “Yes, you guessed right”

[The joke is hidden in the speaking of French language}



14 B BOMBAY ARTS

If you want to witness a play before lunch
 Mumbai has Marathi drama
 On par with Pune's Deccan gymkhana



Parsi plays with funny Hindi
 mixed with English accent equally funny
 enrich theatre experience in arts centre
 Equalled only by Juhu theatre



Natya Mandir's amateur groups
 later to become pro troupes
 Performing arts in Mumbai galore
 as good now as decades before.



Art displays on every day
 Nature lovers next door
 Very near stands the gateway
 Old museum with things to explore.



Tabla from the North
Mridangam from the South
 Bharathanatyam from Bangalore
 From the West garba and goomer



IF YOU PREFER ANYTHING
 MUMBAI HAS GOT EVERYTHING

[notes may not be needed]

15 B NO BOMBAY NO TRAMS

Bombayites enjoyed tram ride
 Moving in the middle of the main road
 Making the arterial way less wide
 With rhythmic *ding-ding* the tram rolled

THE TRAM starting at VT
 Went up to King's circle
 Covered a half circle
 And returned neatly to VT

Modernizing trend abolished the tram
 Mumbaikars missed journeys slow and calm

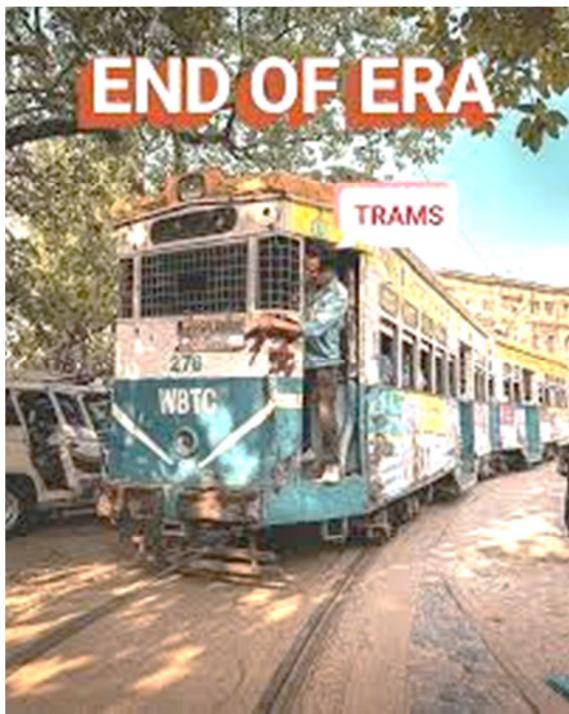
If you are not in a hurry
 Tram travel can be merry

See around, read store signs
 Get slightly wet when it rains
 If nothing interesting to look
 Get a corner seat, sit with a book,

For the cost of a cutting chai
 See half of the whole Mumbai.

Alas! No more tram for Mumbaikars
 Bombayites boast of tram ride
 But metro will come soon
 It will be Mumbai's boon

*[for new generation
 VT- Victoria terminus – now CST]*



16 B MUMBAI RETAIL STORES

Retail stores in the suburbs are open on Sundays , since they depend upon working men and women of Mumbai for outing to enjoy , shopping to buy.

Monday is a working day
For business in the city
It is a shopping holiday
in the eastern suburbs of Mumbai

Thursday is a holiday for shopping
In the western suburbs of Mumbai
So if you have to urgently buy
You can do some
Bus or train hopping

[essentials all the seven days somewhere in the city]

Eastern and western suburbs - division brought on by the railway line running in the middle of the city- called central railway

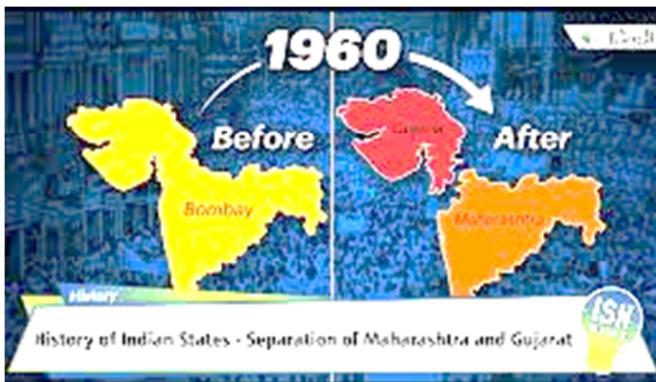
17 B MAY 1, 1960

May day elsewhere
 May be meant for workers
 May day here where
 I live, is for Mumbaikars
 and all of *vishal* Maharashtra
 formed as per linguistic sutra.

[*sutra = formula vishal- broad, vast*]

How about Gujarat? That too.
 With a new capital to boot

Two states newly formed
 In ONE NATION as envisaged
 Like brothers with one mother
 Help and learn from each other.



No matter it took some demos
 Try and succeed as the word goes
 Marathi gets a state by its own name
 Will Bombay too follow the same ?

[*demos- demonstrations, agitations*]

[NOTE; Answer came decades later – Bombay became Mumbai in the year 1995 }

- **May 1st:**

Both Maharashtra and Gujarat observe their statehood on May 1st to commemorate their formation on that date.

On May 1, 1960, the states of Maharashtra and Gujarat were formed by splitting the bilingual Bombay State, with Maharashtra comprising Marathi-speaking areas and Gujarat encompassing Gujarati-speaking areas.

18 B JOIN THE LINE

In erstwhile Bombay now Mumbai
 There were rules and queues to buy
 essentials like milk and rice
 if you wanted them at fair price.

Ration- card for any commodity
 Questioning it was deemed oddity

My friend , a local, and I
 Were just walking for fun
 When he noted as we passed by
 the end of a middle class men in a line.

He said. “Come, quick, let’s join the queue”
 By then we were preceded by a few
 To one of those who rushed
 “What is the line for?” I asked

He said :” I don’t know. Ask the one ahead”
 He too didn’t know but said
 It must be for something good
 Or else, stand in the sun, who would?

[note for new generation:

In 1960’s everyone [not just bpl- below poverty line] had a ration card without which one cannot buy essentials e.g. rice, wheat, milk, kerosene , sugar]



19 B UP AND DOWN

Bombay wanted workers' sweat
 But it won't let them rest
 No room even if one is rich
 Since all space is occupied, every inch.

Karjat, Panvel, Virar and places remote
 are homes to live in and commute.
 to Mumbai . Up and down daily
 Only weekends for the family.



20 B NO DATA NO ROOM

How many lived on the footpath
How many worked on daily wage
even in this modern age
no data no math



21 B NOVEMBER 1995 for MUMBAI

Maharashtra came decades ago
 Mumbai's name is given today
 It is not Maratha ego
 It is our right , I'd say.

Our nation is not America
 named after one person
 It is a peninsula
 Not an island
 or a new land
 seen by a seafaring European.

We were a culture, we existed, lived well
 Our life was great, as history can tell.

If outsiders give us a name , no matter
 Back to the basics is perhaps better.

If Bombay became international
 Why not Mumbai which is rational ?



22 B PRAY TO MUMBADEVI

From today Bombay will be Mumbai
Can I expect any benefits to come by?

Why? Don't you have a job
A little place to rest your head?
Don't be one of mindless mob.
Think of the future and plan ahead.

Earlier you were a Bombayite
Life was a struggle and fight
Now you are a Mumbaikar
Devi may help. Pray to her.

[note for foreigners

Bombay was the name given by the British in their raj days – after it became capital city of Maharashtra the name was changed to Mumbai after the deity of old Mumbadevi temple .Here Devi refers to the goddess]

Mumbai's most famous temple



Inside view of Mumbadevi Temple with full details



23 B VT to CST

Terminal name has changed
 But their nature remained
 Crowded and busy
 Moving not easy

What is there in a name?
 For me both are the same .
 Short form CST, can be read as
 Central Suburban Train terminus

If the other were named WST
 Happy I can be equally
 Western Suburban Train terminus
 It is easy to please the commuters, us.

Change is good . better if it is rational
 In addition to being local, national.

[for non-Maharashtra readers:
 VT- Victoria terminus, old name given by the raj
 CST- Chatrapati Shivaji Terminus
 WST- is not given – only in this author's mind
 Can be Wise Saneguruji Terminus
 Or W[V] eer SavarkarTerminus]

Maharashtra Govt To Change British-era Names Of 8 Railway Stations In Mumbai



- 1) Mumbai Central >> Nana Jagannath Shankarsheeth
- 2) Curry Road >> Lalbaug
- 3) Sandhurst Road >> Dongri
- 4) Marine Lines >> Mumbadevi
- 5) Cotton Green >> Kalachowki
- 6) Charni Road >> Girgaon
- 7) Dockyard Road >> Mazgaon
- 8) King Circle >> Tirthankar Parshvnath



Save this post for later

24 B CHOLA BRONZES

When I visited my aunt in Thanjavur,
 She took us to a Hollywood movie
 in the best local theatre.

When I visited a friend in LA [Los Angeles , **USA**]
 And another in Washington, DC
 They took me to museums
 Where I saw foot-high chola bronzes.

Back In India I mentioned this
 Now my aunt and her friends
 are searching to find
 where they can see chola bronzes
 in and around Thanjavur

[Thanjavur – town in South India where Chola Kings ruled}

Let not this story of mine repeat
 Bombay before British was also great
 Go see Ajanta, Ellora
 Come and see our own Elephanta
 Half way to Pune, visit Karla caves
 See near Borivli old Kanehri caves





25 B BOMBAY VARIETY

Hallmark of this mega city
Is its diversity and variety.

Music of every kind
In this city you can find
Classical Hindustani, Carnatic
Natyasangeet , folk music

Dances of every variety
Are supported by the society
Classical Kathak, Bharathanatyam, Odissi
Pop, Western, Rajasthani or filmi

Games as team or individual
Are played competitively or casual
Net games, field ones, of course cricket
Perhaps the ones in water you don't get

All kinds of **art visual**
For the followers here it is usual
Even a *julus* can be a drama on stage
By amateur artistes of every age

All tastes of **culinary goodies**
Are savoured by satisfied foodies
Puranpoli. Barfi, dhokla
Sandesh, soft rasagolla
Crusty rasmalai, butterlike shrikhand
Peda jilebi malpua kalakand

All are available very much
In suitable areas if you search

Groups to read Marathi poems
 Even in chawls discussion rooms
 Expect the unexpected in this city

Bombay brims with unity in diversity

You may say every mega city
 will have choice and variety
 No doubt, but Bombay is one
 yet for almost a century it had rivals ,none.

One percent of India lives in Bombay
 One hundred percent represented, may I say?





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26 B DON'T CALL ME A SOCIALIST

THE PREAMBLE TO our constitution uses the word, ' socialistic'
As one of the four attributes to our form of government.

Six decades of this makes me say
DON'T CALL ME A SOCIALIST

I do not know enough psychology
to know if I am a sadist or cynic.

But I know I don't want to be called a socialist

I don't mind people starving to death
rather than starving to be walking skeletons.

I do not know whether I am a sadist or cynic .
but I know this:

I would be glad to eradicate poverty,
even if you had to get rid of the poor
to achieve this happy result.

I do not know whether I am a sadist or cynic .
but I know this:

I would rather see school dropouts gainfully employed
[as waiters, valets, vendors, cleaners, cooks, coolies, couriers
,Or anywhere and anyhow where you can use them]
instead of wasting national wealth
in trying to educate the uneducable.

Call me A sadist or cynic,
call me a capitalist or extreme right winger
or a misguided patriot or anything else.

I have seen four decades of socialism
creating crorepathies for the next 4 generations
of the same family, clan, kith and kin,
dynasties, groups ,parties, *netas*

So call me anything .
But DON'T CALL ME A SOCIALIST

[*crorepathies- millionaires*
netas – leaders]



27 B ““YOU'RE A MASOCHIST””

You're a masochist
if you go live in a slum to change THEM
if you go and try to teach the unwilling
if you go buy land to plow and live by it
if you try to get elected on ideals

These were big deals
I wanted to know how it feels
To try to do things at home
Be of assistance to some
of the home maker's chores

Then I found I was a masochist
Trying to change nappies of the infant
Discipline the elder who was adamant
Heat milk without it boiling over
Dust and change sofa cover

Then I said
Let me join a boxing club
With sadists my shoulders rub
They will hit me and be happy
Masochist I am, will the same be .



28 B WHY, TELL ME WHY

Why would I do that ?

Asked the student to the teacher

Who was trying

to trace the missing pen.

I already have a *Parker*

Why would he do that

Asked the defence lawyer

Of the wealthy, guilty ,upper class accused.

He knew the evidence or witnesses

Can be, if not already,

Bought or manipulated.

Why should we do work

Said the striking workers

Egged on by the union leader

We'll get paid any way

Why should it be done now

It can be seen tomorrow

Or when it becomes urgent

Said the government servant

Ordering another cup of tea.

Why should I study now

Asked the college student

I can start when I get a copy

Of the question paper

from my professor uncle.

Why should I worry

They have to give me the job

Says the job-seeker

Flourishing a sheaf of papers

Of all kinds of caste and degree certificates

Why buy a ticket
 Asks a regular train traveler
 We can always pass on something
 To the TC [ticket checker]
 if and when he comes.

Why should I stand in the line
 Asks a queue –jumper
 I have already arranged
 for cha-paani for the counter clerks.

Why produce all these
 bills and vouchers
 Asks the businessman
 to the consultant
 Can't you produce
 suitable accounts and ledgers
 For tax and audit purposes.

Why, tell me why ,
 Anything legal ,
 Anything honest
 Anything social
 Anything ethical,
 Anything patriotic
 Should be done at all
 in this 'blessed' nation and people.



29 B I'VE STILL TO GROW UP

I'VE STILL TO GROW UP
 Old friends who used to bully me
 Still grin and smile at me
 I'VE STILL TO GROW UP

I have still to grow
 I still don't violently hate
 This or that, he or she.
 I have still to grow

I am still a child
 My feelings are mild
 Passions never grow wild.
 I am still a child

I'm not yet a man
 I just thrive, an also- ran.
 I'm not aware of ' I can'
 I'm not yet a man
 I've to grow a lot more
 Join a Guru or become one

Be part of a hate or hated gang
 Bat for this or that or no religion
 Be aware of business in 'black'
 Know to whom and how to bribe
 Be a middle man in some deal

Growing up is not just in
 age or height
 It is how to show your
 societal might



30 B PARK SCENE

There is our regular bench
 Where we seniors perch
 After our morning walk
 In the neighborhood park

“Why is it so dirty today?”
 I asked G – G for Govidacharya

“Didn’t you know? you really missed it”
G said

“Local leaders in our little space
 Lectures and speeches I forgot to mention
 It was a very good function
 You really missed it”

“What was the topic?”
 “Interesting talks full of jokes
 Good food and coffee
 Individual paper plates and cups”
G said;

“Now let me remember, “What was the topic?.”

I saw a fluttering piece of printed paper
 “Ah! Here it is “

*‘Meeting organized by
 CLEAN MUMBAI COMMITTEE’*

I said; “now I know why
 The place is full of garbage
 And rotting left-overs”



31 B CHOICES [1] HOBSON

ONCE DOBSON SAID

I am called a livery man

I am just like every man

If you want a horse I just says
"go to the one which, seeing you, neighs'

If this sounds like no choice

Listen to the old Hobson's voice

You want to ride, huzoor!

Take the horse at the door

Once Hobson knew

And now everyone knows

***You can only choose
that which is given to you.***

*[the author searched for the phrase above and
got a story – curious readers can do the same]*



32 B CHOICES [2] ARE THEY?

The common man
Does not know
Which to choose between

Schilla and the charibdes;
The devil and the deep sea;
The extreme left and the "righteous" right
The saffron and the green
The ladder down or the escalator up;
Food for all or cakes for a few.

Now the common man's leader
Does not know which to choose:

Invite MNC or increase *swadeshi*;
Subsidize diesel or tax cooking gas;
Rural literacy or urban IIT;
Bank on World Bank or faith in people;
Loan on the dollar or support the toiler;
Fair-priced onions or paper made atom bombs .

Once Hobson knew
And now everyone knows
Whichever one chooses
One will be blamed.



33 B CHOICES [3] DILEMMA

It is always a dilemma which creates
not one, but two problems.

If it were Hobson's choice, we can choose IT
And hope IT turns out ok

In a dilemma you know both are bad

For both cause as well as effect is confusion.

When I'm with my friends
It is not even a dilemma

It is a multiple choice with no clues for the right answer.

[[Meaning of

Lemma , dilemma, plight, predicament, quandary

*Please consult a dictionary or thesaurus = you will feel happy that you can
write better than this author]*



34 B WORDS GALORE

Words, words and words
 In a so-called discussion
 mass of people make
 an ass of the group.

How nice if I were dumb and mute!
 I would not talk elaborately
 without a moot point
 and make a rhetoric
 on something simple or stoic.

If I were dumb and mute
 and if I had a bit of paper
 a chit of 3 inches by 5 inches
 and had only a vocabulary of
 essential 1000 words
 I would put down points in brief
 and be ready to see others' chits
 than talk at length,



35 B DISCUSS THE POINT

The media said
we should discuss the issue.
So the authorities called this meeting
to discuss the point.

Some want to close it down
Some want to open it up
Each one was a clown
No one said “shut up”

All the grey hair and beard
and he who got bored but remains
Nothing concrete heard
each bound by his own chains.

One makes a rhetoric
about how we should stop our rhetoric
One takes hours to say
that we should have ended hours ago

The media got a saleable copy
Mute listeners and everyone else is happy.



36 B BIOLOGY CONFUSION OR A DEVILISH TRAP

A flying fox is not a kind of fox

Unlike flying fish, flying squirrel, flying frog,
flying lemur

Or even a flying machine.

A flying fox is really an odd-looking BAT.

Poor confused biologists.

Looking like a fox was enough for a bat
To be christened a fox by these wise men.

Stop! Is it a trap laid by these wise men
to flunk future students with a simple quizzing question?

Pteropus giganteus

The **Indian flying fox** (*Pteropus medius*) is a species of flying fox native to the Indian subcontinent. It is one of the largest bats in the world.

The Indian flying fox is so called due to its unique, fox-like appearance: reddish-brown coat, characteristically long snout as well as large eyes. And indeed, this animal resembles a little fox with wings. An observer would mistake this bat for a fox, if not its leathery wing and the habit of sleeping in an upside down position



KINGDOM

[Animalia](#)

PHYLUM

[Chordata](#)

SUBPHYLUM

[Vertebrata](#)

CLASS

[Mammalia](#)

ORDER

[Chiroptera](#)

FAMILY

[Pteropodidae](#)

GENUS

[Pteropus](#)

SPECIES

Pteropus giganteus

37 B EC CURRENCY

I was never very sure whether
The US currency in its short form
has two slashes or just one.

I, not being one of
IQ idolaters, or quiz whizzes, or finance followers
I can't know or guess the right one.

Now that the current news is currency
of the European community just formed
If you didn't know
Its name is EURO

I know euro is capital E with two dashes

Now I know how a dollar symbol appears
And also the maxim of my peers
"The successful and powerful get
to the last imitating detail.
Slaves and followers of coat-tail "

The dollar gets two slashes
The euro has two dashes.
So I thought and wrote
The same in my son's note

He got marks alright
But I was not bright
To sound logical since
My Dollar assumption was not right

So I write here that euro has two
dashes one up on USA with a new
concept of many countries , one currency.

[Author's note: reaction after a dollar sign with
a single slash was corrected by a
teacher as 2 slashes- I wanted to
verify and found this below]

\$ € ¥ £

38 B FOR INTUITION

WHICH IS BETTER, INTUITION OR INTENTION?

Internal inconsistencies interfere with inference.

Intuition helps in the situation.

Intention impels forward, leaving behind integrity.

Intention helps in decision

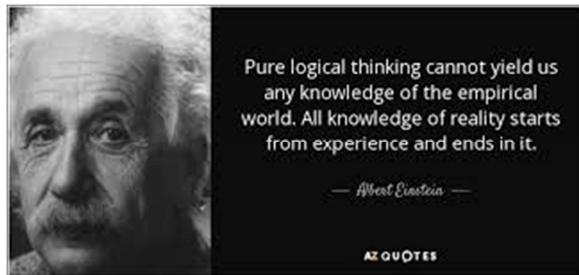
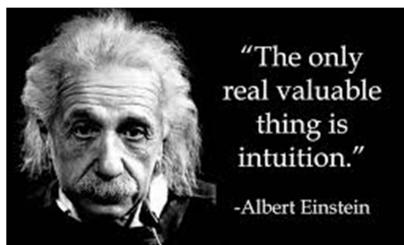
So, which is better, intuition or intention?

Intuition leads to decision with a chance of fifty-fifty.

Intention leads to bias and favours the nitty-gritty.

So, instead of allowing me
To argue, to propel, to conclude by intent
And thus let things go my own way

Please let me
Think, dream, wish for the best and intuit
And hope all will be well.



39 B HAUNTING

Why this mental aberration
that is haunting me,
continues to persist?

This curious craving
this feeling for the poor
the concern for the hapless?

Whereas

Everything that I learned
or that I inherited
tells me not to be concerned ?

Isn't a fact
that those who help themselves
will only be helped?

And
Aren't karma and destiny
much above you or me ?

Why this mental state,
while your secret self
longs for

More money and wealth,
More education and career lift,
More friends and social status ,
And in short more pomp and show?

Is it because
it is fashionable
to make an uninhibited exhibition
of your concern
especially when it does not interfere
with anything that you already possess
and anything that you want to acquire

[get your hands on]
and so fashion , the 'right' thing to do.

Or is it a penance
a religious 'shanti'
a kind of repentance
for what you have procured
and continue to accrue
from the society?

Or is it a mental manifestation
supposed to show your maturity
of thought and intellect
finding no other avenues
of productive indulgence?

Meanwhile,
Without any cause or root
my mental aberration
this concern for the 'others'
grows and grows.

A sporadic wild growth
with its numerous 'roots' or 'tentacles'
Until it is hard to separate
the weeds and the crop.

Who can tell which is an idle thought
and which is a thought-out plan?

Who can analyse
who is arm-chair critic
and who is an honest aspiring idealist?

Who knows which is a growth
and which is cancer?

Between the filthy richwith words to match
and woefully weak working for the poor,

who knows who will be useful to the society?

SOLUTIONS ARE SCARCE
WHEN THE PROBLEMS ARE DAUNTING
BUT I CAN'T STOP
THIS CONCERN WHICH IS HAUNTING .



40 B [1] YOU HAVE NO CHOICE

You have no **choice** if you are reading
 T.S. Eliot or Octavio Paz or Rabindranath Tagore
 Or even A. K. Ramanujan or Nissim Ezekiel
 You have no choice but to appreciate and applaud
 the poetic writing
 .whether you are able to
 see rhyme or reason or not.

You have no choice if you are looking at
 a Rembrandt or a Picasso or a Ravi Varma
 or even an M.F. Hussain or an Adimoolam
 You have no choice but to appreciate and applaud
 the painting
 even if you don't know
 whether it is hung upside down or not.

You have no choice if you are listening to
 a Beethoven or Beatles Or Spice Girls
 or even Baba Saigal or Rahman
 You have no choice but to appreciate and applaud
 the music
 even if you are not sure
 whether it is genius or run of the mill.

You have no choice if you are in a lecture by
 Edward bomb Teller or James DNA Watson
 Or even Romila red Thapar or V.K. filibuster Menon
 You have no choice but to appreciate and applaud
 the diction and delivery
 whether it is understood by the audience or not.

You have no choice if you are watching
 Roman Polanski or Woody Allen or Spielberg
 Or even Basu Bhattacharya or M.S. Sathyu
 you have no choice but to appreciate and applaud
 the film direction
 whether you slept through the viewing or not
 You have no choice if you are writing

or teaching about the lives of
 Abraham Lincoln or Karl Marx or Mao-tse-tung
 Or even B.R. Ambedkar or E.V.R. Naikar
 you have no choice but to appreciate and applaud
 their views and lives
 even if you have doubts about their impact on society

You have no choice
 You can't be the judge or a critic
 Of any of these personalities
 Because they are already there
 And others have joined them
 Or aspire to join them
 Just by being a fan or a follower
 Or led by them or lauding them

If you are a dissenter or free thinker

You have no choice
 Except yakking in
 College canteens
 Union offices
 Sleeper coaches
 Beer or coffee bars
 Bridge tables
 Or your own or friends' drawing rooms
 Or at the most write 'letter to the editor'

Whether you're right or ethical
 Or just stupid and cynical
*You have no choice except to accept
 The system and its experts.*

You have no choice
 But to make some noise
 And continue to wail and weep
 Until into the system you creep
 And make yourself a name
 By playing the same game.

40 B [2] YOU HAD NO CHOICE

You had no choice in the last century
 Now that the media and communication
 have seen an unprecedented revolution

You are happy to have
 blogs, facebooks, twitters, apps and what not

You are happy to upload
 pet likes, non-facts, views , prejudices or pure hatred.

With more texting and messaging
 is there less yakking and whining?

Has the choice led to nuisance and noise
 Fake news, even fake face and voice
 Or to spreading of facts and news
 and sharing of honest views?
 [This was written in 2024 CE]



41 B SION

Sion may have a meaning
 for one with historical leaning
 Just as Mumbai can have a connection
 with local custom and tradition

Maharashtrians may or may not know
 That there is a meaning for sion
 May not care if they knew too

Sheev is near in sound
 To the old name
 Also to *chatrapati*

Call it sion or sheev it is a landmark
 Mark defining the start of the suburbs
 Once the city was down to Dadar
 Farther to Sion it came later

Come up to here by auto
 Change to a taxi
 To city if you want to go

After Sion, the landmark
 Life is like walking in a park
 A golf course in the middle
 of lower middle class locality
 It is no puzzle or riddle

Before a traumatised community
 Came here to settle and survive
 The elite golf course was built
 Since the slopes were mild.

Resilience thy name is Sindhi
 Business sense is born with thee

In spite of great losses
 Thou could arise from the ashes
 Never say die , start anew
 As a community I salute you



1543, the [Portuguese](#) took possession of the largely uninhabited [islands of Bombay](#), naming it Sião, after a biblical hill in Israel.^[2] The Portuguese gave the [Jesuit](#) priests the sole ownership of some of these islands. The Jesuits then built a [chapel](#) on the hill near the present-day railway station and named it after Mount Zion (Sion) in Jerusalem.

SEE ALSO 3B SINDHI

42 B MUMBAIKAR AT YOUR SERVICE

Marathi *maanus* are thin but muscular

At work always prompt and regular

Physically, AND mentally clean and honest

As service providers they are the best

The team of *dubbavalas*, tiffin carriers
Awesome coordination and all round cheers

To the 'rama' give your flat's key

Come in the evening only to see

A gleaning floor and all the rest

Will be intact you can trust

[*Maharashtrian male domestic workers are*

in some places called ramas]

[*maanus – men and women]*



43 B IS IT POETRY?

What will I call what I write?

If I call it **PROSE**

You will check for subject, predicate and object
Along with proper preposition and correct conjunction
Not to talk of punctuation signs at proper places.

If I call it an **ARTICLE**

Authenticity as well as accuracy
And accountability may be asked for.

I can't call it **DRAMA**

Because

What I write may be emotional
Sometimes sensational but not stagy
Nor theatrical and not even dramatic
But most often pedestrian.

Write I must and I have no option left

so

I call it poetry

If it has no rhyme or reason

Then it will be blank verse, because,
Prose can be prosaic, but,
Prosody tolerates free blank verse.

If you, the readers, are not that conventional
And willing to waive blind belief in grammar rules

You may accept

My concept

Which is

Any jumble of words
Born because of concern
Felt with feeling
Expressing emotion
Outlining one's own opinion
Can at least be called a prose-poem.

Now what will you let me call
What I write ?
Is it poetry or is it not?



44 B WHAT IS A POEM?

What is a poem
is always a problem question
both for the literature student
as well as for the creative writer.

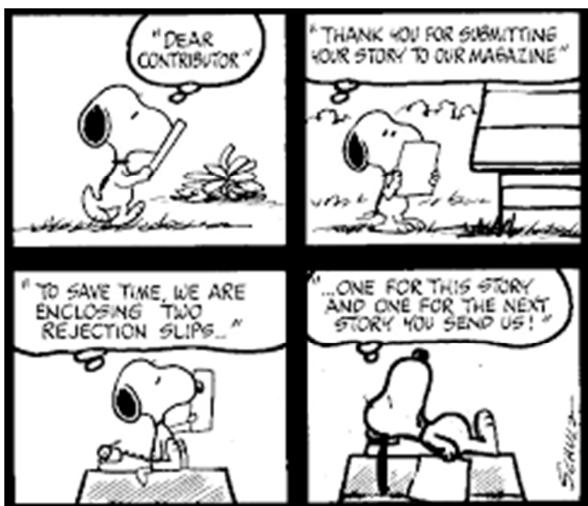
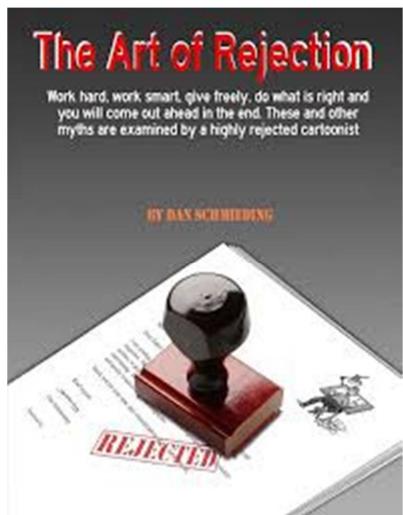
In trying to define poetry
the astute students end up realizing that
a good piece of prose
or dramatic dialogue in a scene
or an artful reporting of an event
can be called poetry,
if it arouses your senses
emotion or imagination.

But editors and publishers
seem to differ. One wonders

Anything written on any subject
by a known writer is “writing”
And by anyone else is trash.

Otherwise
how do you account for your Sunday paper
full of rubbish

And
the editor’s waste bin
overflowing with
unread and unopened submissions
of unknown writers?



45 B YOURS OR MINE

Whose is good poetry?
 It can be yours or mine ,
 If it has sense and artistry
 of apt words and thoughts, fine.

Whose is a good poem?
 It can be mine or yours ,
 If it can affect them
 listeners even for hours.

Visual imagery

- William Wordsworth's classic 1804 poem "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" is a good example:
*I wandered lonely as a cloud
 That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
 When all at once I saw a crowd,
 A host of golden daffodils;
 Beside the lake, beneath the trees,*

The Rainbow

My heart leaps up when I behold
 A rainbow in the sky:
 So was it when my life began;
 So is it now I am a man;
 So be it when I shall grow old,
 Or let me die!
 The Child is father of the Man;
 I could wish my days to be
 Bound each to each by natural piety.
 by William Wordsworth

The Rainbow Christina Rossetti

Boats sail on the rivers, And ships sail on the seas; But clouds that sail
 across the sky Are prettier far than these. There are bridges on the rivers,
 As pretty as you please; But the bow that bridges heaven, And overtops the
 trees, And builds a road from earth to sky, Is prettier far than these.

The Snare

by *James Stephens*

I hear a sudden cry of pain!
 There is a rabbit in a snare:
 Now I hear the cry again,
 But I cannot tell from where.

But I cannot tell from where
 He is calling out for aid!
 Crying on the frightened air,
 Making everything afraid!

Making everything afraid!
 Wrinkling up his little face!
 And he cries again for aid;
 - and I cannot find the place!
 And I cannot find the place
 Where his paw is in the snare!
 Little One! Oh, Little One!
 I am searching everywhere!

Who Has Seen The Wind

Author: Christina Rossetti

Who has seen the wind?
 Neither I nor you.
 But when the leaves hang trembling,
 The wind is passing through.
 Who has seen the wind?
 Neither you nor I.
 But when the trees bow down their heads,
 The wind is passing by.

46 B ARM CHAIR TRAVELER

My friend dear to me as a brother
 though weak and sick; he didn't bother
 He would go out on a week end trip
 All over Maharashtra just in a zip.

No matter he needed help to walk
 even a few steps . Please don't mock
 the gait and manner of his walking
 In his mental image he was the king
 among travellers and tourists
 Leave alone amateurs or adventurists

Sitting in his comfortable arm chair
 He adjusts his specs suitably bifocal
 Asks me to adjust the TV to channel local
 With a coffee mug on the side table,
 Says:
 "Program starts be ready to travel
 This show is made very well
 It looks as though you travel
 To your friends you can tell
 Thank god for this Marathi channel"

Ask him for advice where to go
 Both for spenders high or low
 he could guide from where he is seated .
 To a strong filter coffee you are treated.

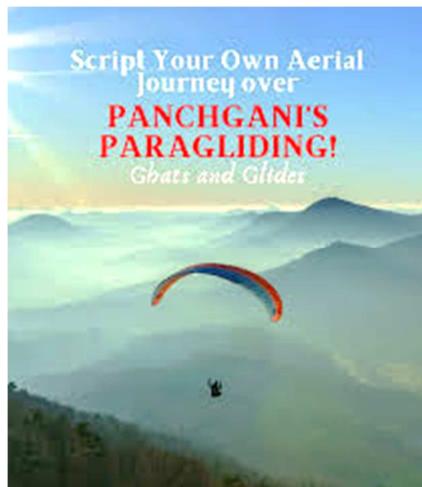
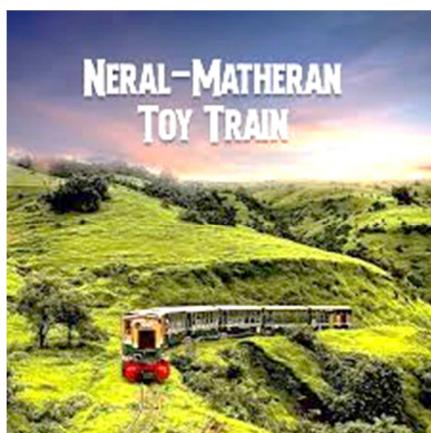
Mahabaleshwar is for stray and sight see
 Matheran is for stay and with locals be

Lonavla is for you to touch clouds
 At Malshej Ghat you are carried by clouds

In the monsoon forget Shillong or Shimla
 Come to Matheran, Malshej or Lonavla

Enjoy *vada paav* with *chutney of lassoon*
 Tour Maharashtra during the monsoon
 My friend lacked health, money or grit
 to tour ;yet he had the rare spirit
 of mentally scanning his local landscape
 You may call it a way to escape
 the boredom and pain of the indoor
 I call it interest and mind's vigour.





47 B BEAUTIFUL OR USEFUL

Can sunlight make me beautiful?

Can sunlight make me healthy?

Can sunlight make me wealthy?

Or, wise, intelligent ?

Perhaps indirectly, I don't canvass for it .
Advt.s galore for any or each of these benefits:

They claim this can make you beautiful--
Skin treatments , slimming diets, cellulites,
make-up, hair dye, nail polish, nd many other products

They claim this can make you healthy –
Slimming, , flowers, jewellery, gym, pool, jogging , cycling
and many other fitness aids

They claim this can make you wealthy--
Mutual funds, share markets, lottery, real estate, insurance
including agency, coaching classes, etc.

They claim this can make you wise/ intelligent/ happy/
peaceful—
Guruji, astrology, religion, yoga, gita, bible, othr unmentioned
holy books , astrology, etc,

If it makes you beautiful and you could afford , do it

If it makes you healthy and you could afford , do it.

If it makes you wise, peaceful and you are capable of it , do it

Or will this be useful? - **A SMILE ON YOUR FACE**

Yes , sure, said my friend
But that is not the end.

Some may be good, some not bad
To your list allow me to add
A word of praise, a word of passion ,
A word of compassion, a kind expression,
cheerful manners, positive approach,
Hum in the throat, song on the lips,
Dance in the steps, a ballet in behaviour,
and many other HR and personality development tips

I said, great, my mentor Murthy!
May I consider myself worthy
of your friendship, and company?

However, try these GIVE and TAKE list::

A meaning in any work
A book in any sentence
Wisdom in any decision
A lifetime in any advice

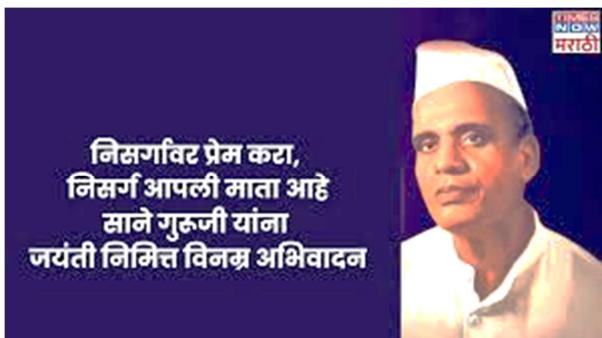
Try giving if you can
Or taking if you are lucky to get
And feel the difference.

Can sunlight make me beautiful? Healthy/ useful / happy/

Yes, it can

and so can

GIVING OR TAKING GOOD ADVICE AND APTITUDE,



48 B. CONCRETE FOR REST!

Cement, tar, concrete and steel
Seem to give comfort and power
A day will come, I feel,
When, to tear off this cover,

People will flock
and jeer and mock
at the still, barren, inhuman life

Under the glittering stars, only strife
Is abundant in this land.
Ignored is ecology's demand
to respect mother nature
and every living creature.

Hey man, mother's child!; if resourceful tap her.
At least do not ravage and rape her.



49 B HOLY DIWALI

Diwali is a corruption of deepavali
 which is what is seen in every Indian house
 row on rows of lamps
 Once carefully tended oil lamps
 now taken over by technology.

While this is feast for the eyes
 ears suffer the most
 When light show is going on
 can sound be far behind?
 Decibel levels soar
 to reach 3 score and more.

It is not just fun, want to say the tradition lovers
 They try to find some stories from mythology
 Some celebrate the coming back to kingdom of one avatar of
 Vishnu
 Another go thousands of years forward to another avatar of
 Vishnu.

No matter what reason was told
 celebrations are the same
 people have fun.

Ancients liked to mix myth with life
 They had the urge to invoke religion.

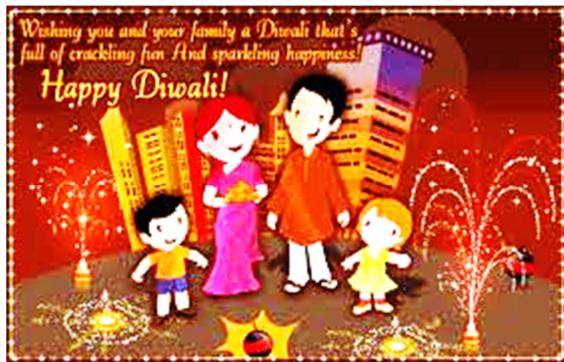
Could not these elders have had pure fun
 or at least let others have one?

Why should it be a holy day?
 Can't we have just a holiday?

[Note for foreigners:

People of Ayodhya were supposed to decorate with lamps to welcome their king Rama

In some other parts of India, it is believed a demon called Narakasura was killed by Krishna [perhaps with Satyabhama] on this day]



I had to go to the chemist for aspirin
when the teachers tried to push chemistry in.

Now that I am answerable only to myself,
chemistry appears very interesting.

When my bosses wanted me to do **chemistry**
my stomach reacted with hyper-acidity.

Now that I am free
chemistry appears very interesting,
no headache, no stomach pain.

Wait, *kahani aur baaki hai*
Both these maladies came back when
my bosses published the results
without my name and , methods of course.

I found a new rule of chemistry:
It is called **explosive disgust.**

When the catalyst is ignored
products cleverly siphoned off
Any reactive elements are cleaned and got rid off

What reaction do you get?
Not one of bubbling effervescence
Not one of cool endothermic
Not one of warm exothermic
But a violent reaction of explosive disgust.

[NOTE : *kahani aur baaki hai-* STANDARD QUOTE FROM BOLYWOOD MOVIES]

51 B LEFT OUT

If i have anything to give
to whom do i give
and how ?

If i have a beautiful story to tell
where will i get the audience
and how ?

If i have a pensive poetic piece
where are the ears
and how will i reach those?

If i can emote very well
where is the stage
and how do i get the viewers?

If I have simplified Einstein's theory
to whom do i give
and how ?

If i have extra food
where are the hungry bellies
and how do i find them?

If I were a big trader ,
I would advertise

If I were a small vendor ,
I would go from door to door.

If I were a big boss ,
I would order help.

If I were a famous person ,
I would not need to beg.

If I were a political leader ,
I would already have *chamchas*.

If I were a cine star ,
I would lean on my fans.

If I were a general ,
I would be able to command.

If I were a selfish customer ,
I would go through brokers.

In short
Those who sell
impress/ entertain/ enforce
tempt/ coax, / coerce/

Will be able to find customers by apt means.

But if i have something to give
Either literary /or artistic/ or altruistic
or rational/ or educative/ intellectual / or idealistic/

I am left with the question,
'Where is my target , and how do I reach it? '

If i am too naive
Sensitive/ proud/ prudish/
self-respecting/ gentle
or just too simple, common

I have to remain
waiting to be invited
hoping to be found
yearning to be adored...



**Like an unpublished poet
Or like a wall flower,
all ready and done up.**

52 B HANDICAPPED, DISABLED

Events come, events go,
I watch them happen, I can't move.

Events come, events go
getting out for me is no, no.

Events come, I can't go
for mother told me so.

Clowns come; jokers go;
I watch and smile, amidst my woe.

Cars come , buses go
my feet are glued to the floor.

. Events come, events go,
I am numb, I care no more.

Tractors come, cattle go
I try to move my mind to plow;
Children come, elders go
Play or participate for me both are no
Drummers come, whispers go
I can't talk, mother told me so

Night comes, noises go
I sit and watch darkness grow.

Thieves come, money goes
I'm a witness but nobody knows.
Police comes , after the bandits go
up and down they make a great show
Lawyers come, scot-free the culprits go
whom will I tell what I know?

Revolution comes, bourgeoisie go
I watch with awe, lying low.

Workers rise; exploiters fall
I don't know if that's all'
Peasants unite; landlords go
I sit on the fence, my mind is slow.

Workers rise, exploiters go
Which way to lean, i won't know

The fire of Russia may get cold
I won't care if the rouble
tumbles down; for mother has told
to always be away from trouble.

The globe returns to free enterprise
Lured by promises of sugar and spice
I won't know if the right is right
but i should shun any fight.

EVENTS HAPPEN ONE AFTER ANOTHER
I CAN'T JOIN, I ADORE MY MOTHER.



53 B FLYING KISSES ARE FLOATING AROUND

A FLYING KISS is a f.. l ee....ting fantasy

A FLYING KISS is just imagined
by the sender and the hopeful receiver.

Unlike a spoken sound or a soft whistle
it does not even produce
a pattern of disturbance in the air

A FLYING KISS is like
A telephonic assurance in a govt. office.
no concrete action will take place
unless it is followed by a hard copy.
It is just a fleeting fantasy.

A FLYING KISS is like
Promises made in a political speech.
No progress will take place
unless Passed on to adm. Depts..
It is just a fleeting fantasy

A FLYING KISS is like
Proposed project in a science lab.
No results can be reported
unless equipment and facilities are made available.
It is just a fleeting fantasy

We all dream and fantasize and
Flying kisses are floating around.



54 B SITA AT LAS VEGAS

Can i do can-can?
i think i can
after a training.

Then i would see if i can
but even then, I fear, i can't.

Neither my legs and thighs
Nor my ideas of virtue and vice
Would i like to be exposed,
Even though on me imposed.
by my clan and culture
I can't sully the stature
of the great woman whose name I bear
I have to be beware
of what I do and what I wear.

Ca n i do can-can?
no, i can't.
And now
you know why.



55 B WRONG TREE

Are all our wise men
barking at the wrong tree?

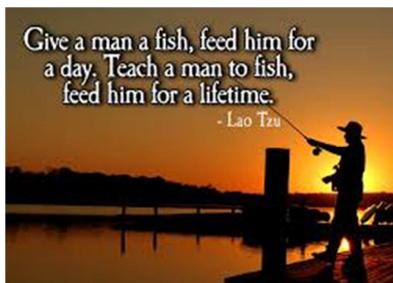
Why sympathy, why not empathy?
Why preach, why not participate
Why use ,why not employ?
Why reserve, why not empower?

Why give fish, why not teach fishing?
Why coach, why not give right to self education?
Why freebies? Why not pay for work?
Why concessions? Why not permissions?

Why social classes? Why not universal citizen?
Why religion? Why not leave to own choice?
Why only one language? Why not as many as one can?
Why regulate? Why not guidelines?

ARE WE ALL BARKING AT THE WRONG TREES?

[written circa 1980 CE- in Bombay]



56 B HIGHWAY 1

I write this sitting trapped
in this highway

They said :

“” Take this route . It is fast, easy,
Free and competitive
It is a challenge, do it””
I went along
Now I think ,
I'm stuck , no way to go'
I hate the day
I turned in here

56 B HIGHWAY 2

I write this sitting trapped
in this highway

They said “take this highway.
Everyone goes by this one””

I joined the multitudes ,
taking the well-trodden route.

Soon I found I was caught in a jam;
Hundreds trying to reach the same destination;
Each delaying the other one in the way of another ,
all trying to reach there first,

I am sitting here trapped in the freeway'
Contemplating where I went wrong.

56 B HIGHWAY 3

They said :

“” Take this lonely road,
Everyone goes by the crowded highway””

I ventured all alone
taking the unusual path.

Soon I found I was caught in a block
The road to any destination was not yet completed’

I must turn back I try in vain. For
Hundreds behind me ,
trying to reach the same place
where I thought I would go, but could not,
blocking my way back.
May be they followed me.
May be they were also misled.

I am sitting here , not able to retreat,
Until the last one to join the line decides to go back
By that time it may be too late.



57 B SIAM- Sometimes I amaze myself

Sometimes I amaze myself
doing things unexpected from me.

1 . SIAM

I actually said, ‘hello’”
to my good-for-nothing boss.

SIAM

I actually returned the smile
from my usually grumpy boss
even when i knew the smile
was for the beauty behind me.

2. SIAM

i really let go of a pun job
when i met a turbaned man from Punjab.

SIAM

i really let go of a joke
when the turbaned man
wanted to go home because he was sick

3. SIAM

i actually paid for a saree in a hi-fi store
though the same was available
at half price on the nearby footpath
because it was her birthday.

SIAM

i actually took her for selecting saree from the hi-fi store
even when she was willing to buy from the footpath at half the
price
because it was her birthday.

4. SIAM

i silently made another plate of salad
 when one of my desi guests
 drew the whole plate to his side.

SIAM

i waited all my guests to finish
 before i got up from the dining table.

5. SIAM

i silently finished the tea
 offered by the polite and courteous host
 even if it had no sugar.

SIAM

i could pretend to enjoy the cup of tea
 offered by the benevolent host
 even if it was a saturated solution of sugar.

6. SIAM

i actually let go my seat in the bus
 reserved by my purse put through the window
 let go in favour of an old blind man.

SIAM

i moved forward saying, “that seat is for the mds”
 when the obvious eve teasers
 offered the centre seat between them.
 [*md- mentally deficient person*]

7. SIAM

i did not yell at the children
 even when i knew
 it was their ball which broke my window glass.

SIAM

i really yelled at the neighbourhood children
 when i knew and they did not know

it was my mistake which broke the glass.

8. SIAM

i actually joined the street children
with my awkward steps
in their hopscotch game

SIAM

i allowed the group of children
to use my Italy marble- tiled floor
for their hopscotch game.

SIAM, SOMETIMES I AMAZE MYSELF
BY DOING THINGS
QUITE UNCHARACTERISTIC OF ME



58 B PARODY

Parody is funny , enjoyed by the audience.

Parody can put you in stitches
Or at worst, bring out a wry smile.

Parody even a highly successful one
cannot create soulful melody or rhapsody.

A parody can be pathetic if it is sadistic.

But

Behind a parody performance
by a serious creative artist
lies a lot of passion and compassion.

Awe and adulation
Study and observation.

I cherish with all my heart
Parody as a form of art.

However

When I see so much hypocrisy
In this our democracy
In affairs of the state
I see parody in poor taste.

Anywhere around us if you care to see
You'll volunteer to agree with me.

Erstwhile bandits expecting to be adored as Robinhoods;

Slumlords imagining themselves as Bhimrao's
Behind the scene prompters and kingmakers behaving as
Chanakyas

Organizers of *suparis* donning the cloak of *durbaris*
 Scam kings of crores writing their stories as though they are
 'experiments with truth'

Are these just pathetic parodies?
 Or more serious malignant maladies?

A parody artist is sensitive, observant, talented, creative
 A pathetic *apist* is crude, clever, crooked and manipulative.

A parody reminds us of the past magnificence.
A pathetic imitation is just modern decadence.

As long as this democracy
 Encourages blatant hypocrisy
 Crudity will be culture
 Parody becomes literature.

[Notes can be given . only bombaia words are used- so not given]
Apist- author's word]



Art imitating life and vice versa

59 B POWER CUT IN BOMBAY

I went to a play called ‘*the dark room*’

They delayed the start

Either for audience to muster

Or the daylight to decrease

But when the play truly started

We heard only feeble voices-

No scenes, no actions

In a dark room what else do you expect?

Whether wantonly done

Or thanks to Bombay’s frequent ‘power- cuts.?



60 B TELEPHONE 'LINES'

1. The number you've dialled is currently busy. Please call later.

This means the person whom you are trying to call is talking to someone else.

So, please try afterwards.

This also means this number is at present [= at this moment of time] is busy. Please call again.

If you thought you will give him phone company

Poor chap, mostly lonely,

Forget him; he has others.

2. The number you've dialled is currently switched off. Please call later

This means the person you want to call does not want to talk to you.

No, he does not want to receive your call.

No it means, he does not want to receive any call now

If you thought you are great

And one and all will wait for your call

This says you were wrong.

Telephone lines of Mumbai

[And all other places]

Are **eye openers**

and their recorded messages

sound advice like that of a guruji.



61 a B NEED FOR SORTING SOTS [1]

English has many words
 for my son and his friends
 They can be one of many
 Depending on company
 Or severe leaning to habit
 unable to get out of it

Addict, wino, tippler, sot
 drunkard , drinker, user [of] pot

Western culture allows wine
 as if it is harmless, fine
 For them a mug of beer
 may bring all round cheer

Like the camel and Arab story
 social drinking makes an entry
 engulfs the man to make him a slave
 of worse habits. I grade them as grave

I suggest that all men
 must be subjected to a regimen
 of test and questioning
 And grade them into a category
 As per his addiction's severity

How this will help let
 social scientists study
 It will help me at the outset
 to ask "Your bf , which category?"

*[SOT is a drunkard
 Bf- boy friend]*

Note: add from the list taken from a thesaurus

Strong matches

- *alcoholic* -----
- *bacchanal*
- *boozer* -----
- *carouser*
- *debauchee*
- *dipso*
- *dipsomaniac* -----
- *drinker* -----
- *drunk*
- *inebriate* -----
- *lush*
- *soak*
- *sot* -----
- *souse*
- *sponge*



61b B SOT AND POT [2]

I could not find in
 my little dictionary
 many words for my neighbour
 who was found often in a gutter

Since he was a drunkard and addict
 When will he get worse I can't predict
 We the wily ones wanted to refer
 to him secretly but we prefer
 a code word- there was no need for any
 since I saw in a thesaurus that synonyms were many

Some usable and some only slang
 all usable by our mischievous gang
 English is thus fine

In our languages we could not find
 one which neither the subject
 nor others may understand and object.
 Don't you think we speak English
 though some are from Dharavi?

*[Note Dharavi is a slum in Mumbai]
 [Readers can see for themselves a thesaurus]*

*[Sharabi, bevada, kuduka, kudikaaran. Paanakkaran etc
 May not help because the sot gang includes addicts from all corners]*



62 B GOLD [1]

As a metal it is beatable
 As a medal it is unbeatable.

[Written circa 1980, in Bombay]

GOLD [2]

As a metal it is malleable and beatable
 As a medal it is [in] valuable and unbeatable

*[to Mary Kom, Saina Nehwal and all other golden girls and boys]
 Time of CWG [=common wealth games] --, written, 2018 in Mysore]*





He captained the Indian national team, which won the gold medal at the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow, then part of the Soviet Union

With so many youngsters, skipper Baskaran felt that his team needed an extra dose of motivation to build its confidence before flying out of India.

And so, the first inspirational talk happened at a pre-Olympic national camp in Bengaluru.

"This bunch was lucky to have been spoken to by field marshal Sam Manekshaw," captain Vasudevan Baskaran had said on the Sony Sports show *Medal of Glory*.

"He visited us twice and talked about the target at the Olympics. That's how it began."

Having seen the effect it had, the Indian hockey team captain also requested former Olympic hockey gold medallists and selectors, Leslie Claudius and Muniswamy Rajagopal to talk about their triumphs.

The talks genuinely made an impact.

63 B BONDS

Without bonds

There is no structure

There is no function.

If there are no bonds

Can we call them inert? Mostly yes.

However entities can be inert

If there is no interaction.

A free electron is “free”

If it is not bonded or bound

to any mighty nucleus around.

It is free

To exist

To confer charge

To give polarity

Or to make things **oxidising**.

Just by refusing favours

It can reduce and nullify

over-reactive ones.

Or confer **reduction**.

But a single free electron

does not an atom make

unless it is bound.

Binding together

of different origins

Is the beginning of new species.

Sodium and chlorine

unless come together
In close union
can never be welcome
to a tasty meal
or tongue- tickling pickle.

Unless the apt molecules are
Bonded, structured, ordered
And if necessary twisted,
Can seldom make

A paper to write on
A plastic to pack in
A medical pill for relief
A protein to live by
Some starch for energy
Or a DNA to propagate

Electrons may be tiny
Found everywhere
Highly expendable
But electrons are the binders
So the core part of chemistry

Look around any society
Dime a dozen toilers
Manual labour **skilled craftsmen**
But sans them can I do anything? .

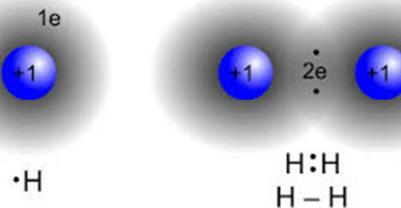
I who can taste tea and certify
after it is made and served
And my co-professionals

who are toast-masters
ever think of
the **bonded labour** behind the tea.

Are we reminded of
rows of plantations
manual bonded labourers
gathering one by one
three leaves and a bud
and all the rest of work
before the tea is ready to pour?
Can we?

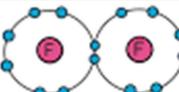
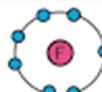
[written while a 'high tea' session of chemistry
was attended by the author]

[note: common salt = sodium chloride , NaCl]

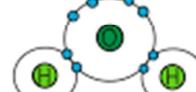


Covalent Bond: the sharing of electrons

the goal is to achieve a set of 8 valence electrons



Each fluorine atom has 7 valence electrons. A covalent bond completes the octet for both.



Oxygen has only 6 valence electrons. It can make 2 covalent bonds.



64 B RACE COURSE IN RAJKOT

Race course in Rajkot
 is a popular place
 it is thronged by
 people who would not
 know a mare from a filly
 nor the meaning of even the 'odds.'

Race course in Rajkot
 is a popular place
 populated in the evening
 by ice-cream lovers
 and open space seekers.
 Or just idlers alone or in groups.

Fashion people with frolicsome pets
 Couples, just married or thirty years ago

Race course in Rajkot
 is a popular place
gujjus of Rajkot
 will equally enjoy
 Fruit- filled *shrikhand*
 and ginger ice-cream
 any *farsan*
 or even popcorn.

Race course in Rajkot
 is a popular place.
gujjus seem to love open space
 more than open air
 They don't mind exhaust fume
 from auto with illegal kerosene as fuel
 from own cars and scooters.

Race course in Rajkot

is a popular place.
 The place itself
 is an open space so far
 luckily without
 the ubiquitous plastic waste and other garbage.

Race course in Rajkot
 is a popular place.
 There are neither horses nor races.
 No betting, no gambling
 for quite a long time so far.

Race course in Rajkot
 is a popular place
 Citizen and children alike
 can enjoy the free space.
 See an art exhibition,
 Play with hands-on gadgets in the science centre
 See a whole night's sky in one hour in the indoor planetarium.
 Play or watch tennis ball cricket;
 Just walk around the large oval
 Or just smell the season's strong odour of
 thousands of pearl sized white flowers of neem trees.

Race course in Rajkot
 is a popular place.
 I wish Mumbai
 and all other big or small places
 copy the spirit of the Rajkot race course.

**But what is it I hear?
 A stadium in the oval?**

A stadium-- only to be used
 by a select few
 for a select few purposes

for a select few days in a year?
 The rest of the days
 not useful to you , me
 or even to those who wanted it.

While I wish others could copy Rajkot
 Rajkot goes and apes
 the rest of the misguided lot.

It just reinforces the adage:
**enjoy the good luck
 while it lasts**

Who knows what is the fate of the race course in Rajkot?
 Your own elected leaders may spoil the show soon.

Race course in Rajkot
 is a popular place
 for how long more , I won't know.

[The author was impressed by the small science centre managed by large hearted people who allowed, nay invited ordinary public to come see and feel their science exhibits and explanations. The open space nearby is a great facility only available in small cities - written circa 1995 CE – gujju- a gujarati person- here used with respect]





65 B PLACE TO GO TO [1]

If you had infinite time
 And thoroughly bored at home
 Where would you go ?

1. To the office .., did you say?

No. I can't stand
 The boasting boss
 Or his pretty assistant
 Or their antics

Even if I may get O.T. for my time.
 [note; o.t. –overtime money]

If you had infinite time
 And thoroughly bored at home
 Where would you go ?

2 To the cinema., did you say?

No. I can't stand
 One more silly song
 Or one more one-sided fight
 Or a car chase with Bombay taxis
 Even if I have a free pass.

If you had infinite time
 And thoroughly bored at home
 Where would you go ?

3. To music, dance or theatre., did you say?

No. I can't stand
 The static or kinetic exercises
 Of vocal chords or hips and bosoms
 Even if a friend is the organizer.

If you had infinite time

And thoroughly bored at home
 Where would you go ?
 4. To the hotel or restaurant did you say?
 No. I can't stand
 Over-eating or drinking
 By yourself or with friends
 Even if it were 'on the house'

If you had infinite time
 And thoroughly bored at home
 Where would you go ?

5. To the beach to watch sunset did you say?
 No. I can't stand
 Beggars and vendors
 Dacoits in the dark
 Even if the frothing waves
 And tea-cup sunset are great.

If you had infinite time
 And thoroughly bored at home
 Where would you go ?

6. How about the library?
 Where there is neither a boss nor a favoured assistant
 And you are the master of what you read.
 Where you are not the captive audience
 But you can choose your fight and the winner.
 Where the music never stops since it is in your head
 and the dialogue lingers as long as you want.
 Where sumptuous fares laid out are unlimited
 You're not sated even after many helpings.
 Where sunrise and sunset can be at the same place and time
 without any beach or ambient attendant hazards.

How about the library? Where

Unlike the office
You can choose your work and the reward
How about the library? Where
Unlike the cinema
You can choose your actors and the climax
How about the library? Where
Unlike the theatre
You can choose your raga and the songs
How about the library? Where
Unlike the restaurant
You can choose your menu, price and ambience
How about the library? Where
Unlike the beach
You can choose your season, tide , weather and waves.

[Written sitting in USIS library near Churchgate Station , circa 1998]



65 B PLACE TO GO TO [2]

Did you say the internet and world wide web ?
 Where all kinds of libraries with their contents
 are offered to you on a platter by servants
 who are your own fingers.

But then these are aptly named , net or web
 Many of my friends have got caught in it

Just like alcohol, drugs and bad habit
Easy to use but difficult to throw out

It is like a cleverly constructed labyrinth
Easy to get in but difficult to get out

If you had a tricycle, ridden a bicycle
 Then you can handle a motor power
 And drive safely
 Without harm to yourself or others.

If you had read books , used dictionaries
 Then you can handle powerful internet
 And browse safely
 without harm to yourself or others.

Yet the touch, feeling, skipping pages
 Browsing from different shelves
 Weighing the tomes
 Or counting the volumes
 Spreading related or unrelated
 Books and pages on one table
 Helped by a good librarian
 are old fashioned enjoyment.

Sometimes serendipity
 I find some gems left

open by other readers.
Just read the chapter titles
or just see pictures in a
textbook or children's book.

Library is a friendly hostess:
Telling you "taste us , taste us"
while offering pieces of cake
and other snacks for us to take .

[written circa 2017 after internet revolution]

66 B NAVI MUMBAI.

A place is known by the people who dwell
there and Mumbai is known quite well
as a place of choice, for chance and talent
Only a few you can imagine as equivalent

If you want to own a house
as well as land and do agriculture
In Mumbai you can't dream of a future.

Yet once worked in Mumbai
People manage to rent or buy
A room, flat or shared place to stay
Even in a suburb far away

NAVI MUMBAI is not a concept
It is a new construct
Made possible by bridge both rail and road
Hurry up before every inch is sold

[written before 1998 CE]





67 B THE BOMB, A POEM FOR CHANGE

[EXPLDING A BOMB BY CHINA, INDIA, PAKISTAN IS THE CURRENT NEWS]

IT HAS TO BE TOLD THAT ASIANS ARE NO MORE TIMID

It has to be told and reinforced and proved
by exploding an atomic bomb
that Asians are no more timid.

When will this situation change?

When will we learn that an Asian a-bomb
is unnecessary, is out of character and an anachronism?
When will I hear that an Asian going hungry is news?

When will the power world learn
to respect honest effort, mutual wellbeing
and thus for themselves earn
the respect as rational human beings?



68 B URBAN IDLER'S TREK [GEN POEM]

IF WE SEEK SHERPAS' SHOULDERS

One to lead and show the road,
One to manage the group and the load;
finding our steps on ice and boulders.

Some other help to manage material
Is it not our expedition rare and real?
If we, the urban idlers think of adventure
is it less than any other nurturer of nature?

*[Written while seeing a slide show –
mountain climbing club meet circa 1975 CE]*



AUTO RIKSHAS are three wheelers
 So I thought
 until I took a ride on one.

If you had enjoyed seeing
 the pirouetting on one heel
 of a talented ballerina
 or a skilled ice-skater
 You would see the parallel.
 When the autoriksha
 suddenly takes a U turn
 and taking U along

There, you SAW a pirouette;
 Here, you FEEL one.

AUTO RIKSHAS seem to run on one wheel

69. B THREE WHEELER [2]

AUTO RIKSHAS are three wheelers
 So I thought
 until I took a ride on one.

There are three wheels
 But the driver needs only one – the front one
 This I learnt first-hand
 No, not my hand , but the head .

From behind the khakhi collar
 and the matching cap
 I saw a menacing bump ahead
 on the road

The driver's wheel neatly avoided it

What happened to the passenger?
or the other two wheels

Ask my head
The nasty bump on my head will tell.



Somerset Maugham wrote a great story
 It was called 'the verger' ;
 To me it was a merger
 of great original idea and an allegory.

Allegory for me , for it is known
 that an emperor of great renown
 in India was an illiterate,
 which history books do not state;
 but must be a fact, as it is the folk
 who often talk of it as a joke.

In a nation of educated unemployed
 such stories as the verger have a ring of truth
 Thanks to the feeling of frustration and void
 created in the minds of honest youth.

Maugham chose for his thought
 a famous church in England;
 His narration, character and plot
 suits my country or any land.

Some critics may call it 'tongue-in-cheek'
 Let such of them read the story again
 Three pages of conversational prose speak
 of matter of fact, call it profound or plain.

Bombay too has many vergers
 In paun shops , paper vendors ,
 Theatre ushers , taxi owners,
 Front desk managers,
 Clerks in any office
 The more you get educated
 The less is chance of a decent job .

[In today's internet world , readers can ask for a short summary of the short story and they will get and then understand this poem]

At normal times it never attracts attention to itself.

Sometimes it feels as fast
sometimes it slowly lingers
Sometimes you waste it
Sometimes it wastes you
Most of the time
no one has enough of it.

It is not sex
It is not money
It is neither happiness nor desire
It is just TIME.

it is elusive , it is invisible , it is unassuming
But it is universal, it is everywhere
But you cannot acquire or store it
Neither can you inherit or bequeath it .

if you ask me
“What is THE TIME now? “
I can tell you
or a telephone
or a talking watch can tell.
But “what is TIME ? “
is a question needing philosophy.

Unfortunately, today's children
do not get much of it
or much about it .

Children and youth get a lot of,
Advice and lectures
Harangues and harassment
Ideas and incentives
Classes and coercions.
Also about
Value of money and making it/

Value of Education and ranks and degrees

Value of Character and its family pride

Value of Biodata and to make one

Value of Competitive exams and coaching centres

Value of many other skills, aims, ways.

Way beyond childhood days,

but pushed in

in childhood days.

All the time the value of time

as told to children pertains to

how not to waste but use time

In order to attain this or that

or as many of the above as one can.

In this chasing of the chosen targets

is spent

the childhood

early adulthood

youthful enthusiasm.

Many don't even get anywhere near the target.

By the time you slow down it is too late.

It is too late to start thinking about
how your time COULD have been spent.

By that time

5 year olds have recited Gita or Kabir or Kural /

6 year olds roller skated under parked cars/

7 year olds got black belts /

8 year olds had swum across the channel /

9 year olds could speak 4 Indian languages/

10 year olds won chess medals/

11 year olds can enjoy Bach or Balmurali/

12 year olds have won in parallel bars/

13 year olds got quiz and spelling bee medals/

14 year olds have trekked to Gomukh/

15 year olds have done arangetram/

16 year olds have run half marathon/

17 year olds have played junior Wimbledon/

18 year olds did number of things
like

Getting driving licence

voting in elections

donating blood.

Some skills have to be
learnt or appreciated or achieved
at the proper time
in one's lifetime.

By the time you can appreciate
the youth of the land
your own youth is gone.

It is time now to start
to admire [though not achieve]
some of these yourself
so that you can help youngsters
understand the value of time
and active life and achievement in time.

Awareness of time is always needed.

**Timely awareness of time- related skills
is the need of the hour.**

I could have been a critic,
 I never aspired to become one
 Except as an arm-chair type,
 read or recognized by none
 If you are a critic I have no jealousy
 Quite often your job may be lousy

My dear critic, listen!

I could have been a **poet** I wanted to be one
 If you are a poet sure I envy you.
 Some poetry in your opinion may
 just be a jarring jumble
 or clearly a clever combination
 of words and phrases.

But a recognized poet is beyond YOU, the critic.

I could have been a **writer** I wanted to be one
 If you are a writer sure I envy you.
 Some biography may just be fiction
 Some essays you may find as cut and paste
 Some fiction catering to vulgar taste

But a recognized writer is above and beyond YOU , the critic

I could have been a **singer** I wanted to be one
 If you are a singer sure I envy you.
 Today's music may be
 More visual than aural
 More din and noise
 Than melody and voice

But a recognized singer is above and beyond YOU , the critic

I could have been a **painter** I wanted to be one
 If you are an artist sure I envy you.

Some visual art may be
 Dashes of the brush
 Or clashes of colours
 Or distractingly abstract

But a recognized painter is above and beyond YOU , the critic

I could have been a **speaker** I wanted to be one
 If you are a speaker sure I envy you.
 Some lecturers can be
 Interesting but illogical
 More opinionated than factual

But a recognized speaker is above and beyond YOU , the critic

I could have been in films I wanted to be in the industry
 If you are a **film director** sure I envy you.
 Some screen offerings may be
 Too slow to miss the action
 Or too complex to miss the theme
 Ends too soon to miss the climax.

But a recognized director is above and beyond YOU , the critic

I could have been a leader I wanted to be one
 If you are a **neta** sure I envy you.
 All netas may not be corrupt ,
 some may be left or right , never correct
 may have educated fans and followers
 who may just be misguided fanatics.

But a recognized leader is above and beyond YOU , the critic

In addition to , or instead
 Of being a critic you could
 Choose for your days ahead
 Some vocation that sounds good.

Poet, painter, singer or writer
 On whom you comment for a vocation
 Try to BECOME any one and brighter
 will be your days and social station.

Actor, speaker, leader or priest
 about whom you quote out of context;
 Try being an assistant to one for a day at least,
 You will say , good bye critic, what next?

Criticism we need for the commoners' sake ;
 To verify the truth and weed out fake
 News , info, or any hearsay
 The critic can write even an essay.

No one likes the critic
 Because his work is biased or acidic
 I may be an arm-chair one
 But by my comments no harm is done

Call a spade a spade is fine
 Call one rusted is not fun
 A critic admires his own creed
 Constructive class is what we need.

Consigned to a concealed living
 for most of their lifespan
 They live in holes
 and crevices
 and underground *áshrams*"
 thanks to their poikilothermic property.

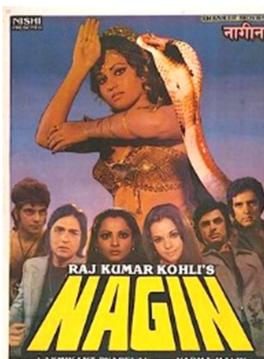
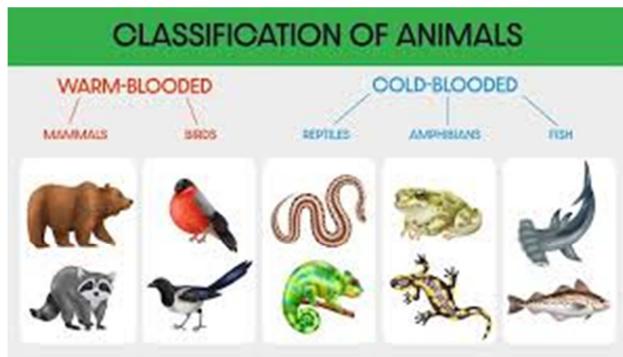
Whereas,
 All other vertebrates hover around
 no matter ice or steam around.

'Cursed' to travel on their bellies
 snakes have to find
 their lanes and highways
 paths and sidewalks
 under the grass
 for just being
 not conspicuous.

They know that
 any ostentation
 or demonstrative action
 by the 'cursed'
 or the untouchable
 will result in catastrophe.

Idio[ma]tic English
 dubs the mortally afraid creatures
 as treacherous and deceitful
'Snakes in the grass'

Only very few have venom.
 But any snake that emerges out
 falls a fatal victim
 to the colossal ignorance of the superior race
 Or is it the spite and venom
 And lack of grace
 of the superior race?.



✗ MYTH

Snakes drink milk.



✓ FACT

Snakes are reptiles and cannot digest milk. Rats are the cobra's favourite food.



www.indiansnakes.org

74 B CALL A SNAKE A SNAKE

The snake is sacred for us
 Though it is scary
 Or, because it is.

Which statement above makes sense
 Or, either one non- sense.
 I won't know , for, we have created
 Fearful deities for each benevolent one
 And we respect those who are god-fearing.

Snake worship in our society
 Is a symbol of religious piety.
 The snake is scary, but charming;

A five headed snake was powerful but evil;
 Another was soft and bed for the Lord
 Our ancestors were great dreamers
 Included imagination with ethical tenets

A single snake slithers its own way;
 Hooded snake is only a warning :
 “ I am scared, you go away”

Ants build and dwell in huge ant-hills;
 The snake takes over and it is a snake-pit.
 Was the big one looking for food or only lodge?
 Weren't the tiny ones able to dodge?
 How can forked tongue of huge gap
 Pick up tiny one, a dot in a map?
 If it were not for food
 They can co-exist; do they?
 A friendship for good
 Might have developed , can I say?

Do snakes drink milk?
 Scientists can bore us with a lecture

On water balance in rats or reptiles.
 But they are shy of categorically condemning
 Age-old practices and beliefs.
 Old snake producing precious gems
 Gifted girl transforming into a cobra
 Great fiction for the naive
 Or fanciful kids

How come all my questions
 With the answers were never
 Popularised by
 Snake charmers, catchers
 Ecofriends and biologists
 Did they miss them Or, did we never ask?.
 Why won't biologists get out and declare
 "Feed a snake or worship; it is your faith;
 But a rock or a snake does not imbibe milk or honey"
 WHY WON'T RATIONAL ELITE OF THE SOCIETY
 CALL A SNAKE A SNAKE ?

[note: reference made – adisesha ; kalinga; left out vasuki – all of
 mythology - belief that snakes drink milk- also old snakes carry gems or
 transform into a nagin, a woman – all superstitions prevalent all over India]

It is soft
boneless
vulnerable, slow in motion.
[slow –witted and in reaction too, who can tell?]

Therefore
It shrinks into its shell
Mostly
for preserving self
against
smart and swift predators.

Why sneer
at the snail
for its only available
self-defence mechanism?
Whereas the predators are,
Lauded
Photographed
admired
and even quoted
as role models.

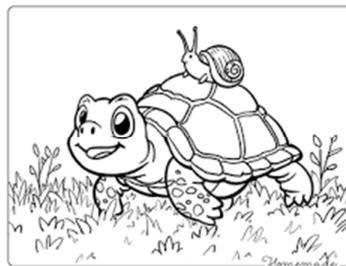
How many of us
Powerless, vulnerable
slow in progress
[slow –witted and in reaction too, who can tell?]

Like snails
have to shrink
uncomfortably into
our own shells of

Races, languages, religions, castes
khandans and dynasties,
senas and armies
and even nations and pacts?

Why sneer at the snail
or the turtle
or any slow but nature's creatures
For being what they are
and doing what they can.?

On the banks of the river Seine
Some of my friends were seen
Exclaimed a chef. "oh! Escargot!"
I said, "Amen, alas!" I pity their lot
[note: Escargot – French delicacy with snail flesh]



- (i) Turtles and snails have shells to protect their inner body parts from their predators.
- (ii) Deer have strong legs to run fast away from their predators.
- (iii) Porcupines have sharp spines to protect themselves from their predators.

76 B PLEASE COME SOONNEXT YEAR

Ten days of social festival
 In public places called *pandal*
 Or *mandap* or a common hall in a *chawl*
 Organized and observed by all Hindus
 Irrespective of class, caste or views
 Also joined by all others around
 Is the great *ganapathy pooja* with sight and sound

Idol worship of the highest devotion
 All over our *dharmic* Indian nation
 Maharashtra's main is this one
 If festivals are jewels, this is the crown

Resounding slogan
 Come next year..soon

Ganapathy papa moreya
pudcha varshi laukarya

[*dharmic*- here meaning righteous
pandal, *mandap*, *shamiana*,- common place for a function
chawl - a shared residential apartments for ordinary low-income families]





Ganapathy papa moreya pudcha varshi laukarya



77 B DISCUSS THE POINT

The media said
we should discuss the issue.
so the authorities called this meeting to
discuss the point.

Some want to close it down
some want to open it up
Each one was a clown
No one said “shut up”

All the grey hair and beard
and he who got bored but remains.
Nothing concrete heard
each bound by his own chains.

One makes a rhetoric
about how we should stop our rhetoric

One takes hours to say
that we should have ended hours ago

The media got a saleable copy
Mute listeners and everyone else is happy.

*[It was called a discussion
It was really a disgusting disgust]*



78 B LOVE LINGERS , SEX SELLS

There is something about Mary
 Is a movie
 Now popular [at this time]
 Not only in LA and London,
but even in Mumbai

Something something happens
 Is a Hindi movie
 Now running side by side
 To packed cinema halls
 And weeping audiences.

If it was not for
 a Mary
 Or a Kajol
 Or a Rani
 Would there have been
 'Something' or 'anything'
 In either of the movies?

Can you imagine either
 Something' or 'anything' happening
 In the studs on the screen
 Or the machos in the audience?

Imagine
 Instead of Mary -- Mother Teresa
 In place of Kajol- -- Kasturba
 Replacing Rani -- Usha Mehta
 Would that be something!

Would there be something
 That the titles suggest .

That something has to be
Youth
Beauty
Verve
Presentability

All replaceable by the word 'love'
Which is euphemism for 'sex'
Because
LOVE LINGERS , SEX SELLS

[now popular - year 1999 CE]



80 B NO JOKE DTP (1)

You cannot joke with a DTP operator

“ What does IT mean to you,
income tax or information technology?”

Because

It is **your business data** he is uploading.

80 B RISKY JOKE (2)

Before you crack a joke
Find out who's the bloke
Who is at the butt end.

On that will depend
Whether the joke will crack
Or your nose, head or back.

80 B NO JOKE [PROSE-POEM](3)

It is no joke to crack a joke
or to find a *bakra* to joke upon.

You cannot joke with a doctor
‘Whether a cardiologist has a heart to send such a bill’
Because
It is **your ECG** which he is interpreting.

[note: *bakra*- a *listener, victim*]

80 B IRONY - mate

Cold, logical, matter-of-fact
 was the mate
 I was looking for.
 I described my ideal mate
 to my friends.

““What a terrible fellow you must be !
 Completely devoid of feeling””
 They said and
 Were they my friends any more?
 They were not there to ask.

Matrimonial

**SEEKING 25- 40, Well- Placed,
 Animal- Loving, Vegetarian
 GROOM for my SON (36, 5'11")
 who works with an NGO, Caste
 No Bar (Though IYER Preferred)
 iyerpadmav@gmail.com
 [30153628]**

83 B DAHI HUNDI

Dahi hundi on Krishna's birthday
 On the streets of Bombay
 Also in Pune a and all Maharashtra
 Carnival not ordinary, but extra

Dahi hundi hung high
 Just below a brave young boy
 Standing on the shoulders of a sturdy
 Man who is the apex
 Of a great complex

Of a team making a human pyramid
 consisting of mighty Maratha men, amid
 rhythmic beat of drums and noise
 and a hundred human voice
 chanting praise TO KRISHNA

WHAT A CROWD!
 WHAT A RHYTHM !
 WHAT A SPIRIT!
 WHAT AN ADMIRATION!
 WHAT A TOGETHERNESS!



84 B ON THE DEMISE OF A DON

The patriarch of the clan has gone
 Bequeathed from father to son
 Not only the property
 But also the cruelty
 Of covering up and denying
 Any chance of knowing , studying.

Scientists say
 The genes leave their mark
 Traits dominant, bright or dark.
 A safe bet may be F4 or later .
 Do you need genes served on a platter?

Let leaders evolve by their own mettle.
 We get tea as per contents of the kettle.

[F 4 – fourth generation - geneticists say dominant genes may affect F1 , F2 - so F4 suggested here]



85 B WE LOVE HAWKS, DON'T WE?

Hawks love rats, don't they?

More the rats , more the choices, aren't they?

Milling rats, can be seen from miles above , can't they?

Rats dead, rats alive , hawks will scavenge, won't they?

Rats and hawks in the ecosystem

Nature or God made both of them

Rats of the social system thrive

on deceit , crime and bribe

If hawks of the society hunt and feed

on rats , isn't nice indeed?

What if soon the rats are gone

on what the hawks live on?

Will they turn to helpless chicken?

That is us the soft-headed citizen.



86 B CHEMISTRY

I had to go to the chemist for aspirin
when the teachers tried to push chemistry in.

Now that I am answerable only to myself,
chemistry appears very interesting.

When my bosses wanted me to do **chemistry**
my stomach reacted with hyper-acidity.

Now that I am free
chemistry appears very interesting,
no headache, no stomach pain.

Wait, *kahani aur baaki hai*
Both these maladies came back when
my bosses published the results
without my name and , methods of course.

I found a new rule of chemistry:
It is called **explosive disgust.**

When the catalyst is ignored
products cleverly siphoned off
Any reactive elements are cleaned and got rid off

What reaction do you get?
Not one of bubbling effervescence
Not one of cool endothermic
Not one of warm exothermic
But a violent reaction of explosive disgust



87 B GRAVITY

Nearer and nearer
gravity seems to be greater.
even though physics says
capital G is the same .

Equal masses should attract equally
Balance of force is what suffers
if size or mass much differs.

I don't know
if psychology can benefit
by borrowing from physics.

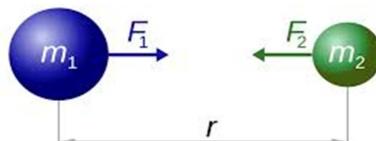
But the *brainwala*s have a job
Mass equivalent they should find
Can that be a sum of brain and mind ?

If so IQ is not any usable unit
Then distance for ideas, I am not sure
May depend on genes and exposure

What will be FORCE equivalent in wisdom?

What art and where can I borrow from?
Finance, marketing, management.
Or decision making or deferment?

Now I know why psychos shun
Any equation or calculation.



$$F_1 = F_2 = G \frac{m_1 \times m_2}{r^2}$$

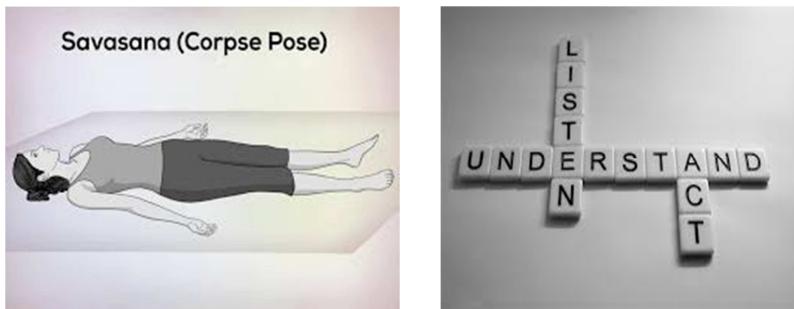
88 B REVERSE LOGIC

It is everybody's quote
by word or anecdote

“Shut off your senses
To outside influences
Then self can be felt within
where there seemed to be nothing ”.

To what laudable goal
Does this method pertain?
Unless to cater to one's own soul
And glory to egoist-self, attain.

Instead, did you try the reverse?
Shutting one's own ego and self- pity
And feel the vast outside universe
In all its glory, misery and eternity.



89 B FILLERS

[Collected from unknown sources]

79B FARMER

He is a dry land farmer
He tills the land
And irrigates it
With his sweat.

[Borrowed from unknown source 1999]

81 B HOUSE OF THIEVES

Why blame the country
When the people are peeves?
Why blame the sentry
When the house is full of thieves?

82 B waiting 1

every girl waits
for the right man to come along
meanwhile
she gets married

82 B waiting 2

“Don’t wait too long”
Is the advice to all aspiring girls .
Is it true for men too , I wonder
If so, can’t we have a waiting list
As in tickets and services?

89 B IRONY

We came across a wild looking fellow
in the jungle./ sharpening his knife.
When we asked how he thrived
he showed his knife.
“” what a barbarian, robbing travelers
or killing wild life””

We went in and ordered
a jungle fowl sandwich.
Server shouted across the window
‘Joe, fowl for four””

[midday and evening newspapers had occasional poems]

90 B FULL CIRCLE

1. IS my life a total zero
Or have I come a full circle?

2. Those were the days in each step spring
 In every bush
 maybe a thrush
Or some such beautiful thing
 A speeding swift
 Or similar nature's gift.

IS my life a total zero
Or have I come a full circle

3. I have seen silently
Fleet of beautiful butterflies Flutter
 Walked among gently
Flowers of *phalas* setting forest on fire

IS my life a total zero
Or have I come a full circle

4. On some days miles I have gone
 Before I got tired or slept
No roads, no signs, no lawn
 Only as nature had kept.

IS my life a total zero
Or have I come a full circle

5. I have seen silvery sunrise
 Over rocky precipice

I have sat and admired many scarlet sunsets
 Among the Arabian sea's gentle wavelets

IS my life a total zero
Or have I come a full circle

6. I have seen pugmarks galore
Alongside prints of the hoof.

Wild can be herbivore or carnivore
I've seen nature's own proof

IS my life a total zero
Or have I come a full circle .

7. I spared time to stand and stare
Others might have reached somewhere
For I glanced many of them busy and rushing
while I admired the monsoon stream gushing

IS my life a total zero
Or have I come a full circle

8 Socially secure I was,
walking, running, biking, hiking
I could afford to do anything to my liking.
I was full of ego-trips in my mind
Until I suddenly saw
Not unlike the Buddha
Much better human beings left behind.

IS my life a total zero?
Or have I come a full circle?

9. Once I wished to soar with the wind
And wanted to rise with poetic mind
Now I wish I could somehow someday find
A site, a place beside those left behind

IS my life a total zero
Or have I come a full circle

10. My sight and hearing might have become weak.
My muscles may ache and joints squeak

My steps may be quite slow
But stop I can't, I must go.

IS my life a total zero
Or have I come a full circle

11. Move I must albeit slow
Until no more can I move
If you will, say adieu now
Oh, the listener from above.

IS my life a total zero?
Or have I come a full circle?

[Written 1999 CE and A stanza added 2017 CE]



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