POETRY

Solitude

Sitting alone on the quaint veranda

Thoughts cross the mind

…. the leaves of the luscious creeper, green with spots of blooming violet, trembling on wings of the cool summer breeze.

The quiets, the breeze, the distant bustling of the fading city

You like it this way…. but thoughts they cross the mind.

Of evenings lost, of staircases broken, of laughter long silenced,

Of voices that no longer echo, of shirts that hang alone in the closet - they will never be worn again…

Of conversations that only exist in sepia, of memories, that are confused, whether they are cherished or dreaded as they bring back a bit of life that once was, a bit of life that will never again be.

A Heart Full of Guilt

I often get a numbing pain
A pain that jilts my breath
A breath that pushes to the edge
The pace of life itself.

I once had promised to be there
Nowhere was I but found
when the moment of hand holding came
I was hiding behind the shroud.
The shroud that once felt like a mask
Is now as heavy as a hill
It chokes me down with a guilt so deep
I wonder if that will finally take it all.

I know I failed, I know I let go,
I know I was selfish as a prick
Now all that I am left with
is a thought that life is missed!

Not a moment's rest, not a moment's peace, just the longest sigh forlorn
A numbing pain of things not done
and things that will never be undone.

I had a dream…

I had a dream, a real one
A dream as true as you
I felt you warm, and in my arms
And touched it as if it were you.

They told me that you were to leave
For which place I didn't know
They told me I should tell you to go
For they tried so hard but you won't go.

I looked for you, I ran around
Trying to get a glimpse
I had to take you in my arms
Could not think of anything else!
But all I found with a pounding heart
Was a cold and helpless you!
With your eyes hard shut and your toes all curled
I sat there at your feet.

Where did you go? How did you go?
Who told you to do so?
I was to meet you one last time
I had to say "You go!"

Alas! That day will never come
Alas! That time is gone
Alas! The one last time I could have had
Is lost forever and will never be anymore.

I still remember how you waited for me,
how you had to ask it all.
How you never said but always did
Wait upon my call!
How could I be this selfish one
the one to hold back so tight?
That when I finally did let go
It did not matter anymore.

Now I wait every day
and sleep every night
Hoping to see you again…
Standing there in front of me
With a smile as deep as your cheeks

And hold my hand and press it hard
And tell me, “Go back to sleep!”

An Evening in Sepia

It was a breezy evening with a warm setting sun
And a rosy promise at the horizon

I felt a charming skip in my heart
Didn't quite know what it meant from within!

I thought I would spend it with me
Few moments of quiet, few moments of bliss

I stood holding the railing at the balcony
All twirled around with the bloom of the bougainvillea

The moment brought back memories of the past,
Moments in the present and promises of the future.
Oblivious to the cosmic designs

I stood there
Taking life for granted to the brim.
And suddenly there was a rebel gust of wind
Which blew in from nowhere.

Hurled on its moorish wings
came a torn piece of paper from nowhere
I shook it off while it held my feet
In an unknown familiar hug.

While I shooed it off with all my being
Something said, it was not all unknown.
And the next moment it went away riding the wings of the roar.

The next day there was a call at dawn
A call that took my breath
It told me that my half was gone
In an unknown escapade.

A moment of war, a bullet of rage
Had taken my sharer of womb
He was gone forever the prior day
Right when I stood there on the balcony.

In a moment as vapid as it could be
I felt a splitting pain
Was the paper hugging my feet …
Really a goodbye said?

How will I ever know it for sure?
Where from and why did it come?
Was it my little one who sat there invisible?
On that sheet and held me hard?

Was it the one last time that he had come to hold me hard?
And I all lost in my insipid thoughts
Threw him away with a selfish zeal?

Now every day at dusk
I stand at my balcony
Gazing vaguely into the horizon
I wait for a gust of wind.

I wait for another chance
When something in the wind
Will quietly whisper in my ears
Bye! Bye! Will meet again Didi!

– Ranita Chakraborty Dasgupta*

Assistant Professor, Amity Institute of English Studies and Research, Amity University, Kolkata- 743232, West Bengal, India. Email: rcdasgupta@kol.amity.edu