

Body, Soul and I

KIRATH DAS

BODY :

Here we are at last, my love,
Upon the shores of an age-old misery
The swaying lake and foggy eve
That sings an ancient rhyme.
Forget the past, forget the future,
Forget the gloom of many a man;
Break the shell and take the breeze-
That cries : "this is pleasant" !

SOUL :

No my coffin, my sweet career
Chained I am to destinies long;
Call me not, fight me not,
Let me await the Doom's day.
Go you hence, go your way
Throw your sword, shield and spear
Fight me not, this trial is great.
Climb the cliffs and fall the wreck !
And,—

I:

Alone on the war-field with the night
That breaks into a thousand pearls
I stand, a tear in weeping sea,
A tomb of million dreams.
But the fumes clear and swords glare
Again, chariots of my wrestling beings
The same roars and same battle
Come, sleep, take me abroad
Where dark is light and bells are ringing—

DREAM GIRL

E. AHAMED, II B. A. (ECOS.)

Lovely lawns and red buildings,
Amidst pretty girls moving;
Like the butterflies flying-
Around the spring flowering.

Wandering along the tree shades,
All the time and places searching her,
Wondering about her shades,
At last, in the sky I saw her.

She was shining in stars,
She was smiling in moon,
She was also in waters,
She was swimming in lagoon,

She was my girl of dreams,
She was my' stream of life;
She was neither in dreams nor streams
She was my life itself !

Eternal Loneliness

JALAJA M. R., III B. A. Litt.

A moment—she stopped—
At the mouth of the gloomladen caverns.
An eager look behind — saw —
The vast corridor of the past.
A thousand joyous faces...
A thousand gayous voices
All distant, far away.....

The brimming brook, the flowing thought,
The gleaming bubble, the failing promise,
The blooming bud, the fading blush.
The scented breeze, the lingering aroma,
And the cool rememberence,
In the fluttering, dreamy eyes.
All distant, far away.....

Oh ! this sharp descend from genteel heights !
Hunting thoughts and memories,
Dismal echoes startle heart —
Alj desperate yearnings of the past —
The dark packed caverns open wide
Welcome ! Eternal Loneliness !

Here and There

PUSHPA V. V. ANAND

III B. A. Literature

WITH pen in hand, a few sheets before me and with full concentration I waited for divine inspiration to descend upon me. That day was a cold Sunday in early December. About, perhaps 5 days before 'that Sunday', an honourable friend of mine had casually pulled my leg by asking me whether I was not going to submit some foolish article for the magazine this year too. I told the person concerned that it might appear foolish to the foolish but that it would appeal to the tender, sensitive tastes of a literary genius. That hushed my 'Honourable Friend' to total dumbness because by afore-mentioned friend and literature had as much affinity as the North Pole and the South Pole.

Great poets and lyricists of the past pay their due respects to the Muses before embarking on their divine literary voyage. I had more than often wondered how one invoked the Muses; for that matter who or what are the Muses in exactly understandable terms. Heaven knows!

As I said I waited for divine inspiration—my mind a perfect, complete, absolute blank. It seemed I had outrageously over estimated my supreme genius. No divine inspiration, for that matter not even a simple, original everyday, incident seemed to flash 'upon the inward eye'. I thought deeply, I contemplated, I imagined I prayed even! No good! I decided finally to think of anything that crossed my mind first. I was on the very verge of thinking of something great and extraordinary! When someone's high pitched, cheerful, 'Hi! how are you!' roused me or rather pulled me out of my blank 'ignorance personified' reverie, to catch sight of one of my close acquaintances grinning at me from ear to ear (like a monkey!). Her next question was one for which I was more prepared. "How is life?" A simple, matter of fact question! But that question, to tell you frankly provided me with the fire to write what I have written.

I answered, "Sheer Bliss!" "What!" she cried. "What do you mean, 'What!' My noble answer to your blessed question is that life is sheer bliss",

I humoured her. I expected her to become indignant not hysterical. She burst into tears saying, "Some people are always fortunate." She turned and she walked off.

I watched her calmly, and did not attempt to call her back for she was not then in a fully fortified mental state to face up to my joyful mood. I let her go. But I never forsook her. That very evening as a very good peace-offering I took a garland of her's and my favourite 'Chewing Gum' and made my 15 minute walk to her posh residence. My friend was seated on the verandah flicking through a magazine and dressed up obviously to go out for a visit. I walked up the steps, slowly, cautiously. She looked up, then down....quite indifferently! I was not put off! I took the jasmine garland and placed it artistically, on her neatly done hair. No reaction! I looked round, found a hand-mirror and placed it before the countenance of my friend. She looked, not into the mirror but at me, with eyes blazing in anger. I told her sweetly, "Dear me" "I've never seen a girl look so beautiful even when she was frowning like how you are now". That did it. She not only cooled off, she smiled, she giggled and she gabbered 19 to the dozen for 15 minutes of which I could grasp only that she was not going out now that I was there. We talked, we shook hands and we parted....staunch friends?

That was on that cold bleak Sunday! Two and a half days later a second beloved acquaintance of mine extended to me her warm welcome to spend at least 24 hrs. of my valuable time in her newly purchased country home. I told her some lame excuses, but she forced me, she threatened me etc. etc. so that I made it seem that I had no other go but to accept her invitation, while all the time I was entertaining in my mind about what a lovely chance of enjoying the country beauty after the smoke and congestion of town life. I sighed in resignation and very happily accepted her well meant invitation.

A country home in all its panoramic scenic beauty is absorbingly thrilling to the senses. The

rustic beauty of the country is ample medicine to calm a troubled, turbulent mind. And friends, if by now you have not had the blissful experience of sitting all by yourself on the steps of a deep pool watching rouchalantly the ripples on the water-surface, then I can only say you have missed something indeed? I was seated thus. The pool was a private one and quite ancient too with a temple nearby. I was unconsciously oblivious of my surroundings. The infinite calm and peace around me fully enveloped me. I don't recollect whether I dozed off or not, anyway I had a very realistic, pleasant dream.

I was transported back....back to the time when the temple was in its original glory and splendour with early morning religious rituals etc. I was keenly watching but I was invisible to mortal eyes. Day was breaking in all its superfine splendour. The water fawls' cries rent the air. The screeching of the crows gave momentum to the welcoming herald put forth by wild nature to the rising golden glory of the sun. The surroundings still wore a sultry, dusky cloak. I was bewildered but not for long. A dainty figure arrested my gaze. A young, lovely, lively girl was tripping down the steps merrily humming a tune for her morning dip in the pool. A light breeze whistled through the trees. I shivered but not the girl. She seemed to enjoy the breath of nature. She had her long, black tresses piled high on her head. She stepped carefully down, a glow on her face and only a great wide ripple on the pool surface provided evidence that the young maiden had plunged into the water. I was simply enthralled and filled with ecstasy. That moment I craved for the water, to jump into the pool and feel the cool, fresh water about me. But inevitable death welcomed me, were I to slip into the watery depth of the pool for I knew not a stroke to swim. The beautiful maiden reappeared. I was literally stunned! Never had I set my eyes upon such heavenly, natural beauty. She looked like the picture of a water nymph with her wet raven-black locks hanging loosely about her damp clothes. A ghost of a smile played upon her sweet, tender lips. I was wonder struck! A girl purely country tired, with not a touch of the sophistication of the city looking so proud, and oh? so very beautiful! She appeared to me to be like a goddess. As I watched she made her solitary way to the temple. Her wet clinging clothes added hundred fold to her striking beauty and grace. A pebble rolled beside her. She stopped, hesitated a split of a second, walked on, seconds later a volley of pebbles shot out from nowhere, some on her and some around her. She

stopped, this time a full stop; looked dreamily round, she trembled! With fear or tender emotion I was powerless to discern. My gaze followed her's....to the green leafy boliage of a nearby tree. A face instantaneously disappeared but not before she or I saw it. I was bewitched as was she with that face. One could write poetry on those features. A mischievous smile that lit up the entire face. A pair of innocent, voyish eyes which twinkled humourously. A mop of rough, ruffled hair only added charm to that delicate countenance. It was the face of a blossoming youth! An expressive, appealing unforgettable face. The young girl stood stock-still as though paralysed. Two spots of crimson crept through to her dimpled cheeks. She sighed! stole a glance once more, then sat down carefully on a rock. I felt like I was watching a genuine life-drama. A slim, active youth slipped lithely down the tree and stood beside the girl. The girl appeared absorbed by the antics of a king-fisher as it swooped into the water. The youth gazed at her, His face a mixture of the most tender emotions. His eyes shone, his lips quivered, his gaze wavered, uncertainly.

I rubbed my eyes for I felt too breathless. The whole fantastic vision had a strange effect on me. I opened my eyes half hoping to behold the glorious vision. A wide, disappearing ripple on the pool surface provided answer for my scrutinising stare. I felt oddly elated yet somewhat downcast. Perhaps at that thrilling, meaningful moment I had envied that simple country girl I saw in my dream. I pulled my unwilling self up and walked back feeling a bit drowsy and.....well.....very strange. An unforgettable experience!

A week later I was in my own home absorbed in some last minute mugging for the test next day when a dear friend of mine dropped in. My first impulse was to send her off! But my golden heart melted within me at the very crude cruelty of such an impulse. I welcomed her in, closed my book most willingly and smiled at her. She told me that she wished to put to me a very personal, delicate question. I nodded assent and asked her to ask away because to my frank nature there was no such thing as a delicate one or a personal one. Yet I was not prepared for the question which she put to me. The question in question was, "What—is—LOVE?" I was speechless but only for a moment. I told her what crossed my mind first namely, "Love, my dear, is one of the most beautiful words in the English Language". My beloved friend frowned

I guessed, my answer caused a rebellious dissatisfaction within her thirsty mind. I explained again, 'Love, like summer fades away', 'Love is never having to say, I'm sorry?' She fretted, she fumed! "Stop!" she burst forth, "I—want—your—personal—version—of—what—love—is" (this is beautifully stressed syllabus) I was in a very tight corner. I wanted to please my friend without embarrassing myself. I tried various angles. I suggested the fact that she was old enough to know what it is to be in love in like etc. etc. But God and I knew she was not satisfied.

So, I gave her my version of Love. "True Love is slow to condemn, quick to justify". "Tears become pearls when they fall on the crucible of Love". These are unforgettable, beautiful axioms on 'LOVE'. Love is something which we human beings cannot really understand or reason with. Shakespeare had written wonderful sonnets on that theme. T. S. Eliot's pen had wrought forth some remarkably touching poetry on that beautiful subject. I advised my friend to read those works. I further revealed to her that 'Love' is an experience which can only be described as uniquely fabulous and thrillingly supreme. "But" I cautioned my friend,

"when you fall in love take care that your precious heart does not rule your head. You must have a firm grip over your self and yourself respect. To love someone in 'gay abandon' may be fun but the consequences may not be as funny". Lastly I instigated my pal to build up her poor vocabulary before letting cupid's is arrow hit her because love letters should contain some nice sounding words; not the common, lousy language, my friend used while conversing with me. However I promised my whole hearted co-operation to write her love letters to which she very generously nodded approval.

"Well then what?" she asked "then what?" I asked back. "You haven't yet told me what to be in love is like to you". I told her to shut up and mind her own business because hence forth. I was going to mind my own business and my being in love is my own business and that anyway I'd told her enough about love, and that my dreaming about my falling in love will not in any reasonable way aid me in answering the Phonetics test the next day. My friend left, exasperated but not before disarming me her famed 'charming, winning; sparking smile! I was grateful. I smiled my humble smile and returned to routine duties.

MAY I REMOVE MY MASK?

AMBALANGADAN MOHAMED, II M. A. (Eng. Litt.)

I disguise
in many a fitting guise
an' fool even the most wise.

Flattery
is the glittering livery
I always wear.

The duped damsels
dart out of their silent cells
to my, adorned doors
for consolation and a grain of peace.
To appease
the frail sex
I stretch out my arms.

Thus
I am with you
as a placid Primate
in his white gown of pretext.

Through the quiet
of the pitch-dark night
I retreat, at a snail's pace
as a practised pirate
with the robbed wealth in delight.

Often,
I cry out
as the wretched pilot
of a wrecked ship in tempest.

Yes,
my course
I now realize
is like a planet
out of its orbit.

I exist
as a broken burette
in the hands of a chemist.
But,
he forgets to throw me out.

MISTY MORN

FRESH after a tingling cold shower in the night, dawn came smiling at me in all her splendour. Like a village belle just arming back from the river with her garments clinging wet. Nature with a thin veil of blue mist tried in vain to cover herself.

I looked on.....The clouds hurried on to cover the Nature's perfect figure before sun would catch a glimpse of the mountains her perfect borrow—and start staring. In their haste they collided with each other and failed in their object. Sun, the lover extended his golden arms to embrace her. I laughed at the clouds for they were vanishing fast. Meanwhile they flushed and took on a slight pink glow. The flowers—Blue, Red, Orange, White, Violet everyone of them started laughing until the morning dew brought droplets of tears on their soft, sweet, little faces. Sun wrinkled at the flowers as if on prior understanding and the droplets of tears on their faces sparkled like jewels in their sacred merriment.

The clouds really grew angry by now and bathed us in its angry red light. The sun continued to

laugh from the high heavens as the clouds looked up helplessly, their faces whitening a little. A sigh in the form of a slight cool breeze escaped from her.

The rich greenery shook her head in sympathy, for she knew only too well the trouble caused by her lover—The wind. That play boy came whenever he liked and expected her to dance to his tune. Many a tune it happened that she was contemplating a quiet hour or so when that mischievous wind would come and ask for a date. She never refused. Oh! the trouble these lovers brought. But then, she smiled at herself at the thought of the pleasant hours spent in glee with him and found herself looking forward for more of it.

The lovers were still laughing. Sun with his golden arms tenderly wiped off the tears from their faces and smiled at them. Poor flowers! If only they knew what awaits them! Soon the lover bees would come buzzing and rob them of their honey.

I smiled on.....Oh! When will my time come?

K. P. VELAYUDHAN I B. A.

SMILE AND GLANCE

GULAM MUSTAFA

Your cut-rate, clearance-sale smile
Makes me feel like the sun will never set,
Or if the night comes,
It will be a Festival of Lights
Your low-voltage glance
Caps my heart with polar ice.
You are the engineer of my moods.

THE WALK

HEMCHAND J.
II M. A. (English)

It had stopped raining.

The smell of soaked dust hung in the air. Mother nature, smelling like a lady after a hot bath was sweating from the hot breath of the sun-god.

Five days back I found out I hated my father.

I had thought I could not possibly hate him since everybody else claimed he loved his father and it had convinced me fathers were meant to be respected and loved.

The vapour rising from the tarred road reminded me of the hot coffee mother had spilt on the table.

"Ma, you needn't have taken all the trouble. I could have managed without your help."

I had made a mistake. I knew it when the old man opened his mouth.

"Mothers should know where to keep their love for kids. Your mother instinct will spoil your son, dear lady".

It was at that moment I knew I hated him.

I remember him now only as big, bald head, with short-cropped curly hair, fringed with grey. A head that was too proud to bow and with a slit in front that kept sliding upwards in contempt.

"There's no short-cut to success, young chap, Don't you forget it. You'll have to get your job the hard way, like I did".

Bitch; stupid bitch! Bloody sadistic bitch.

"Number one, I've proved I was right all the time, I've won and my name is Jaya."

So what, you goddamn, rump-fed stubborn lady dog, you are a pest as far as I am concerned.

"I didn't stay there after the Group discussion. I just got out and walked and walked. And take it from me, that's the best medicine you can find to prevent yourself from flying off the handle."

Thanks a lot for the tip pal! That dame really got my goal.

"It's a straight walk from the Bank. you reach a circle turn right and you are on Grant Road. And 'Rhythm House' is on Grant road."

"Your, mom is the most difficult person to please, but take it from me son, she's also the easiest person to please. Do you get me boy, or do you feel I'm talking in riddles."

No, uncle I don't feel you're talking in riddles. I feel you are off your rocker.

The easiest way to please mom is to buy her a devotional record.

Excuse me sir, can you tell me where 'Rhythm house' is?

'Rhythm house? Just a couple of blocks away'

But I was told the same thing half a mile back. Is there he end to this walk?

There is no end, but addition.

Rhythm House.

"Look! can you get me the long play of Bhagavad Gita, I think is canto fifteen—the one with the commentary?"

"Life is a tree....." Zue Vellani's deep, modulated voice etched in wax.

I sometimes wonder if that is what Krishna meant. "They are new, young lady, right from the treasury—not counterfeit". Mother will love it. Mom! she is a tangle of gray and black hairs and pale limbs—and an ever-complaining mouth.

The young couple (?) in the Alfa Romeo are upto something fishy.

Don't crane your neck, Mister you'll contract pain in the neckomatism. Ha! Ha!

"Hi there, wait a minute. You left something behind". Soft, sweat, female voice.

What? My heart?

Stop it, boy, no time for wise cracks.

"Oh, Oh, what is it"?

"You're call for interview".

"Boy, do I need it! you can throw it away Miss....."

"Don't bother...but I really think you are too smart to fail in interviews and group discussions".

"Then you've got a big surprise coming. By the way, are you free now eh.....what I mean is..... Can I invite you for a cup of tea?"

"Oh! I'd be delighted".

Sunny smile. Eyes lock.

Walk, walk, walk with hands held intertwined.

"Hey, thanks for steadying me. You're really strong for a girl. Damn the banana skin. I could have broken my neck".

Don't blame the banana skin you fool. It's your business to see where you are going.

"What would you like. Salted cucumber slices or ice-cream cone".

"Anything, anything you buy".

"Here hold well, they are slippery".

"Last year they used to sell watermelons, now I wonder....."

"You must be a very interesting person"

"On the contrary, I bore people to tears"

"I still think you are great"

"I wouldn't go that far. I've never made a real good break in studies, sports or anywhere else. I have been always second rate stuff, may be high second rate, but never first"

"Do I notice a tinge of self-pity?"

"Ha, ha! I deserved it, I'm sorry. I shouldn't be spoiling your free time with gloomy talk".

"It's all right, as long as you make it up with cucumber and ice-cream".

"Do you know, you've got lovely hair?.....and you smell of love".

"Naughty boy! you really say the sweetest things".

.....

"Hey, look at the time, it's past seven, I really must run".

"Bye, lur"

"Don't look sad, my doll! It makes you look beautiful"

Time destroyer is time the preserver, Blast!

It's only three hours since I began walking and look how I've changed.

"I grow old I grow old"

"I shall wear the bottoms of my trousers rolled".
Blast, Blast, Blast!

Stop quoting authors! Look where literature has landed you!

"Sir, you think, I'll get a class?"

"She, She, I kin bet ma bottom dolah on that"

"Father, father, I want to make a confession"

"You may proceed son"

"Father I have sinned"

"Is it sin of the flesh, son?"

"No, father of the spirit. People expect a lot from me father. And I have let them down. I tried to be what I am not".

"Do you repent over what you have done?"

"Yes father, I do"

Through suffering there is salvation.

What is Jaya doing now?

The priggish bitch with her insular vision, who looks like a frog pinned on the dissection board.

"No, Sir, the bus is full, no, you cannot stand on the steps—the traffic police, you know"

"But I'll miss my connecting bus. And this is the last one on this route".

"That's right sir, looks like you'll have to walk".

It's going to be a long, long walk. And this is not a night for walking it's too hot.

"But I have promises to keep

And miles to go before I sleep"

Here's a brain-teaser for you Quiz experts.

Who said, "My life is like a long, long walk"

I did.