

Poetry Series

Rani Turton

- poems -



PoemHunter.com

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Rani Turton()

Independant writer and poet living in France.

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Existence, Brief And Flickering

Existence, brief and flickering, almost done.
Almost similar to many lives, but not quite
Almost done, and then undone; as random
As oceanwaves, alas subject to currents
And the moon's powerful love;
Subject to the laws above.

Life moves on, second after second
Until the minutes and hours are done.
The years stretch backwards as far away
As the distant, burning sun.

Now there are moments of truth
And many moments of despair; and then
Grace comes, love happens
Whenever, whatever, carpe diem.

Cannot, cannot put back the hands of a clock;
There is no going back to another world.
Transitory footprints, existence, brief and flickering
Angst, euphoria, patience, the written word.

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Living With Our Grief

Living with our grief, day by day,
Living with minor and major sorrow
Every day and in every way.

Heart may ache, but day will break.

Night will fall. The pain remains.
The day is a solace in its own way.
But the night's mind is a prison
The past in various forms, present.

Occasionally, birds fly in the mind's sky.
Living with grief is when
Birds do not fly and ice forms in the heart.

Lines from poems unfettered in the mind.

Living with our grief, day by day,
Living with minor and major sorrow
Every day and in every way.

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The Many Kinds Of Unhappiness

There many kinds of unhappiness.

Some evaporate into the mists of time: and others, others,
Delve into your heart and mind.

Which is as it is. Clouds still move across the sky.
Birds sing, ripples in the lake, fruit ripens on trees.
That pain that should have gone away chose to stay.
The tears that should never have touched your lids
Elected to remain.

There are realms of serenity. Seek them out. Who knows?
Some remnants of belief can touch with grace
And make one entire, whole.

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I Will Carry You Home

Son, I will carry you home.
The Etawah Government Hospital does not know
The extent of my love for you. You were born
In a poor family but we loved you.
When you were born I, your father,
Carried you so easily.
Blood of my blood, I was so proud
Not knowing that I, Udayveer,
Would have to carry you, Pushpendra,
On my shoulders, lifeless, to our home.
They said they were busy; nothing could be done.
Nobody asked me how I would take you home.

My son. My child. Come with me.
I will carry you home.
I will struggle, I will die
I will take you home so that
You can rest. That you may join the other realm
Of compassion real.
I am a poor man, my son.
I have laboured hard with sweat and tears.
But not even the richest father would have done
What I have just done.
Son, I will carry you home.

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N.B: The lack of ambulances and hospitals in some Indian hospitals have led to the unbelievable situation of the very poor having to carry the bodies of their family members home.

Rani Turton

We Are All Born Alone

I can say I need you. Like rain of arid plains
The words dance in the air and melt into the ground.
I can say I am whole again. Like summer dust far away
A haze that will settle one day.
I am alone. But that is sheer pretension.
We all are born alone, die alone.
Ours minds disconnect from our bodies, that's all.

I can wander, wonder, think and complain
There is the silence, the mist and the rain.

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Spirals Of Longing

Spirals of longing, when they come
Wonder, wonder at what this life has become.

There were years when it didn't seem as though
The cold wind of exile would suddenly blow;
There were years when life seemed to be
Charted out by a kind, benevolent destiny.

There would be mother, father and the violin.
Some broken strings could create an awful din.
Was it happiness? Was it just an illusion?
I was. They were. No disillusion.

Spirals of longing, suddenly when they come
Wonder, wonder at what this life has become.

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* There Lies Eternity

There lies eternity under a leafy bough
With twittering birds; a kind of silence
Because there aren't any words anymore.

Bribed a few moments out of destiny
Until, weary, bribes there were no more.
There is a time for everyone
To close the book and go.

The poem is over; the musicians have gone.
Eternity and I look at each other
Eye to eye.

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Spider On The Wall

Spider on the wall,
You can see us all
Do you wonder as to why
We scurry and worry?
We have our lives to live
(Four score and ten)
Waiting and worrying, often.

Spider on the wall,
A web still to be woven
Around family portraits on the wall;
So much work to be done
But knows Duty above all.

Spider on the wall,
Eternal artisan
Wiser than I who watches you.
You know your duty, I move on
Errors sown, often unknown
Often unknown.

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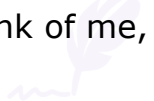
If You Think Of Me, Sometimes

If you think of me, sometimes
Without any regret to cloud your mind;
Untarnished by pain or even
Even by slight desire.

Without any hope of return or
The crossing of paths. There have been
Spaces; so much emptiness, voids
Left by life's intense emotion.

There were moments when I had enough.
There were several years so dark.
But the road was endless, away from you
But think, think of me, sometimes.

Life has its own recriminations.
Lots of questions to answer
Lots of answers to questions
if you think of me, sometimes.

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* His Voice

His voice reminds me of distant things, far removed
From me and my life. His voice reminds me

Of distant alleys, of rain hitting dry soil
Of perfume-laden roses in the rain,
Of dusks with crimson suns, birds chattering in trees;
Of the glittering sun, scorched stone to the finger's touch
Of the veritable reasons of existence.

Even the cornerstone of every being
Knows remorse, guilt and exile in the mind.
The body lags far, far behind.

His voice reminds me of silence under the sun.
A table, overladen with sweet fruit, curtains
Billowing under the monsoon rain, dark blue clouds;
Of a lonely tree under the sky, ripe with longing.
And birds that fly, fly, fly.

Thus it is that the end comes right from the beginning.
I hear that voice, so far removed from my life,
And from this deep, pointless longing.

Rani Turton

Shelter Under This Tree

Shelter under this tree; the rain, incessant.
It is night. Stormclouds scud above and
There will soon be moonlight.

Raindrops skitter and fall: heat and dust
All day until the tempest came.
Now the earth drinks up the water
Rivulets course their way down the slope.

Shelter under this tree. Wait a while
There is jagged lightning in the sky
Loud, loud thunder rolling by
Wait, wait a while.

A voice in the darkness;
Someone's footsteps, a lamp.
The storm has abated; go your way.
Rain, rain in these eyes.



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* They Will Tell You

They will tell you what to do and how to do it;
They will tell you when to do it and why to do it.
That is when an inner voice, a deeper voice
Cries out loud: Just don't do it.

They know better than you how and why
They have the means and the power:
When enough is enough, and when it most matters
You cannot let all your dreams shatter.

When it is not a yoke, an incidental burden
To be yourself or all alone. Life is strangeness
From birth to death. Who can bear your grief
Better than you? Can you ask them to share it?

Instead of them telling you ceaselessly
How to do it, so frequently.

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* The Cold Attic Of The Mind

Cold winter light, it does not seem
As though warmth could ever return
Ever replenish, refurnish
The cold attic of the mind

The mind, aching, the body, bent
Seeks to escape; thus it is
Ducks float placidly on rivers.

Dust on books, light glancing off
A precious stone on a ring.
Some souvenirs of the past
The journey has been long,
So long, so tiring, so solitary.

The frost will soon cease.
But the steps sound so loud.
Night comes, doors close.
Even the trees slumber.

Who is certain to attain immortality?
Why is it the body dies?
Nocturnal musing: moon rays
Lighten dark corners.

Rani Turton

Waiting, Listening, Thinking

Waiting day by day
In the only possible way
The only plausible path
Lies straight, like an arrow
However rocky and narrow.

Oft in sundry guise
I dreamt of sunny skies;
Reflecting on life and its turns;
But to my great surprise
One learns and learns and learns.

Breathe the air, smell the wind;
The earth has a heart and a mind;
All that remains in the end
Is the love that we had to spend;
All that remains when our lives are done
Is the earth, the sky, the stars and the sun.

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I Spoke To Someone I Imagined By My Side

I spoke to someone I imagined by side.
But the wind blew, blew my words away.

The words, essential and captivating
Thus had no substance except to myself.

I saw leaves fall from bright trees.
Quietly, knowing it was their fate.

The autumnal sadness is complete in itself.
It comprises silence, exile, solitude.

I spoke to someone I imagined by my side.
But the wind blew, blew, my words away.

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Reading Those Poems By Candlelight

A book that lies near my bed.
A pen, to note essential words:
The world, in shadows sublime
Reading those poems by candlelight.

Life's matter in those lines:
Life matters in these lines.
The rustling of pages eases the pain.
Candlelight, silence, the rain.

Years back it wasn't the same. It seemed
Life fitted in the palm of my hand.
Years back living life to one's guise;
But learning came with every sunrise.

Pages rustle. Words take on significance.
Emotions, in shadows cannot hide.
Reading those poems by candlelight
Emotion, silence, the night.

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Rani Turton

* This Mind, This Body, This Verse.

When the wilderness beckons, and the mind,
Recalcitrant, struggles to obey:
This body hasn't anything substantial to say.
Only lines of verse can take them far, far away.

To look onto the river and rocks: leave worries behind.
Listen to gurgling streams: to see ships afloat
In the distant horizon. I have travelled
Often and wondered often walking
On streets and bridges as rivers murmur

Where does poetry begin? Why does the heart weep?
Are destiny's lines charted
And does change ever ensue?
How often, how often can one go wrong?

My companions to this solitude:
This mind, this body, this verse.

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Bloomed A Flower Rare

In my mind's regions bloomed a desert flower
An outcome of arid soil; in my mind
It gave my life a gentle grace;
Year after year I waited. On cold nights
Imagination would run riot:
What, for how long and when
My fingers would almost graze the sky.

Long years the bud, curled up in itself
Waited. And then when it blossomed
Its beauty brough tears to night skies.
The flower, red, with petals soft,
Lived and patiently waited to die.

In my mind's regions bloomed a flower
Rare.

Rani Turton



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* A New Day Has Begun

I have walked, walked until daylight seemed night.
The long tunnel of darkness drove the breath
From my body; soft light from celestial bodies
Did not harm these eyes, only my feet were sore.
The wind shook the branches: they looked like demons dancing
Beckoning me on like before. How long is eternity?
Why cannot the soul find serenity?

Pebbles scatter and fall as for ages past.
A soft mist rises off the river:
I will find the boatman to ferry me.
The soft rays of the morning sun warms my cold face;
Will hopefully warm this restless heart.
I have time enough and more. Life is thus
Moments, and more than instants in the evermore.

The river is almost eternal. Ah, this gleaming shore.
A bird that plummets and plunges
Is part of the eternal scheme of things.
A pattern that crosses my fate. Look at that
Tree's branches dancing in the river breeze.
Soon the fisherfolk will return home.
Village women will wash their clothes in the sun.

And now, it seems as if a new day has begun.

Rani Turton

I, Alone

Ivy over brick walls, a fountain swishing
Flashing in the sunlight, wetting the stone.
A fountain in the city centre and then
Cars that flashed by, I alone.

Early afternoon, recollecting my thoughts
Fountain, fountain, windowed walls.
At times, overwhelmed I didn't know
How to deal with it all.
As tears, mingled with rain
I alone, walked on the wet stone.

There was the waiting and the wanting
The I Was and the I Wasn't.
The I Should and I Couldn't
All those wasted years, I alone.

Musing, the fountain, bubbling
Curious glances cast my way.
Wet, wet stone, threatening sky
Hours that have silently passed me by.

Rani Turton

* Not Anguish

Frozen hearts in concrete cities
Abound today. Of little importance it is
If one is alone. It is not anguish
That speaks thus: It is not anguish which
Lost in explication, deciphers the definers,
The dreamers, the poetry writers.

Poems, not anguish, write themselves.
Words chart the course of lives. Expression
And depression are episodes that fly
From a mullioned window in haste
Like a myriad bats in the mulberry sky.

What makes a bard a bard? What makes
The night writer write? Life swallows
Emotion like a quick gulp of wine.
In diurnal rhythm, nocturnal notation;
Nothing from something. Creation,
Depletion, existence.

Not for I the anguish and the pain.
Jumbled thoughts, a cloudy night
And a winding, long, lonely lane.

Rani Turton

* Wherever You May Walk

Wherever you may walk, my heart goes with you.
In acceptance, in silence, in the completion
Of Absence; recognizing the emptiness of this life
When you leave my presence. In knowing that
I need to sense this vital presence as if it is
Water in the dunes; as though it is sun in polar winds.

I will speak of this emotion only if you want to hear.
I will also leave you your freedom if you so desire.
I can control my steps, but my ears strain to hear yours.
I can choose to walk away but even then my soul will
Long, long for your presence.

I hear the nightbirds though my window.
I can hear the silence of a sleepless night
That, with the fingers of dawn, have silenced
My words, desires and whatever lived within me.
I have waited so long; long did I wait for my fate.

Wherever you may walk, my heart goes with you.

Rani Turton

* Paper Walls

I wrote about the wild winter wind
As it stung the flesh and caused tears to fall;
I wrote about the blazing sun, solitude
And melancholy, the soul's itinerary:
I wrote at dawn and dusk, midday and midnight
Lines on pages, wrong on right.

Enclose me with words, paper walls.
Inkstained fingers and reams
Yes, those were the dreams.

The fingers would move, the pen would dance
And as thoughts glided on
Many a frozen lake did I cross
Countless times was I reborn

Several phantoms came to call.
Life, linear time, past leading to future:
The present wasn't so omnipresent
No, not at all.

I am far from the familiar.
An almost, almost failure.
I feel the weight of the words
The price of taking refuge in other worlds.

I write about the choices, difficult
And irremediable that a woman has to make,
Like stolen moments from destiny's time.

I show my foreign face to unfamiliar winds
On beautiful bridges. Some pages of verse
Accompany me on melancholic days.

Rani Turton

Nights, Like Knights

The length of the winter night
When, evening has just begun.
Nights, ere the morning comes
Nights for the mind to wander
As moonstuck it becomes

The length of the winter night
As the hours toil their way around the clock
Dawn will come: Slowly spinning earth,
Weaving, leaving, birth.

Now the clock has stuck four:
It goes on as it always has before.

The weary night, like a knight
Vanquished, and battlesore
Has laid down armour and lance
Has left, heart and mind to restore.

Rani Turton



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* My Heart's Empty Spaces

I have looked for you in many strange places:
Highways, subways, and in my heart's empty spaces.
By brightlight, flickering light, by rain and sun.
I waited. That is when this quest had begun.

I wrote in imperfect rhymes, by day and night.
That is how the heart reasons, and why I write.
That is how the ache is dissipated, as days go on
As times whistles by and hope is born.

I have waited at street corners, even in biting cold
Many strange cities have I roamed, wild and bold;
To follow my destiny was a toss of dice.
Beloved, if only you could love me twice.

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That Universe

Make me a part of that universe
Where you walk, where you speak, where you think.
Make me a part of all that is you. I want to be
An iridescent, integral part of you.

I will see the sunrise on clouded mountain peaks
As though it is the very first time;
I will watch the birds as they fly
High, so very high.

We will speak of existence. Absolute, lucid
And serene. If by chance I see
The sadness veil your eyes, alas
It will not be that great a surprise.

I have come from afar. Upto this point
The journey was my own. When the shadows lifted
It was better. Walk with me on this path.
Make me a part of that universe, silent, unwise.

Rani Turton

I Cannot Promise You Eternal Love

I cannot promise you eternal love; my lifespan
Does not lose itself in the realms of time.
I cannot even speak of the years ahead:
These words, now, remain after being said.

Do not ask for vows I cannot keep.
How does it matter even though you hold
That most precious place in my heart.
I am here today: tomorrow we might part.

Come to me here now in this silent dusk.
Touch me with your gaze. If on life's journey
We meet again, then, that will be enough:
Life has some eternal moments, ah, many such.

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In My Room

Life, space, secluded place
But that's how I hear the waves crashing
See the parrots on a tree
The leaves that fall on a balcony
Smell the rain
Hear the wheels of the goods train

Some photographs on the wall
But no faces at all.
Episodes have burnished and furnished
Countless memories and dreams
Sun's rays and moonbeams
In reflection, lurid,
But not so often lucid,
Pacing the mind's corridors,
Opening the mind's tinted windows,
Walking out of the sacred circle
Leaning back in
But now the day will begin.

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For Each Day's Living

If life turns out this way, there has to be a reason.
There has to be a way through the gathering gloom.
Why did the path lead on, winding, sloping, rocky
In strange cities, on mountain roads and why
Does the sigh of the breeze amongst trembling leaves
Make me feel this way? I have seen strange citadels
Ancient walls, human hands that have traced and carved
Stone, only the faces differ from those in my country.
I have seen beauty and warm hearts, listened to
Languages I didn't know. In my heart there are spaces
Distant, like the unfathomable sun.

At times my heart aches, like the body and mind.

I hear the swish of wings as birds fly home. I can see
The sun, crimson and unfathomable
Set. I touch the drops of rain that fall from the window
Its like a dream. I assume and presume. There
Must be a reason for each day's living.

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I Who Have Walked So Long In The Shadows

I who have walked so long in the shadows
That the sun dazzled my eyes; dazzled my eyes
Until tears blinded them. Would it be better
To adapt to sunlight or to step back to in the shadows?
The shadows, from where a shadow I had almost become?

A shadow I had almost become, just a remnant.
A semblant. The soul looks for comfort where it can.
The mind tries to function and analyse
But the body, tired, tried and tried.

I who have walked so long in the shadows
Did not handle with skill life's questions.
There were moments when I was almost serene:
Just to live now, to be and to have been.

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So Close To My Heart

You are so close to my heart
But you are so absurdly far.
There are city sidewalks that know you
That hear your footsteps
And doors that open when you command:
Ah, I am the stranger, who being so far,
Does not understand, does not know you at all.

You are so close to my heart.
I dreamt so many dreams, opaque.
Look, the leaves are falling
Falling, as fast as my tears.

One day I will hear your knock.
I will open the door, I will not speak.
And hold you close, so close,
So absurdly close to my heart.

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How Do I Find My Errant Love?

How do I find my errant love?
How do I find the path to his distant heart?
Like the course set by moving suns
Like a cold, unwearied comet, trails I have spun.

Whither, whether, clear or stormy weather.
His steps err. He has gone and will not return.
I may, in silent grief, wonder
That love can be such a blunder.

I have, at times, walked past his home.
I have argued with myself and at times
Decided to leave without a pause.
Emotion, after all, writes its own laws.

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As You Read These Lines, Life Carries On

And thus life carries on, carries on.
You will read these lines perhaps tonight,
Moon shining brave and bright.
Or tomorrow, when grey clouds veil the sky.
The city awakens to each new day of pleasure or pain.
Crowds gather in the cool gardens; that's how
I remember it used to be. The tombs of kings
Brought home the need to live life urgently;
That life can crumble, that names can be erased
Like leaves falling on the ground.

We walk in our memories;
But when will we be forgotten?
For how long will we be the subject of people's talk?

As you read these lines, life carries on, carries on.
Watch the sun go down, do no wrong.
Eat the bread of simplicity;
Reflect, sing life's song.

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* How Do These Feelings Matter?

This heart has no reason to regret you;
Why should it have any reason at all:
These years have passed as in a dream
Summer, winter, fall.

And autumn, yes autumn
With those hallucinatory colours
Under dripping skies, this heart won't regret
But my eyes will inconceivably get wet.

How do these feelings matter?
Why should it suddenly seem
That delirious sight, touch, song
Have gone so terribly wrong?

I have walked, walked, walked.
I have woken up in unbearable pain.
There are no answers, no answers:
Even my heart cannot explain.

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Let Me Memorise Your Face

One more thing before you go.
The door is open. You will walk out and not return.
The shadows of the night will take you away.
The car door will slam. And then there will be
That unspeakable silence once more.
So, let me ask for the first and last thing
I ever asked you for: let me memorise your face.
Maudlin? No, not I.
Let me memorise your face for the empty years to come.
I do not even know what I will become.
Let me, in total recall, imprint
The colour of your hair, your eyes, your skin
But do not let the slightest emotion begin.

I will not touch the skin of your hands.
That means nothing. It will not sustain me
On life's long journey. On lonely days and nights
I will remember these moments:
These moments, fraught with anguish and this place:
The instant when I memorised your face.

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One Day I'll Get Better

One day it will seem as though all these moments
Were bits of dreams;
Dreams that I would rather forget. To look back
Without that regret: without sadness
I'll get better, and the road ahead will flow
Like a river, a tranquil river that flows
Smoothly from shore to shore;
And my destiny, like a barge
Would sail, under the sea, the sky, the sun.

So often I those feelings would envelope me.
I would wander from land to land.
Foreign seas and mountains would speak to me.
Poetic fantasy or was it really so?

Then I would walk in the rain, numb with chill;
The kind of cold that even a fire could not warm.
To keep me from that terrible approaching harm.

Some tears would fall, it does not matter much.
Life has these moments, ah, many such.

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In Paris

Roofs silhouetted by a reddish moon
Late night revellers walk down far below;
Women, high heels clacking on pavements
Walk, a whizz of perfume as they pass swiftly by.

Just an instant out of life: a vision
From a lonely perspective. In Paris
The cafés have closed for the day, but the bistros
Remain open, and even at dawn that onion soup
For those who do not sleep
For those who cannot sleep
For those who wake early
And then night fades into day.

Avenue Parmentier and it's windows open
I hear the soft chords of snazzy guitar play
You know, some chords in minors can bring
The tears to your eyes. Some fingers
Can pluck the emotion from your heart.

The river seems calm. The lampposts
Flare bright. The stone walls and stone bridges
Have seen other solitary walkers
Silently pace the night. The stone benches
On the Pont Neuf have watched for so long
The rain, the night, the poets, the song.

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Nothing To Do With My Life.

I heard the clouds whisper.
It seemed that rumours were running rife.
Nothing to do with my life.
Nothing to do with my solitary life,
Nothing to do with my perturbed mind.

There was a rift in celestial realms.
Nothing seemed to be the same anymore.
What happened, what was to happen
World spinning fast on jerky axis
Tsunami, forest fire, war in many lands

I heard the clouds whispering
My mind tried to remain calm.
Lightning in a bleak black sky; tempest
Over choppy water; drops of water
Falling, falling, onto placid lakes
Thinking, regretting many mistakes.

Clouds that move from land to land.
Maybe only they can really understand.

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Just Another Kind Of Love

Distant are the intense years of analysing emotions
So far from all that I learnt and taught; but prevailing
And walking slowly through a mist, another kind of love
And whatever the coming years can bring along.

School bells ring. Footsteps on stairs.
I have changed utterly but is that so?
Do the artists still gather by lamplight
In the distant countryside? Does the river still flow, slow?

Storms would come. Melted candles wait ready on wooden table tops.
Light a match, do. Let me see your face
In the flickering light. Let me hear your voice
In this soft silence. The mist will roll up
When the sun rises. I will write a poem or two
If inspiration so stikes. I will think of tomorrow;
Just another kind of love to reveal facets
Of life and living, love and giving.



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Febrile

I have often walked under fevered suns.
I have seen the moon rise on febrile nights
Instants and episodes, whenever and whatever
When the now became then
Transformed by moods and emotional pain.

The rain pricked my eyelids. No, wait.
This rain is much too warm. Why does it hurt my eyes so?
Whatever it is, it is my own.
It came from the depths of my agitation
The calm that lay on the facade
Was only a dream, the real I
Lay so far, far within.

Whenever I write, whatever I write
Everything suddenly seems to be alright.

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Birds In Flight

Often, birds in flight make me think
Of my soul and its plight: they make me think
Of life's anguish and then ponder
If life doesn't lie yonder

Yonder beyond the hills and sky
If when life, pulsing in life's veins
Is but a dream, an illusion
Birds in flight, dreams and delusion.

Now, in an instant, the beating of wings
Have faded; nothing remains.
No remnants, not even a song.
The beating of my heart goes on and on.

Rani Turton



PoemHunter.com

On Wings: With Garuda

The sky. The sky, complete and infinity-clad.
On wings, I would fly, leave this body and this brain
In this concrete prison: Yes, I would fly.

On wings, I would let the breeze handle me as it's wont
Thrown here and there: I would skiddle, paddle
Heck, skedaddle away to didle daddle.

I would fly. On wings I could try to breathe
Far from these walls, these constraints:
I would see what lay beyond the boundaries,
The woodlands, the frontiers and the obligations.

With wings certainly it would seem
A simple frivolous thing. With wings
Both victim and prey, life would seem
A fragile, totally different dream

Real, surreal. I could fly with those wings:
Those mythological birds come to haunt me
The wings, those flying, beating wings
Sing a song; recite verses of poetry

I could like a Garudian clone
Freedom-intoxicated, listen to those wings,
Immense beating wings that can block out the horizon:
That sing and chant lines of poetry

With Garuda and those wings I could fly
To that distant land of liberty in the sky.

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Uncertain

I am not so sure anymore
Not so certain that it can work;
Life that was once, so simple and straight
Has turned into vast, complicated fate.

I analysed in pondering might:
My mind was strong and fine;
But sudden darkness eclipsed the light.
Thus my fine mind took flight.

Then with rocky imperfect rhymes
I wanted to mingle with the mist,
Strange melancholy and the rain:
Forget those years of struggle and pain.

Now night has come softly.
The time to wander, and try to unravel
The skeins of destiny's plan,
From before, now, and how it began.

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The Mind, Agitated

These days will, one day, pass from the present
Into the past. These emotions will cease to agitate
My heart; my restless mind shall like a calm lake
Watch, ponder but remain serene.

Turbulent thoughts that do not question
Anymore; the body has too much pain.
The soul has tried to break free:
The spirit, yes, the spirit also yearns for liberty.

Now the days pass, one by one.
Language and words cannot define why
In the road, when all is seemingly defined
The mind, agitated, falters.

Rani Turton



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Oh, Melancholy

Oh, Melancholy

You almost tempted me

On wet city streets, in grey city nights

To trust uncaring strangers

Yes, those city knights.

Oh, Melancholy, you are my love

I have walked, talked and sung to you;

Years and years have gone by.

Melancholy: I was savage and shy.

One day I waited near the river

I saw you pass by on the bridge.

You were all I had ever dreamed of

Me, walking on the river's edge.

I almost lost, ever in love, but

Never, never really wise;

Lost in romantic dreams,

I wished to believe in your passionate lies.

When I saw you walking by
On the bridge, your face in shadow
I knew then, you would always
Follow me, go where I go.

Touch me with soft, gentle hands
And often take my pain
Letting me believe that
You could dissolve it in the city rain.

That you would speak to me
And I would for once understand:
My emotions would surge
As we walked on hand in hand.

Years later now, I still have you
In every shadow, mirror, poetic line
Oh, Melancholy, you know
You will always be mine, only mine.

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Exist For Me

Exist for me, beloved
In a thousand little ways: when the dawn lights
The eastern sky, when rain slants
Onto city spires. As children walk to school
And comets spin around suns.

The potters spins his wheel,
The artist wields his brush: I can hear
The chords and the keys,
Of strings ready to play.
All that is beautiful awakes in my heart
You exist, but only for me.

I will take the blame for this passion.
I will shoulder the guilt and the
Heartsearching if it so becomes
More than necessary. Whatever
This destiny, whatever these dreams
Walk with me, exist for me.

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Draw The Blinds, Time

Draw the blinds, Time
Its time enough and enough
Time to grieve: I do not want
The sun to weighten closed lids;
I do not want the light to numb
My sight; for me, it is yet night.

Draw the blinds, Time
Its time enough and enough
Time to accept and not weep.
There is a calm about intense grief
That frees the spirit; the spirit
That cannot bear anymore.

Now, Time, draw the blinds,
Daylight has come on tiptoe.
Dawn will flicker into day:
And the pain will finally go.

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A Loner By Profession

He says he is a loner by profession:
He says he is not a garrulous kind.
He says he needs to be alone
Most of the time.

He is not the family kind.
Ah, he is not even kind!
When he says he is a loner by profession
Tears almost make me blind.

Then he goes and comes
As if he has to follow the tides;
Some bitter rhymes come to me
About naive, young, pretty brides.

Thus it is and it will always be.
Another fable, an unfinished story
To remember when the rain
Slashes the panes, the pain.

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All That Remains

All that remains at the end of the day
Little bits of rhyme
And you who will never be mine;
Who will walk under different skies
As I awake alone at sunrise.

All that remains is the memory of your face.
The surprise, the moments of love's grace
Have in my heart left an open space

An open space. An open wound.
A chord on strings that are finely tuned.
A soft murmur, a fountain in stone
A pain that cut into the bone
A notion of eternity
Ah, and infinity, oh yes infinity
To think, to ponder, and simply to be.

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If You Still Loved Me

If you still loved me

You would have returned, from far away
Or never ever have gone

If you still loved me
You would have wiped the tears from my eyes

You would have, without argument
Waited for me at every dusk

And then you, maybe, at times would
Draw the curtains and let in the moonlight

You would have softly spoken a few words at dawn
About us; about destiny; ah, you would never have gone.

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Be Patient With Me

Be patient with me, even though
I seem absent, even though I might be sad
And at times I walk away

Seemingly distant, uncaring
For all I ever had.

Be patient with me, even though
Winter has seeped into my soul
There is a time to come
My love for you is yet whole

Be patient with me, yet again
As I walk this silent lane;
In silence I dispute with destiny;
I will, in time explain

My love, be patient with me
Love remains, ever was and will be.

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Strange Kind Of Feeling In My Heart

Strange kind of feeling in my heart;
As though I wander in from the street outside
And find the door locked.
As though a storm, dusty and fierce
Prepares itself afar.

Strange kind of feeling in my heart.
Anticipating the worst: almost afraid
To enter a nebulous world:
An almost ache, settling itself
Deep, deep inside.

Strange kind of feeling in my heart.
Wanting the eastern dusk; asking for
Nothing at all: desire and dreams are
Long behind me. Now, I will make acquaintance
With that strange kind of ache in my heart.

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Strum, Strum Gently And My Heartstrings Sing

Strum, strum gently and my heartstrings sing
A song that comes from deep within
Words that coin their own phrases
And that is how I begin

A terrible ballad of love
I can speak of emotional hiatus
Begin at the beginning and then
Let this song sing about us

Strum gently and let the world fade away
The time I have with you will soon end;
There is a meaning to this interlude,
I have a lifetime this heart to mend.

Strum, strum gently, do not pause when
The words do not come;
Thus my heart will continue to beat
And I to this love will succumb.

Rani Turton

Father's Day Is Almost Done

Father's day is almost done;
His hair shines silver in the light:
His hands, frail, hold a book,
His smiles to see a bird in flight.

He walks slowly as though
To still time in it's flight;
The sun will set, will set
And it will soon become night.

Father knows life is fragile.
With every passing season;
He unravels thread by thread
His life's passion and it's reason.

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I Hear Your Voice

I hear your voice, despite absence and distance;
Amongst clear skies, cloudy days, dark nights.
I wake up from fogged dreams:
And even then it seems
As if you are standing there.

I have a secret known to none.
I can listen to silence and the silence
Speaks in a language only I know.
I can hear its words distinctly;
Decipher what it is saying to me now.

Often in the silence, I can hear your voice
Clearly, as when you walked by my side:
Ah, how lonely is the yearning heart
How fatigued the soul when it is tired.

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If I Close My Eyes

If I close my eyes, I can see you standing there
If I open them, you're gone.
Ah, mystery of imagination
The cold, waking dawn;
The heart that waits,
That fitfully longs, sighs, flutters
In varied emotional states.

Now that I know that it works that way
Let me close my eyes: let me believe
Utterly in phantasmagorical reason;
There is yet time enough to grieve.
When I wake; when I realise
That this fantasy was just a tissue of lies.

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Life In Pastel

I think and often imagine
Even in scorched dreams
Myself and life as it seems;
As it seems, seems, seems.

I have a tenuous grip on reality
A self-made functional mode.
I think I have some aspects of alterity;
I can think in colours unrefined.

Pastel, refined, softspoken,
Colours that were not mine;
I can speak in languages
That are often tough and fine.

I can think in pastel
Speak in pastel and subdued
My life, often in colours bright
To this has now been reduced.

I have a life in pastel but inside
I have emotion bright and strong
I can think in pastel but emotion
Remains vivid and lifelong.

Life, filaments of life, in muted hues,
Is thus what it amounts to:
Live softly, there is yet a vivid dream
That I am driven to pursue.

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Through Those Lanes, Lost, I Wander

The night resembles the day: endless and refractive.
I wander, in dyslexic mode, unable to formulate
One thought into another. I have left
Analytic reasoning far, far behind. Emotions
That ebb and flow like the tide.

Through those lanes, lost, I wander.
Is it this land that is foreign or is it I?
Is it me the stranger, weary and shy?
I have tried to reason, but now there are no reason
Even to wonder why.

Through those lanes, lost, I wander.
Was I the substance or the shadow, or was it
Just reality that eluded clouded reason? ?
I wander, wander, and now as time
Walks by my side
Shadows lengthen; and through those lanes
Life, love, pain and all that remains.

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Walk Slowly Through Bowered Lanes

Walk slowly through bowered lanes; who knows
How many years are left to us to gaze,
To feel, to decide?

Feel the rain on upturned head, the sun
Blazing onto winter bleached skin?
And then who knows if, when night comes
The sun will rise the next day?

Walk slowly through bowered paths.
Walk straight, with eyes that see
The skin on fingers ready to touch
The soul deserves that much.

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The World And I

Distance, absence, nothing makes sense.
Voids that need to be filled, needs
That quite simply need to be fulfilled.

I can hear, speak and reason
As long as as I may
But nothing can tell me why
Life turns out this way

I delved into the mystic poets.
Late nights and only them
Seemed to understand.

Whenever I see the river
The earth, the clouds and the sky
Watch the birds flying, flying, flying
Thus turns the world and I

Now as paths move onward
Pages remain to be turned:
Life is my ally.

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Whispers Into The Brick Wall

Who else will listen silently while I speak of my love for you
Who else will stand still while I whisper my secrets
Those deep, hidden secrets buried in my heart
Except this rough, brick wall
Standing so tough and so tall
While I whisper all I have to say;
Nobody would remain as stoic and immobile.
No, nobody could or would. I, myself
Knowing myself so well, can hardly believe all
That I pour out into this ready wall's ear
I, myself, can hardly listen to my own words
Speaking out my barely avowed hesitations
And uncommitted love's crimes; I, myself softly touch
This rugged wall and it's surface
As though it is the skin of my loved one's face.

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I Heard My Destiny Speak In An Unknown Tongue

I heard my destiny walking beside me, I heard
It speaking in an unknown tongue; I asked for ways
And where; I spoke as well as I could in
What I thought could be language it could understand.
I saw my destiny befuddled, sometimes sure
Of it's stride, and sometimes stumbling as
I walked beside.

I heard my destiny sigh, almost as weary as I.
Then I kept the questions to myself
All my queries were as pointless and why
Should destiny explain to each and every one?
We exist, and then we go
Maybe far, far into the sky.

Tell me where to go and when
Tell me why, how and the means to get there.
I am just a bit of blood and bone
Without you my flesh is bare.

I heard my destiny walking beside me, I heard
It speaking in an unknown tongue;
It showed me strange paths In foreign lands
So much worry and sleepless nights;
Yes, destiny I think even I, in my wildest dreams
Sometimes have my rights.

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Pretend, Just Pretend

As I write these lines, simple words that
Tear at my heart; pour from my heart
As they say what I cannot say: as they speak
The unimaginable, the words I left aside
For another day

Pretend, just pretend that I am,
That I am the one you love
Here before you, here at last
Waiting, for the words I want to hear
Words for which I hadn't asked;
Words that wound and sear

I am this moment. I am the thought.
I am the emotion, but alas, not thine.
I, who belong to nobody, am yours
And yours even to decline.

I am the light and the strength
I am love and its divine essence
Prtend, just prtend foe an instant that I am
The person who has your acquiescence.

There is a truth to be found in your eyes
Ah, in your eyes, so evident;
You look at me clearly; you are unaware
That, for so many summers now
You hold me love's tricky snare.
You hold me in an emotion I can hardly bear

The quest for truth lent an edge to my rhetoric
I, in my wanderings, left intellect behind;
Reason and arument did not wisdom bestow;
My heart spoke to me, and with my soul I had
Much to discuss; much to question: but
The rain did fall and fall and the wind blow.

There were hours of contemplation
Wondering where to go and when;

You will know when I come to you
In all simplicity, no questions to ask
And no replies to give;
Pretend, just pretend you love me
For a moment, a day, for eternity.

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Unbearable Sorrow

Deep within the snowbound reaches
Of my mind, never speak it out so loud, sorrow
Unbearable; waiting to reach out;
Oh, what it can do to you.

Imprisoned in frost, emotional hiatus
Emotion, feeling, possession
Softly, sound-dampened sorrow
Waiting to be let out
Unbearable, borne for too long

The reality of waiting, wanting, thirsting
Falling, falling, falling as feelings get snow-bound.

Borne through fire, borne through the years
Sorrow, burning, burning white and bright
All through these years, these tears
All these years, these tears.

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Poets In Their Melancholy

Poets, with troubled lives and secret thoughts
Have often stood and looked this way
And in this half light, strong and secret
What they thought, nobody can say

As dusk fell, and windows would close
Some words from soft songs would drift in
And take root in the present; some lines
Would nestle in a stranger's heart and brain.

Poets, lost in their melancholy
Lost in the muddle of their lives
Weave verse and rhyme: and thus it is
That their work their lives survives.

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Almost, Somewhere

In a distant place, look up at the stars.
The sun remains the same day after day.
So much to think about, so much to see
To understand, almost got there,
Finally almost got somewhere.

Wandering on narrow paths, the slope was steep
The clouds not so high, and with numb feet
Slipping and sliding on small pebbled paths.
With boots on, roofs far below
Yes, far below lay the village street.

I was the almost poet, the almost wanderer
Almost understanding the meandering path
Was the sequel to my meandering life;
I was the almost bard; what was left were
The remnants of words and a life full of strife.

Teach me the almost phrases of realization;
Tell me why my heart aches so; I, this sadness
Almost fought; Watched the battle and then the mist
Watched the rain fall onto stone spires and then
Almost, almost held my life in my fist.

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Lessons I Never Learned

Backbencher in grief schooling;
Never able to rationalize my loss;
Questioning pain as though life was
Just another dice's toss.

Whenever I thought of death
Or of people going away;
My breath stuck in my throat
And grief walked beside me that day.

I never learned the right way or the wrong way
Towards and away from loss;
I never thought it could be so hard;
I guess my learning was full of flaws.

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Alcoves, Shadowed And Empty

Alcoves, waiting to be filled or fulfilled
Waiting in the recesses of my mind:
Longing for the absolute self to find
What goes where, when, how and why.

Alcoves, patient and secret,
Waiting for objects and subjects to make
Memories, to fix, mend and bend
Life's recollections, to analyse
To question and then to reply.

Alcoves that wait and desperately want;
The self is an entity that cannot be bought:
The route of life is fraught with danger and
Only at times is life's true meaning sought.

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Until The End Of Mortality

I will tread on meandering paths, often weary;
I will stop and gaze at the sun as it rises.
I will watch a tree's leaves rustle in the breeze
Rest my body, so tired, when I please

I will wander in that old city's lanes
Pass crumbling mansions, craftsmen at work;
I will recall youth's joys and troubled sorrows
Even as I write in fragrant ink these lines;

I remember snatches of melody;
I remember the poetry of long ago.
Defenceness, under the end of mortality
I will witness my own nostalgic pain.

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This Week, Empty Benches Beckon

This week, empty benches beckon
Speak to me of betrayal
Some trust that turned astray
Some feelings that walked away.

And thus comes the day
Of facing problems and solutions:
Of waiting it out and wanting
It all; of wanting it all.

I am the remnant of my dreams and aspirations.
I asked, received and fought.

There are weeks when empty benches beckon,
Beckon to trust gone astray.

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All I Need Just Now

All I need just now
Is for the earth to curve into the sky:
To listen to rustling leaves
Watch clouds sailing by.

Then when my fatigued brain sleeps
And worries cease to be
I will dream of peace
Lying here under this green tree.

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In A Peculiar State Of Mind

In a peculiar state of mind
Neither here nor there as my brain cells click
And merge and try to make sense
Of conflicting information; that somewhere
There is a universal path to

Peace and love; that our children's children
Will find safe roads to walk on
And pure lakes and minds to swim in;
That wars will remain in the pages of history;
That illness and pain will dissolve
In pools of limpid rain.
That there will remain only one race

Humane.

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If I Tell You Not To Go

If I tell you not to go
Will the drumming of this heart cease
If I feel the warmth of your hands
I will only want much more

Dawn, pale and silent
Will sprinkle the windowpane with light
The city will awake
And it will no longer be
Dark night

If I tell you not to go
Will this story finally end
Will confession of emotion
Bring about a conclusion
Or will I continue to pretend

That life continues anyway
That dawn gives way to day
And day just fades away

Just fades away,
If I asked you not to go

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Everyday, While We May

To watch the trailing rose on stone walls
Dew on flowers, a resting bird on tree
To listen to the wind, feel the rain,
Everyday, while we may

The sun with it's golden beams
Warms the flesh yet alive
Stars that glisten and shine
Bread, that the soul may dine;
While we may.

While we may, blood and bone
Skin, touch, tears and pain;
Remind us that each and every cell
Lives, and then hears the knell.

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Walking On That Far Shore

Walking on that far shore
You know, the one that hardly existed anymore.

The far shore, unhindered by daily reality;
Only glimpsed by immortal glances,
By those in mortal pain; when
The sun falls on fallen lids
When the rain cools and heals
When the body doesn't shiver
And the soul shines like quicksilver.

Walking on that far shore
You know, the one on the horizon
That comes closer with every stride;
As the page of life turns, alas rapidly
I, from that far shore cannot hide.

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As I Lay Dying

As I lay dying, yes dying
Tired, unsure of which shore
Not to walk anymore.

As I lay dying, yes dying
I saw ancient trees, blue skies
All the many times I hadn't been wise.

As I lay dying, yes dying
My old father's face swam before my eyes;
He said, 'My child, you can't die before me:
Now try to rise.'

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The Sick Bard

The sick bard, in a haze induced by melancholy
The mysterious sickness that threatens subtly,
The malady that does not leave, ever.

The sick bard, at times on the frontier
Between life and death does not know
Which to call inside the painted door.

Now there is pain; now there are visions
But also, also haze and delusions.
The sickness is full of illusions.

The sick bard has pages full of writing
Poems and thoughts that have spanned years;
Alas some of those words have been erased by tears.

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Now I Lay Myself But Not To Sleep

Now I lay myself but not to sleep;
That is natural albeit functional
My laying myself down is nothing:
An action that is situational.

Now I lay myself down to dream
Yes, dreams in which I often did
The extraordinary, unfettered by the ordinary
Dreaming, yes, when dreaming is lucid.

There are instants both dark and gay
Which can dull life's bright glitter;
Now I lay myself down but not to sleep:
From instant to instant will my soul err.

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When Mother Went, She Left Her Shoes Behind

When mother went, she left her shoes behind.
Soft shoes, tied with a ribbon.

She, who once walked so fast,
Walked away into eternity.

The morning came to take her; and in her haste,
Mother left her shoes, tied with a ribbon.

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Adored

All steps lead to your door; all paths lead to you somehow.

When I saw you the very first time, it was evident to me

Life's doors opened and closed for you. That my life

That the years, all these days and nights lay in your eyes.

Adored you are, adored you will remain, come what may.

Life can be fickle. My heart, however, is sworn to secrecy

Though sometimes weary; but walking, walking

On this road of destined love. Adored you are.

You will always be.

Precious as the air I breathe,

As vital as life is to me.

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The Anthology Of Rock In Your Head

The anthology of rock in your head
That hypersensitivity to words and notes
Your attraction to eccentricity
Speaks more eloquently than you do.

Your hands, long and scarred
Some tobacco stained nails and sleepless nights
Your eyes, weary when it was daylight.

Now you go wherever life beckons
Your nights in strange lockers and towns
With long names and foreign friends

You have nowhere to go but yet
You are never alone. When times get rough
There are crazed moments of intensity.

But then laughing, laughing, in the moonlight

You walk on, your shadow loping beside you.

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So Far

So far, the roads and rues and avenues
Told me, more or less in their jagged way
With their signposts that zigzag here and there
Where to go in my own inimitable way.

There were people who tried, and tired
Left my side: there were moments of grace
But I kept on at my pace.

And weary of it all, I thought
After having come so far

Not to tire out, not to fade out
Without finding what destiny is all about.

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Strange Days, Strange Lines

It came upon me in a strange city
Words, alien but touching, almost unknown
As though they from other planets have flown
Touched my shoulder
Perched on a boulder
And made me their own.

Strange days have I known
Oh, the twisted paths of destiny
Give way onto longing; I waited for that light.

It was long, it was cold, dark this terrible night.

Who will believe that life has an end
When in the midst of trouble and strife?

Strange days when the hand tries to write:
Strange days when the mind fights to keep awake
There are acquaintances, maybe a friend
To keep you clinging onto life;

Now for all this strangeness I write strange lines
On dark days, and wait for life's stranger signs

It came upon me in a strange city
Words, alien but touching, almost unknown
As though they from other planets have flown
Touched my shoulder
Perched on a boulder
And made me their own.

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A Lyrical Fantasy

I wrote this poem for you; just a lyrical fantasy.
Just some words that found their way onto a page.
Unasked for, unbidden
But not yet forbidden.

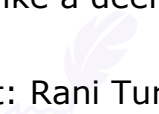
When the sun rose, I would ponder.
The sun set, yonder.
Night itself was a lone delight
A wilderness in which to write.

Then I asked my heart what it wanted to say:
It spoke softly, it did not want to betray.
I asked my soul and it had flown far away,
Far away; I thought of my beloved
And the words came; I, wont to reflection
Did not have to pause and think.

My soul, like a deer at a wild pond, did from love drink.

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Some Roads Lead Home

Some roads go forwards, backwards, onwards
Tracing the planet like leylines; some can circle the earth
Several times; roads, lanes, paths and country gullies
And vast ocean routes around the globe
All these territories I can roam.

But only one, only one path leads home.

Earth, sky, land and astral route
I will follow, the sound of that distant flute
I will come, when I am ready;
Soon; my steps are still unsteady.

There are proverbs and wisdom's ways
I know nothing of all that: I followed my heart
There were soothsayers and phantoms
All blocking my path; there were the rationalists
And technicians who negated my soul.
I will come, when I feel whole.

Roads and routes, paths and lanes
Sprinkle earth's body like veins;
One day I will arrive at journey's end
There nurse this pain and this heart finally mend.

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A Bridge, Some Dreams

When that sadness comes upon me

That mystic, mad melancholy;

When realization hits me

I am here, now, my body and bits of my soul

Some of it, but not the whole.

There are fragments of me left in this city

Bits of my heart, parts of my destiny

Brought me here; sometimes when beset by self-pity

Motes in my eyes, holes in my heart

Torn, torn, and almost forlorn.

Walking on a Parisian bridge

Stepping to another tune; wait a while:

A song is yet to be sung, let me wait for another rhyme.

There are clouds and there are dreams

Dreams, yes, as misty as those clouds; I, myself at times

Seeing myself walk on, walk on, plod.

There are bridges and some dreams

Still, there are paths to be trod.

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Sometimes When I Forget

Sometimes when I forget
Where I am, where I will be tomorrow
Blessed memory can take me on it's wings far, far away.

When the pain gets too much
Pass my finger across the strings
The wooden body hums, the wooden body needs that much.

The flesh is weak but the mind,
Permits some delusions
The time for illusions has gone.

Sometimes when I forget
Where I am, where I began
Where I am and what I've become:
Insomuch
Where I can be in the long years to come.

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Fragile Hearts

Fragile hearts, hearts that break
Do not harsh words and ruptures take

Fragile hearts that trust and beat
Trodden under uncaring feet

Hearts, like roses in the rain,
Scatter under the onslaught of pain.

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There Is The Sky, There Is The River

There is the sky, there is the river
The taker, and the giver

There is the sand, there are the stones
All that constitutes our bones

There are the stars and the trees
The soul has eyes that sees

The body thus thinks and acts
But then, whose is this mind that reacts?

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The Glass Of Wine Smiles

Two glasses of wine
Waiting, on a bare wooden table.
Breathing the air.

Barges that float on the Seine.
Slowly, like swans on a lake.
A step on the staircase.

The door opens.
The beloved has come.
The glass of wine smiles.

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Deserts That Dance In My Mind

Endless walks, nothing at all in sight;

Nothing and nobody in sight. My mind, still and

Oblivious to the external world, scorched and

Silent, walked, walked, walked on.

.

People with pasts have memories to keep them warm

And others, have nothing more to say.

The mind, like a furnace, clings to the air

To burn, to burn, to burn bright.

There are deserts that dance in my mind

Strange, unreal and almost divine.

They beckon, they chase me from reason

As I circle in the vast nowhere, somewhere, everywhere.

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Grief

Grief, don't stand near my bed tonight
I've had enough and more than I can bear
Last night was the worst: I could feel you
Watching me whilst silently standing there.

Now tell me, grief, are you friend or foe?
What is it about me that attracts you so?
Is it for my beauty, my wit or my fragility
That you stand there clothed in such simplicity?

You knew that yesterday was a hard day.
I had a certain difficult role to play;
Grief, as I suddenly felt you in my room
Ah! I actually felt the weight of your gloom.

Now I know that you are more than a presence;
I even think you sense my absence;
I almost think I'll wait for you tonight:
Grief, please do step into sight.

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When Miracles Come

When miracles come, pouring into my outstretched palms
Like gold coins long buried in the earth;
like manna from heaven
Miracles will come and then I will become

Another person; transformation and affirmation
Written into sacred chants and texts; there are
Life-changing situations. Choices and voices
Telling one what to dread and where to tread.

Wait with bent head. Wait and figure out when
Transformation begins and ends and only then
Will pieces fall into place
And lend life a special kind of grace.

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If You Have To Leave

If you have to leave go, go swiftly before I can summon
My voice to call you back; go swiftly before I can raise my hand
To stop you, to try to hold you back, to touch you
To reason with you and try to make you understand.

If you have to leave, ignore this stifling heart and this biting cold
If tears prick my eyes its because I never knew
How to say goodbye; its just because, just because
I was ignorant of love, loss and all their laws.

If you have to leave don't turn back for a last look
I wouldn't be able to bear that, no, not that;
I would remember the warmth of your embrace
That place near your heart, my own treasured place.

Go now and be done: You have to go your way;
Leave me to my thoughts, to think and pray
Leave me to this cold wintry life alone, to wait
Until my life's choices mingle with my personal fate.

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Sew My Heart Wth A Golden Needle

The sun sets as the globe turns; I am alone, and you

Maybe not; Who knows why some destinies turn out this way?

I flirted with metaphysics; I asked for answers but

The questions turned themselves away.

Bleed, heart, bleed. It might help to dull the loss.

It might soften the anguish and the pain;

The human condition is fragile, strong and strange by turns

Though with every sunrise the light returns.

Bleed heart bleed; the power of this pain

Will then lessen, and with a golden needle I can then,

Stitch the broken fragments, wash them in the rain

And finally enable this broken heart to become whole again.

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Alas Alone Am I

As despair weaves a cocoon around my shadow
Alas, alone am I with my despair.
I had waited for these clouds to lift I had prayed
For these storms to cease
These deities I had tried to appease

By various diverse means; the day remained grey
The clouds did not move away.

Alas alone am I, and I tired, of constant
Conflictual battle; I do not have the necessary
Tools to open up wisdom's door;
Do not have the fierce strength to do that anymore.

There are cobwebs in my nightmares,
The night is peopled by strange shades;
Alas, alone am I, almost merging with the shadows

Dawn will come, I will walk in thy meadows.

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Anchor

Wherever you may rove, my thoughts, my brimming heart
Tries to keep pace with you: for so it is;
The journey has been so long, so fraught with worry
My body is numb and my eyes blurry.

There is a port perhaps where you can at times
Anchor; there is an inn or a home where you may
At times want to linger: wherever you may go
My heart goes with you, with every tide's flow.

Once I knew you were my lighthouse
My ocean and my endless horizon, I dared
To cross oceans and go hither and dither;
But in anguish oft did my lonely soul wither.

Nomads wander and do not wonder;
But how did I become the muse and the mast
When all that I ever wanted, I do concur
Was to become your eternal anchor?

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My Beloved's Face

My beloved's face has haunted me night after night;
Many were the moments I spent eluding sleep
Many were the words I wrote on white sheets
And wordlessly, I often did weep.

I did not want to become yet another melancholy
Sentimental selfless shell;
The night was so dark, so obscure that I felt
I had walked on the paved road to hell.

My beloved's face has haunted me night after night
And sleep eludes me still;
When dawn finally does come will I still be
Standing by this windowsill?

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Professor Higgins, I'M Not That Flower Girl

Professor Higgins, I'm not that flower girl
A flower girl that is foreign to boot;
The cockneys in Londontown are
A learning experience on their own;
And Eliza Dolittle was such a dear that
You may be talking clean through your hat;
Fiddlediddydo and fuddyduddydo
Forgive me Professor Higgins
I dunno where it begins.

I'm not that flower girl, dear sir
My accent holds all that I hold dear
I too would be flabbergasted if you
Suddenly learnt to speak like me;
Lo! what misery!

Professor Higgins, loosen your stays
Your accent has flown clearaways
If you were really a scholar in this area
Ah! you would become better and better!

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My Soul, I Saw You

My soul, I saw you wandering off
As though thirsting for a drink
You left me to my own devices
I might in shifting sands sink.

I thought of your absence and why;
I might be naive or even naughty
That's not a reason for your loaf;
Just a problem that is very, very knotty.

My soul, my soul come back to me
You should know above all
You, my ideals and superego,
Come back to me when I call.

Today I was what you might say
Just a shell, a skeletal self;
When you vanish without a word
You left me waiting with myself.

I have waited and wanted and
As the day waned, I even wept
My soul, in another land,
Happily rested and slept.

I have an ordeal and a passion;
You are all my compassion
Come, come, my wandering soul
Heal me and make me whole.

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Recapturing That Dream

Like leaving my imprints in the river
Like touching stone and having it crumble;
Looking at the future in a ruby glittering bright
Conversing with the night birds in a lonely park
Whilst walking home late at night.

The mind is my treasure; recapturing lost dreams
Thown into a dark corner of the galaxy
On the other side of the moon
Where I will retrieve them very soon.

I have a friend who is an expert
In saving the lost, the damned and the lonely:
But my mind and dreams and destiny
Have me and me only;
Now these lines are only a fraction of what life seems
In recapturing all those lost dreams.

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The Woman You Could Have Loved

If you come upon those
Rainbows, those sunsets, those narrow city streets

Before the parting of ways; from time to time
The perfume from women's hair might jostle your memory:
Your sensitive hands, whilst touching fine silk
Might remember another time; your eyes
Resting on another face that resembles another's from another time
Might remind you elusively, furtively of

The woman you could have loved.

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I Thought Love Was An Emotion

Not an ordeal, no, not a slow walk in the sunlight
After a long melancholy night;

Not a trial by fire after getting wet in the rain
Stepping over puddles and watching pain
Plop in to the swirling water
And waiting, watching long after.

I thought love was an emotion, strong affection;
One that overrid all objection and dejection;

Not a melancholy metaphysical madness
Not a surreal, sentimental sadness.

I thought love was an emotion, an emotion
That it was just another poetic notion

When feelings your body do betray
Emotion tries to flee clear away.

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The Poet In Exile

The mind moves, the way hands do
To touch a beloved's face; to feel within
The soul, the thoughts, the skin.

The mind, sometimes heavy, lacks the shine
Of the freshly polished vase
The mind, saddened by its exile
Tries to leave the poet behind.

The mental, the metal, the marital, the martial
Worlds seem to be in fusion;
And then ultimately comes
The anguish, the joy or the confusion.

Footsteps around the world;
Standing over the Seine
Clouds in the water, and nothing
To guide me even then.

Like any other poet in exile
Destiny seemed knotted like a rug
Persian-perfect and that thought,
That absurdity finally made me smile.

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My Mind, In Blinding Light

Waits, waits, in a silence that is heavy as pearls.

Waits for the lines and lanes of destiny to redefine
And refine; when the refined mind
Silently doubles and doubletalks itself out of rational thought;
Waits for the light to go, to disperse itself after the gloom
When the eyes can refocus and see
The difference between can and would be.

And destiny weaves her loom,
By blinding light or darkest gloom.

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My Mind Has A Mind

A calm surface: a world within a world.
My mind, at times, turbulent, savage and contrary
Just at the sound of a simple word
Gallops like wild horses across the prairie.

Oft I longed for calm; for a magic balm
To protect me from various kinds of harm;
Oft I yearned for tenderness:
Life was a game of dice or chess.

Moved from space to space.
Tumbling and wasn't it humbling
Trying to find a minute space
In my mind's mind's universal place?

My mind told my mind
Don't leave me alone;
Life is long and my destiny unsigned;
My mind with my mind, then intertwined.

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Tears, I Told You To Go Away

I told you, tears, to go away
Not to remain so close to me everyday
To tell the trees and rocks who knew me
That I was as far away as eternity.

My tears were just rivulets of pain
A passion that need to fall like rain;
I could not speak out what I thought:
I could not seek out whom I sought.

My cheeks were wet as on a rainy day
But the sky cloudless, remained dry;
Tears, I told you to please go away
My ineluctable destiny is here to stay.

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The Psychology Of The Unsaid

Thoughts, untranslated, remained unsaid.
Was it because expression or emotion was dead?
Or was it really that all courage had fled?

Education has not the answer
On thoughts that remain unsaid;
Or the psychology of the unsaid world
Could probably change the world.

There were pauses, there were glances
And the words that spoke
Were the smokescreen for
Ordinary, unsuspecting folk.

Now, instinct, reason and lapsus
Are some more terms to discuss;
The unwritten is unwritten
The unspoken is yet hidden.

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Your Fine-Boned Hands Are The Focus Of My Dreams

Your fine-boned hands are the focus of my dreams.
Thus it is; no melody sounds as sweet as your tap on the door.

Your hands have their skill. When I first saw them
And your fingers touched my palm

It was as though every Oriental balm
Poured into my spirit, that spirit ever a-light;

Healing it, freeing it, whispering that it would be alright now.

Your hands are the focus of my dreams
Not all as calm as I thought it could be.

In my dreams my longing took hold
Touch, skin, palm and magic balm.

Now touch my hand and show me if what I thought was true
That love is, was, and is surely what I thought I saw in you.

Rani Turton

Yes, Today I Will Celebrate Life

Yes, today I will celebrate life
Put my cloak of sadness aside.

I, the poet, the wanderer who changed worlds
Crossed seas and sought my destiny.

Mudstained, weary but still reflecting:
Outside the tavern door sits an old man

I ask my way; he points inside
So inside I go to rest and dream.

Today, I will rest from worldly preoccupations.
Today, I will celebrate life.

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These Paltry Lines

These paltry lines cannot bring you back
Into the halo of this street lamp outside my door;
I thought I had words but even they
Slipped from my grasp and went away.

I thought I had words but even they
Could not make you stay. I asked the earth
To still my heartbeat and then say
If your shadow fell across my hearth.

I was a paltry poet with paltry lines;
I was a paltry poet with simple rhymes
I was a bard, a dreamer looking for signs.

Nothing did I have; my only lifeline
Was this: rhyming these paltry lines;
Words, words that I tried to align
Into a kind of poem that kind of shines.

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I Thought Of A Place

I thought of a place
A place where my soul could go to be alone.
From here to there with fragile wings
I have flown.

Where I could be myself,
With all my faults, faults multiplied by ten.
Faults I confessed to myself, often.

Where I could observe and understand
The workings of the universe
A universe that often seems to work
To my mind in total reverse.

I thought of a place where
There would be a meeting place
For all colours and accents without anybody
Trying to outdo the other
Trying to outtalk and show their superiority
Over another's culture and birth.

Words, like needles, often prick.
Be yourself, that is the trick.

I thought of a place
Where they would look at the person
Behind the strange name, strange face
Strange accent and strange degrees.

And that is the truth in every country and city.

Unfortunately, more's the pity
We can educate and prune
From Arctic winter to monsoon;
There is a high born accent
A low born accent
and also a third world accent
And for those who live in a tent.

Tell me, is there any such place?

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The Literary Blues

There is a book and pages that rustle,
A vagabond muse, bewildered
Hiding in the faces of ones that I loved
That sang, that danced, that bled.

There were things; a necklace and a ring.
Dense and comforting but, that could in a trice
Bring a sheen of tears to my eyes;
There were thoughts that flew over the seas
And scattered into blue skies.

I would pick up my heavy hand
I would try to write a few lines
Now, now that's the way literary tears
Cascade, try to understand.

I have the literary blues today
I don't know what I'm going to do
When I'm feeling literally literary
And so very, very weary.

Now, the sun is going to rise
Stars wink and fade, and the words flow
There is a book, and pages that rustle
My words, my dreams and things I don't know.

Rani Turton

Wandering And Wondering

Wandering from here to there and then there to there.
From being a being, thinking, feeling
A wanderer from here to there
From somewhere to anywhere.

The earth's dangers and daggers
Have often been planted
But the wanderer, from place to place
Has a heart that has been transplanted
With limbs that often can barely move
Tired, fatigued and hungering for love
Wandering, wondering, whatever and however
And trying not to feel too bad

Wandering and wondering,
Stumbling, befuddled, blundering
For reasons that are often fugitive
To live, to love, or to simply survive.

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Ode To Vijay Vine

Vijay Vine, not Vijay Whine,
Was the life and soul of every do
While others whined, Vijay wined and dined
And to his flagon was true.

And wined again, until, until the wine
Almost became sublime; he knew
The big names in the who's who;
He had married into Delhi's cream
His life was a poor man's dream.
He could disclaim and proclaim
To almost universal acclaim.

He was really fine:
Vijay Vine and not Vijay Whine.

Then came one day as singing
Vijay jumped into his car and went winging
The Defence Colony flyover
Remembers till today
On a day that was particularly grey
That Vijay's money could not buy a makeover;
Vijay's car took off like a plane
Now, that really is a shame.

Vijay Vine, never Vijay Whine
Smiling, singing Vijay Vine.

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Leaves (How They Do Fall)

Leaves, how they do fall;
Do they happen to wonder at all
Why the earth happens to turn
And them, with seasons spurned.

When they fall onto the earth
Carpetting the ground with their mirth
Do they think of the spring
And the life that it will finally bring?

That the cycle of life begins
That the waltze of seasons spins
Now leaves tumble and fall

One more autumn, one more fall.

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The River That Murmurs

I will ask the river, that flows serene
I will speak to the sky
I will ask the river that murmurs

Not to ask me why
I cannot speak for myself.
That time has long since passed me by.

The river can murmur and sing
Unspent by passion: my voice
Will break like a terribly taut string.

My words will be grammatically and academically
Twisted (like that leafless tree) , unfortunately!
I want the river to speak, to speak
Alone, alone with thee.

The river can, softly and without tears
Tell you my dreams and my fears
I know you will listen:
And while city lights in the water glisten

You wont see the tears that shine on my face
No, that is a serious, sentimental place
That only I know;
Flow, river, flow.

Flow, river flow.
Speak to the only love I know.
Daybreak approaches soon
You and he by the light of the moon
Will murmur whilst I -
Will wait for you to bring me his reply.

Rani Turton

The Sometimes Song

Wait a while. The mind's confusion and slow steps
May quicken: when the sun comes out from hiding
And weariness itself wearily walks itself away.

Then, sometimes, in the silence of the stars
I can hear your voice. I can hear and taste and see
The years that brought me to this misery.
Sometimes, when familiar streets come my way
Or I come to them, anyway
What I really am trying to say

Sometimes, the softness of those instants
Comes back to me: the intent, the ideas
The emotions and the inspiration
That still remain with me. If you had been,
Sometimes, near me

Things would have been different.
These unfamiliar conceptions of destiny
That life brought to my door would have dissolved
Like the morning mist: sunshine-kissed.

I, in this sometimes moody musing, ask you to listen to this

Solitary sometimes song.

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Oh, Brittle Mind

Oh, brittle mind, leave all your worries behind.
Ripples in your hemispheres, whorls and whirls
Race through your fragile interior.

Strong you may be. Bountiful your life
But your mind, fragile, courses like the river
Onward, onward, sometimes flooding the banks.

Then when reflection ceases
And bliss is yet to come
The mind, coursing on like that swollen river
Wonders what yet it will become;
If daylight would break, and with it reason:
The corpus callosum has it's own season.

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Nets And Knots

Nets and knots, knots and nets.

Away from the shore, away from land
Into the mist and sea
Living, living and trying to be.

I am not a knot in a net
A knot I am not.

But, yet all I saught
Taught me naught
Life was a lesson, a reason
A long way have I come.

Nets and knots
Knots and nets.
Away from what I wanted to be
Just fishing on a lonely blue sea.

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At Sunset, Today

At sunset, today when the sky turns red
When clouds, try to veil the sky; when birds nest
And are too tired to fly

When workers, tired, straggle back home
And school has closed for the day
And in houses the curtains are drawn

When lights spring into life
And the spirit, tranquil, reflects
On the events of the day

At sunset, today, when the sky turns red
Father, grant everyone his daily bread.

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Entity And Nonentity

Names, places, things.
Whither, thither, wither.

Names that speak of where you come
Or began or have become.

Names, faces, and places.
Nothing, noone and nobody you have become.

When my mother was young, she would
Play with me, her face showed her love.
But that was far away, when I was someone.

Perilous was the crossing. From one life to another.
Am I an entity still? What do I become?

I speak in strange words to a stranger in a strange land.
An entity, yet but in my mind I think:
No Homeric persona am I, not a protagonist
Just an entity on the brink
Of nonentity, of trying to understand.

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Reflections On Serenity

From where did I come and from this point
What do I become and where do I go to?
My mind becomes a jumble of whats and whys and wheres.

I watch the river, flowing. Sometimes forceful
And at other times, tranquil. I watch the day
And the night. I am one with the water, sky and earth.

Sometimes, pause and listen to earth's heartbeat.
Still your mind, and still your feet.

Rani Turton



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Every Woman Everywhere

If only could every woman at the well
Could have her pitcher filled; her needs fulfilled
The right to follow her own dream

If I only could every woman who cried
Hot tears of guilt, submission or pain
Could be met with compassion

Fears of work in wild cities,
Fears, fears, tears.
Where do you go when you're alone?

Some do destiny follow
Some do lies swallow
An idea that abandoning roles can
Change destiny since time began.

But do you want to die alone?
Do you want to survive or plead?
What paths do you want to tread?
Why do you urge other women to follow
All the lies you had to swallow?
Village women, city women
Fears, fears, tears.

Some ideas of education and roots
Like a bamboo and it's shoots;
You hear the same discourse.
It is your own idea where your freedom lies.

Freedom from hunger, freedom from strife
Does the city then have any pity?
For one, hunger because the crops have failed;
And for the other, wageless, hunger,
For the rents have to be paid;
Pretty princess or simple maid

Every woman, everywhere.

In Darkest Night

In darkest night, the soul is alone.

The soul is alone and the world silent;
In deepest pain, silence like a knife
Can leave jagged wounds
A soft human voice can comfort and heal
A soft human hand can touch
And that is never too much.

In darkest night, the soul searches.

A ray of light, a hope, some solace;
Words of wisdom from a wise human being
Knowing the far path from which you've come.
Sometimes tired of just being.

Now dawn pales the sky.

There is the night and then the day
A giver and taker, taking all away
There is sorrow but tomorrow
Even after the darkest night
The soul will find the light.

Rani Turton

You Will Always Be

You will always be for me
Academically
More than a memory
More than eventuality
An essentiality.

There were mirages and dreams.
There were illusions and beliefs
Believing that brought grieving
And the light that became night

All that, a part of living.

Sunrise, moonrise, starrise
Everyday, to my surprise
The unabated beauty of this world
And the world was the word

You will always be for me
Academically, an essentiality.

Rani Turton

Boats From Troubled Lands

How long on the lapping waters
Crowded, hungry and cold
Each heave of the boat and we thought
This flimsy bucket couldn't hold.

Night after night, we huddled and prayed
Mother don't weep if you don't hear from me
Now, only now will I come to know if
I shall ever be free.

On my this boat from yonder troubled land
I packed my mind, body, dreams
To try and reach that far beach.

Like specks of sand that wait for tides
Like stars that crowd the sky
And leaves that tumble from the trees
We try, we fight, we survive
And we have often asked ourselves why
Destiny has passed us by.

Now comes the lightening of the dawn
Another day for destiny's pawn.

Rani Turton

Your Sweet Voice, My Child

Your sweet voice, my child
Awakes me from deepest slumber
Speaks to me of trivial things
Tells me I am everything.

When you speak to me I know
That my love for you is deeper than
Any I have known; that your first breath
Gave me the justification
For all my worried journeying and that

Your sweet voice will always
Be the balm to this beating heart.

Rani Turton



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A Clock, A Street, A Tower

There is a clock on a city street
These pavings that have often known my feet
There is a clock, a street and a tower
That is the mystery of love's power.

That stones alone can intense emotion retain
That you can walk forlorn in the pouring rain
That, whatever may happen, years ahead
For me these streets will never, never be dead.

The pain in my heart stops me now:
My faltering steps even begin to slow;
The mist from these mountains stings;
Memories, moments, melancholy and things.

Now behold the time for resolutions
Time can often bring its own solutions;
How do I walk away when familiar voices call
Me back; let me sit on that stone bench and recall.

Rani Turton

Trials And Trying

Trying, everyday and in every way
Coué would have clapped me on the back
At sunrise, up and up
Trying to work out my day, my survival
The trials of this destiny I did not chose.

Trying, and often crying, methods
That work or not, who asked for this tangled web
Of sunrises and sunsets, when I see
The herons in a lake, the moon's soft glow
When I think the well could run dry

When I remember that I have to carry on
Trying, on and on in every way.

Rani Turton



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Darkness, My Beloved

Watching the night approach with silent tread
Waiting to clasp his hand.
Waiting for that compassion
That pretends not to notice faults
Of stammering, stumbling, lisping or halts.

Darkness softens, hides, transmutes
Bases qualities into gold
Moonbeams dance on rooftops; it may be
Soon I those rays of light could hold.

But words enter unbidden into my mind.
Like in a tranced love, this liason with you
This dark and unseemly pact I have,
When I can leave all my errors behind.

Did you know that you, the dark,
This warm enveloping darkness, my beloved
Is what I wait for everyday?
Soft lamps, verse, the murmurs and
Rituals that only the sombre can understand;
Now draw the curtain, and hasten:
Come, my beloved, hold my hand.

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Rani Turton

To Wait Another Day

In darkest night, my soul, anguished by its plight
Tried, tried to soar free, but tied to soil
Came rushing back, to wait another day.

Day after day like soft petals that circle a flower
Like stories told at night to children
Like comets that circle a sun
Night becomes day and seasons change.

Days go by: And life
May end when it has scarcely begun.
Thinking about ambitions and dreams
Has long ceased; the sound of children at play
Will remain with me as long as it may.

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Rani Turton



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Sacred Was This Longing

Sacred was this longing; like a flame
Whitehot and purified: flaring towards freedom
Nebulous but euphoric in a mad quest for liberty;
To rebel, to fight and even maybe lose
With that sacred faultline of losers the world over:
Cracks in the surface, waiting, waiting for a kinder destiny.

Sacred was this desire: wrapped in life's energy.
It was what enabled the city lights and country earth
To course in my life's blood. When I raised my head
To look at the stars they were attainable;
When I looked at the horizon it seemed so near
I had touched rockbottom but now I could fly alone
Touched, brushed, cleansed by

This sacred longing

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Rani Turton



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In The Shadow Of The Leafless Tree

In the shadow of the leafless tree
I waited, alone with melancholy
There was nobody, nobody around
To touch, speak and see.

In the shadow of the ruined stone walls
I sat and spun my fate;
Time was passing by
But I continued to patiently wait.

In the shadow of a moonlit night
I counted the birds of prey;
I walked in to the sound of swishing boughs
And my soul then tried to pray.

I walked on with my shadow, as though
It was my greatest friend
No companion could be more faithful
To me until the journey's end.

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Dragonfly, Dragonfly

Dragonfly, dragonfly,
Please don't pass me by
Wait with me a little while
Whilst I look, wonder and smile

You, my poetic inspiration
Maybe even for Da Vinci's invention
Did you teach the planes to fly?
You lovely, lovely dragonfly.

I can see you poised and still
On the leaf, and thus until
Blazes the kind summer sun
Until coldest winter has begun.

Branch, pond, flower and breeze,
Wait a while with me now please;
We shared the silence, but now
You've flown onto another bough.

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Rani Turton

A Storm Will Arise Tonight

A storm will arise tonight.

The wind has started ruffling the pages of my book
The open window creaks, curtains billow.
Branches move, rustle softly, start to move.
Leaves of trees, leaves of books
Light, almost unsubstantial, it almost looks
As though an invisible hand moves.

The storm has arisen, pale boughs dance
To the wind that has set to a-singing;
Where do the clouds go when they sail out of sight?
The moon, amused, hides and bobs
Consents to show a single ray of light.

Lovers wait; poets write.
A storm will arise tonight.

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Blurred

Nothing is impossible: everything is possible.
Affirmation and confirmation, conforming to
The positive attitude as signified in books.

But then why is this world blurred, why do drops sting my cheeks?
I saw...I saw a bird plummeting down from the sky
I saw a child with scars, an old man cry
I was every woman who could not because she had nowhere to go;
I was the child, woman and man
That is when this blurred world began.

If Siddharth, the son of a king asked why
Why should I, I, find the reply?

The train that missed the track;
The limbless man, the teenager in limbo
The rage and the desperation in tenement homes
Though home still; the slums and drugs
And the black alleys at night
The jobless, the mobs, those who were deaf to pleas
No more, no more pain please.

Now in my mind I thought I could see
Evidence of misery and insanity
But this blurred world, part of my own personal pain
Is also full of guilt and vanity.
Thus I spin out my emotions in reams of verse
Alone in my own little corner of the universe.
This world seems blurred;
But then, thus so is the world.

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Rani Turton

Sins, Like Shadows: The Cycle Of Life

Shadows, like sins, cast low on the ground.

The cycle of life carries on. Some of the good lingers on
In unsuspected ways. The family is a tribe
With it's own codes. Some of the shadows linger on.
The wisdom to sow, reap and differentiate between the real
The surreal, the ego, the egoistical is not given to all.

Everyone carries their own burden.
Some do their best to realise
Their lives by fighting for their dreams;
And some, try to understand and analyse.
Day after day, the hours tick on and it seems
Shadows lengthen with the noon
Mystic, melancholy, heavy with tears
Shadows that follow and merge
The body, substantial and the shadow, ethereal
And even more so by the light of the moon.

If life is a shadow that passes like a dream
Are we what we are and do we seem to be what we seem?

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The Syndrome Of The Empty Plate

Throughout this wide world, a common foe.
The empty day, painful nights.
How many families have slept night after night
After dining face to face with an empty plate?

Children crying, helpless mothers
Waiting for destiny to become kinder
The fear, the abjection, the dream
Not to desire, not to die.
Body aching, bones that cannot move,
Tired out, cannot.

Lacklustre paths, wrong and right
Fades into indifference. Whenever differences arise
Between people from here or there,
Colours and customs, languages and arts
There is no differences between the syndrome
And the symptoms
And the fear and the pain that wait
Of the achingly empty plate.

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Paths That Lead Somewhere

Paths that lead somewhere; do they know where they go?
Do they think of the pebbles and the thorns
That can wound your feet; do they imagine
Or ever ponder that distances are not the reason
You set out alone: that solitude could have made you
Retrace your steps fast enough if you had known.

If you had known that paths that lead you somewhere
But do not guide you along; sing, sing a lonely song;
That paths are just tracks, trails to be followed
And life is still to be walked along.

Rani Turton



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One Day Old Age Will Bend Me Down

One day age will bend me down
And I will walk slowly like my old father.
I will have left life's mysterious codes
Those codes that slowly left me, rather.

That day will come soon enough:
Old age has its own mystey and pain;
But wonder too at the singing bird, the trailing rose
The thunder and the rain.

My bones will be frail, my shoulders stooped.
I will recall the past, mirages and things;
Time will be measured by each new dawn, and
The wonders that each sunrise brings.

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The Poet's World

How many poets have these pavements known
Stepping and storming, thinking and weaving
Lines into dreams; these cracked intellectual stones
Have mutely remained still under the onslaught of words:
Silent in the fury of the poet's world.

This twisted tree has seen me too
Trying to reason out what I did,
The evidence of the illogical emotion
And the rational linear world.

Why did the clouds run away?
Was there a reason the moon suddenly hid?
Why did the waves slosh and fall? Fated to follow the tide,
Feelings and fate, the poems pour out.

The city waits, accepting the flow
Of verse that, thrown into the river
Flowed on, flowed on. The river takes all
And life carries on, carries on.

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Asking

Yet again, a wanderer at your shore.

Asking and not waiting for your reply.
Waiting but not wanting; watching but silently.
The eternal presence about eternal emotion
That can move rocks to tears: tears, yes, but
Fabric-ribbed, wounds and profoundly enough
Vacant lots in the mind.

Asking, and not waiting for you to turn back
With a glance or a smile. Elegance and rhetoric
Once when you took over my imagination
And the wonder of it all: the furtive questions that
Would insistently knock at my temples at the break of day:
Asking but walking away.

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Analysing That Pain

Like a soft breeze that, barely there, sifts the papers on my table.
A window, open, and the curtains move gently.
A memory, that should not have been there.
An emotion that barely acknowledged should have known better.

Some serious men dissected my emotions.
An existence that, in existing, forgot to be.

A faraway pain, like a bird, alights on my hand,
Some ice on distant mountains settles in my heart.
All my experiences could not help me to understand
Why pain has be analysed, why the soul in crisis
Has to dissect, react and realise.

Pain is more than a commodity
More than a substance that can be caged
Artists and poets have used it in its intensity
And often, often sunk under the weight of its density.

I am one with this emotion.
It has become a part of this whole.
Remove it now and then I fear
That it will leave a painful, abyssmal hole.

Rani Turton

I Spoke To Liberty

I spoke to liberty and liberty spoke to me
Asking softly, 'Do you really want to be free? '

I murmured to melancholy and melancholy said
' Why do all these thoughts go through your head? '

I asked for grace and grace touched my life
Saying, 'Quiet for now. Forget all your strife.'

Then I walked on alone. Touched to the bone.
The anger and the pain, washed by the rain
Dissolved as I wept.

Then, fortunately I slept.

I spoke to liberty and liberty spoke to me
Asking softly, 'Do you really want to be free? '

Rani Turton



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Clouds That Come And Go

Clouds that come and go
Untold divine missions do
They carry out, without pause or falter
They our fates can certainly alter.

Clouds that gather up above
Do they ever wonder?
What do scurrying mortals matter?
When the heavens shatter?

Now and then clouds do go
Far above to hot unknown lands
The wonder, the surprise, the unabated joy
When they reply to uplifted hands.

Rani Turton



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Without You

Without you the waters lie still; the reflections of silent trees
Remain as though transfixed but not tranfigured.
Green shrubs and leaves remain sombre; clouds peer
And wonder at the stillness.
It might even rain. Why doesn't the rain
Fall now and be done with it's will?

Without you feelings remain in my heart
Unable to be expressed. Freedom and finery
Are long behind. Senses and sense are nonsense.
When will the cells in my body awake?
When will the dawn come and awakening light
Awaken my brain?

Let me wait for another day yet again.

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The River Ran Red: The Kalinga War

The river ran red; thousands died as they gave their lives
The king bowed his head; Widows and orphans this day
Families in mourning, and he, only he, was the cause.

The river ran red. Resistance at the cost of lives
Humans and animals died side by side
The mutilation and the pain, the Day flowing red, flowing red
And thus it came about that

He knelt and cheeks wet, the King wept.

Edicts in stone that speak. Misery and bloodshed
But no glory. As far from glory as conscience can be
Watching the mayhem in misery..

The river ran red. The King wept.

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So Acute Was My Loneliness

Cobbled stones, not dust.

So acute was my loneliness that dream I must.
Escapism was a flight from dreary realism.

.
If roam I must, if chains I must break
Alone, in this pebble-strewn destiny
My happiness I must fake.

.
So acute was my loneliness that home was far
Too far; too far and distant my loved ones and my thoughts
That in that black cosmic wilderness even the North Star
Seemed close enough to touch. That even my words
Seemed transparent and tinted with Orientalism

.
So distant and cold, so empty my worlds.
So acute was my loneliness even the poems would not come
The words fled, the streets wet, a spectre I had become
My memories tinged with the bitter things I had done.

.
All alone. When dawns touched my lids after fitful sleep
I had resolved never, never to weep
However deep the pain. However acute the pain
The sun would shine tomorrow and I would become myself again.

.
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Rani Turton

Waiting For Tomorrow

Waiting for tomorrow, wherever tomorrow will be
Looking for light's glimmer and no misery
Asking for nothing; prayers and answers will come
To my doorstep when I need to become
What I need to become.

Ego and destiny do not permit me
To become a being: to become while being
I am my body's home, I am alone
A shrine, a rhyme, a time.

I will wait for tomorrow, in silent patience,
Which has nothing of penitance; it comes
From being a being of irrelevance; pages
Will not be written on my life; if and now
I am worthy, I am bound to my society and family.

My children will thus speak of me, maybe.

Rani Turton



PoemHunter.com

Unknown

The lines to this verse came from an unknown source
Wells within wheels, wheels within wells
And sources that spring and do poesie bring.

The sunlight on a meadow,
Shadows and dappled fields
A faint desperation does this poetry bring
And then these verses do sing, do sing.

Unknown I was, unknown I will be
The writer, the poet and the poetry

Now the unknown souces that speak to me
Continue to sing softly, sing softly.

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Forget Me

Now that yesterday's pages have been turned,
Rustling, fluttering,
Flown far away
Now that those people have gone, far away
Voices have faded and destiny with sure fingers
Has traced other routes, other paths
Forget me.

The years have traced lines on faces,
Has touched with grey dark hair;
But the souvenir of those far-off places
Are the memories that are left to share.

Often I had wondered, some paths I could not tread
If I dreamt; sometimes the voices were so real
More real than the people I passed on the street
More real to me than the cold, the blazing heat.
Forget me.

Now the year has passed onto spring.
The trees have won back their leaves.
Roses bloom; the rivers swell with rain
Forget me, I cannot bear to remain your eternal pain.

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It Is So Hard To Be Alone

It is so very hard to be alone; from dawn to dusk
From dusk to dawn, alone, alone alone.
From a chant to a rant to a highpaying job
To an apartment in St Germain des Pres
That everybody wants to rob.

It is very hard to be a cog in the wheel
It is very hard to be a cog without a wheel
To turn, to burn in one's flaming solitude.

From birth to death, this profession of existence
Making an art of solitude, an act of independance.

It is so easy to die alone.

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A Bowl, A Coin, A Mat

He sat there near the white pillar, waiting
For a coin to dropp into the tin bowl
Dented, indented with hazy souvenirs
He waited on his thick cotton mat for a coin
A glance, a word, whatever came easier.

He wouldn't stoop to asking; he had tried even that
It did not give more. Now that the city was overrun
With networks of beggars that stimulated
Sickness and poverty as a means of earning;
Beggars like him, the real ones
Often didn't even have the protection of the community.

Waves of people pass. the sounds of footsteps,
For many the old man was transparent, invisible
At times a man who should not be there.
A young man came and said, 'Here you are,
Grandfather, ' and a heavy thulk as the coins dropped
Into the waiting bowl. He nodded, and waited
The whole day had to wane. He would sit there
Listening to snatches of conversation, a life
Of which he had no part. As the sun set he would walk
Painfully to his shack, fold his mat
And put his tin bowl and coins away.

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Acquiescence

The questions you asked but to which I had no reply
But I wished I had, the replies to
The questions you had asked but never really asked
Remained in my life, murmuring every now and again
I thought of them amongst the debris of my life
I rephrased them and answered them in my heart
My soul had gone, every waking hour, to your door.

When I saw you years later I saw the same questions in your eyes.
The surprise of it all was that my existence was just a pack of lies.
Just a heap of rubble I had shifted this way and that
And tried to build an anorexic existence without substance,
Without even the framework of dreams.

Ask me now, before the year dies a little.
The fragility of this fate will quicken and burn
I will struggle to listen and to learn:
Ask me where meanings lie; ask me if I
Have any answers to give now, before goodbye.
Don't remind me the past: I was different and not very wise
I was the uncertainty of the air, the sun, the skies
I was as constant as the sun, the planets and tides

If you had only known that; my battles with everyday
Were often in the middle of insomniac nights
I thought to die, but my blood surged strong.
I wanted to lie passively and wait for the sunrise
The moon rose, instead and this story went wrong.

Ask me now, I have answers to give.
Don't ask for explications my life is what I have
In my hands to give, before your eyes
I have the answers here, if you have the questions hence
In simplicity, in acquiescence..

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Revelations, Sobering

I was only one more pebble on the shore.
I was only one more star in the sky.
When the eternal wind, cosmic or terrestrial
Stellar or sober, blew, blew like the last call
I was the cosmic dust and the desert gloom

The drops of rain that splatter on city sidewalks
The waves that slowly claim the beaches
The lunar tides, the birds last songs
The time to come, the moments gone by.

Glimpse this instant of life
My window is the world
The bread I eat, the hand I hold,
The love in my eyes will tell the ocean's gaze
Life has to be lived with intensity
I am one with the world's density.

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Rani Turton

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The Rose And The Shadow

The rose spoke to the shadow:
'But why do you follow me? '
The shadow replied, 'Never have I seen
A beauty to rival with thee.'

.
The rose blushed in confusion
And didn't know what to say
The shadow, courteously said:
'Let me stay near you if I may'.

.
'It is only by your substance
That I may take form
Your very existence enables me
To exist and perform.'

.
The rose and the shadow thus
Became the closest of friends
From sunrise to sunset
The shadow the rose defends.

.
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I Was What I Am Not Today

I was what I am not today
The long day of my life stretches on:
Soon the dusk will fall and then
The night will also be gone;
I wonder about the change wrought
Or rather brought about by the years
Was it perception and thought
That dimmed and stopped the tears

Is it my id
That did what it did
Or was it my cortex
That lost itself in a vortex?

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Pillow Of Dust

He lay there unmoving; as still as the falling leaves
Around him drifting onto his weathered cheek.
The ground was hard, his legs were thin
His body wrapped in a dhoti that was clean.

How long had he starved, were his lips parched
A young man bent over him, said something
The old man didn't reply.
Was his village far away? Where were his children and why
Had he come here perhaps just to die?

Had he just decided to walk away?
Was his land parched, his crops rotten
His debts unpaid, his loans looming larger than life
Who could even presume to say?

He had laid his head down on a pillow of dust
He had lain down on a dusty pavement in an unknown town
Were there tears in his eyes, did he think of his wife
Who can even presume to say?
The next day the old man had vanished clean away
His place had been taken by a performing clown.

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Its Curtains Everyday

Real life, not fiction.

When you leave nobody asks you to stay.

When you forget that you once were loved

And that memories could have kept you warm

But then nobody reminded you of that anyway

As you go, into the mists, all alone

In the biting cold and as the fog rises

Love was a luxury that could have kept you from harm.

Sunsets and sunrises

Nobody asked you to stay

Silences lay thick a clouds

Blocking out the sun

Blocking out the intrusive crowds

Its curtains everyday.

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Handling The Pain

Stand near the light; don't walk towards the door
I'm myself, quite myself
Though quiet inside, I don't know.

Poets have often celebrated their pain
In verse with a swish of wine
My poetry has cleansed my mind often
Enabled me to feel rather fine

When I, in restless creativity
In the perpetual outsider's angst
Tried with music to soothe my troubled mind
When I submitted to sleep with thanks

How do I handle this feeling that comes upon me
At dawn, at dusk, at midnight,
I found the Woolfian and Plathian dilemma
Apt as only poetic pain can be, wrong or right.

Artists, musicians, flying euphoric
Far in their dreams and the world looking at them
As though they, and they alone could not understand
The compact structured world and its angles

While the pain got lost in all that trite rhetoric.

Handling the pain before it becomes a bonfire
That consumes your life and all those who loved you
Handle the pain, now that it cannot be borne
Give it wings, let it fly, let it break through.

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For Tonight

For tonight, thoughts will cease
For once my blood and body will try to please
My mind and its outpourings; for tonight the world

And its satellite technology can spin its way.
Planets, stars and other celestial bodies
Can leave their trail in the sky;
For why should this persona, that is I
Always try to touch their orbits. That is, my body
And my soul divine must sometimes try
To remain detached, insignificant and not sigh

Eternally after the great, the grandiose and after all the supernova
Can blind the eye and then fade;
Silence in the galaxy, its light can reach millions after centuries

The bright and the dull, light and shade
My poetry has for reason an illogical emotion
That words beyond season, time and rhyme
Touch hearts and minds just for a short year at a time
Ad then fade.

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The Devil At Midday

Restlessness, when the sun is high
Directly in the midst of the sky
Melancholy, walk beside me for a while
The hours will pass on by and by.

The sun hypnotises the eyes
The brain spins like a planet out of control
Vain cosmic causes and plans
Sucked into an agonising black hole

When the brain is on fire
But the skin is clammy cold
When thoughts run riot and the body is calm
The devil walks and slowly takes hold

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Pity When You Tore My Heart

Pity, when you tore my heart
I saw the world through different eyes
I saw the leper and the beggar and the lies

I saw the wounded, the sick and the homeless
I imagined sleeping in the rain
I imagined all my wordly possessions in a bag

I saw the tramps under the bridges
The tribes of beggars, the silent old
The solitude of millions tramping from work
Who had nobody to talk to

I remembered those who lost their jobs
And the thousands who lost their homes
I remembered those who had nothing to lose,
Who had nothing to lose
Never had anything to lose, nothing, never.

Pity I looked at the world through different eyes
Thinking about my good fortune and luck
Until, until one day I realised I could be pitied
By the poorest who lived in a shack

Seeing my restlessness and anguish
Even when things were going well
My selfish world, peopled with myself
Pity in poor people's eyes
My world, my ambitions and my disguise.

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Wherever You Are

Wherever you are, hear my call
Not more than a whisper, I dare not speak loud.

There were ages and epochs
The world has seen historical times
My head and heart have been filled with other emotions;
Mine, only mine.

The power of wishing, longing and yearning
Surely can cast magical spells
Can move the furthest cloud
Can with a caress cause the earth to sprout

No, I cannot shout.

Wherever you are, if it comes to mind
The barely spoken secrets, the unbidden tears
Come then, and wipe away all these fears.

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Dance The Slow Music, The Sandstorm Swirls

The sandstorm swirls, pebbles and sand
Hitting dour walls
Dance, dance the slow music
Elements appeasing music
Music appeasing elements

Pulse and body and sand
The music is one with the sand that whirls
Hide, hide the face that burns
Close, close the eyes that burn
Because of the storm in the city
No more passion, no more pity
There were mirages with shimmering paths
There were trodden truths and treacherous theories
And home's horizons far, far away.

Dance the slow music
Cease the howling wind, the phantoms
Of the sand that can speak with strange gifts
The old man on his rope-bed with bleary eyes
Remembers and speaks

Of old forgotten things; some people listen
Waiting for the wind to fall

Sand will, leaves will fall, trees that bend
Life stands still, dance the slow music, the sandstorm swirls
Wait and heed nature's call.

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Whenever, My Soul Like A Shrunken Dream

Whenever, my soul like a shrunken dream
Wonders and waits with wasted breath
Destiny beckons on but the road is long
And at the end lies only, only death

Now and then a diamond in the dust
Sparkles with quiet passion
Blossoms colour my dreams
Life is far from all it seems

Paltry rhymes, simple songs, hasty verses
Coming from God knows where
And going on to rocky streams and a pebbled shore
Surely living meant far, far more.

Far away, waves crash in the misty cold
A flagging swimmer, a hallucinating teenager
A tired woman wait for their lives to unfold.

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Walking Home Through The Rain

Walking home through the rain reminds me
Of those long past school days
The wet tie flying in the wind
The mud in those stiff academic shoes
Reflections and dreams of insurrection

Walking through the rain reminds me
Of trying to keep my wet shoes clean
First day at work rain drumming down
On my laborious earnest dampened head.

Walking through the rain in a foreign land reminds me
How often I longed for home: the slashing familiar rain
In alleys lined with laburnum: how even the cold betrayed me
The drops fell into eyes and then in rivulets
Leaked out treacherously again

Walking through the wet wet rain
Walking working wishing wondering
Waiting for a kind of fate
Waiting for kind fate
Fatally kind; rain, when you fell on parched land
Only then did my soul, apaisé, try to understand.

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When Perfection Weeps

The rain fell softly on arid plains, while rocks and mountains slumbered.
Petals opened and and fell, and became one with the dust
Clouds, storms, the primary elements and sunlight
Lightning to make the primeval soup just right.

Perfection weeps alone. When man came along
He was not alone. fruitful, he multiplied.
Abiogenesis is far from Genesis hmm
From Genesis to Revelation then Gabriel left

When perfection weeps, deserts can bloom
Some ancient artefacts in the desert were destroyed
By the unknowing; sometimes perfection hurts
That is the greatest mystery of modern man

As to why destruction preceds construction; as to why
Killing preceeds healing; as to why greed precedes need.
As to when wisdom and wise people will lead the world
As to when the rich and the poor will look up at the same sky

The world was the perfection that wept;
The world was then what came about while Brahma slept;
What is the secret that legends have so craftily kept?
Perfection weeps, perfection is weeping, perfection wept.

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The chronology is far from perfect in this poem...

Rani Turton

You'll Be My Knight In Shining Armour

You'll be my knight in shining armour
Shining so bright I can hardly see
The sunlight because of thee

When springs wakens nature with a sigh
When fluffy clouds go sailing by
Summer comes on, with it's moonlight nights
You, my knight, will beckon to me with sweet delights.

Autumn and winter won't be so chill
Winter evenings with you I'll kill
I'll sit beside you, you'll be my guide
And thus through our lives we shall happily abide!

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Muddled World

In this splendid modern world, freedom beckons
The utter bliss of being alone; structures are likened to shackles
Liberty is moving on and on and on

With nobody to even notice when you've gone.

In this muddled world passion and compassion
Phobias and fears; home sometimes is in a foreign land
Where more people might try to understand.
Families shatter but then
Why should it matter
The complexity of this muddled world
Is expression and depression

Do the poor speak? What do the homeless have to say?
That homes in this structured world will wait for another day.

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Rain When You Drenched Me

Rain, when you drenched me with your cold wet drops
I felt so alone and forlorn
On slick pavements it fell
Alone, along, for long.

Rain, I tried with words to understand your song
The dripping, the dropping
The downpour, the fury and the flurry
Alone, along, for long.

Rain, I felt humble when you fell and wet the city
As you were absorbed by the soil
Rivers waited for you, bareheaded I walked
Alone, along, for long.

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Emotion, Like Wings

Like wings that rustle softly, emotion is fleet-footed
And transient. Not bogged down by mire,
Able to dance and then run wildly, not gravity borne
The intensity at times cannot be borne,
Born but not borne.

Emotion, like a flower's petals, that open to bloom
In spite of hostile elements, unthinking and naive
Innocent and brave, born to this world bright.

Like wings that rustle softly, emotion is unreflective
Unthinking and illogical. The brightest garden blooms
Where grow the flowers; in the throes of deep emotion
The soul doesn't stagger but walks upright.

Emotion is the beginning and the end; the continuum
Of life's substance. Subsistence and the breath of life:
Softly, like wings rustling in the night, emotion comes.

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Meanings And Definitions

I hear the world tapping at my window pane
Like urgent rain
Unwordly wordlessness. Bereft, undone
Empty, a shell the mind has become.

Warm embrace, the touch of hands
Don't turn away thus;
Insidious wordlessness. Come back now
The sky speaks to the lake below.

Textual definitions are all very fine. Where do emotions hide?
Deep, deep inside.
How can you lock your feelings inside?
The body calls out your name and then tries to hide.

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Walk Beside Me A While

Walk beside me a while, let me feel
Your presence; your absence surreal,
Often present; the lack of a presence
Now has past: the past, though is still present.
Bemused, my thoughts often take flight.

Walk beside me a while, I will see
Your lengthening shadow melt into mine
The air we breathe fragrant with sweet delight:
We can speak and smile or sulk or sigh
The clouds will look down and sail right on by.

Walk beside me, let me feel again
The presence without the pain
Now that's what I call melancholic delight
You, your presence, your shadow, your voice
Befuddle my definitions of wrong and right.

Walk beside me, for a while, do
You can, you could and you surely can
Grant what I've asked you for so long
Just to make another memory or to write
These paltry lines into another paltry song.

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Today, As Always

Today, as always and as often before
Dreading the light that falls on my face
The fingers that fumble and won't find
Yesterday, today and tonight.

Worse than the morrow
Is the memory of sorrow
To know at the end of each day
That emotion has flown away.

O desultory rhyme. Time after time
I tried, the paradox of living and forgiving
I can try each day. Each morning the sun
Will rise, will slide, will set

Morning and mourning. The surprise
The yearning, the knowing
Today, as always at sunrise.

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Whenever The Snow Falls

Whenever the snow falls on cold winter nights
The moon, glazed over, lost in a veil
The whitening world has muffled sound
Frozen pavements do not speak.

Flakes that fall; softly, without sound.
Light reflects off the glowing white; lamps haloed
Cast a glow of speckled light as the snow
Falls and falls and falls.

Cold winter nights, as roofs and gates
And trees remain and wait as they are covered
White on white, soft falling snow, soft swishing sounds
As the snow falls softly this winter's night.

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When, In Deep Despair

When in deep despair, melancholy takes my hand
Carresses my cheek gently and for the life of me
The words don't come and I cannot speak

The words like still pools reflect dark moonless nights
Emotions that have plundered and run away
To mountain hideouts

Sensitivity and argument
Music and metronomy
Strings and wood
Voices and fingers

Leave me thus shaken by their power
Of enchantment; all that I saw and read
Felt and dreamt here and there and everywhere

When in deep despair I think of my mother's love
And my old father who always asks for me
In spite of my age; the trust and devotion

I gave to some, often unreturned
But that doesn't matter. Cycles of life and love
Go away and come back again

When in deep despair I wonder and reflect
Melancholy is a friend, not a fiend but for whom
There is none, no one to touch my hand today.

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How Can I Say This?

How can I say this? the sum of my erudition
Could not assistance give; the poets in my country
And the world over,
Have the words, emphasize the emotions
But I lag far, far behind.

How can I say? When I see the sun rise
The moon dance on moonlit nights
When I hear children laugh and music
From open windows, I remember the blind
Sitarplayer, my father with his violon,
I remember friends passed on who out of wood
Made their own guitars.

How can I say? The land of emotions lies
Just beyond the horizon; like ships with masts
That vanish in the clear beyond. Like rays on light
On dappled water, out of cosmic wonder
Comes grace.

How can I say? The years are often long
Because time stumbles and pauses
As often as I have. These lines, these words
This hand, this pen are the link that tie me
To my innermost thoughts

To my innermost thoughts.

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For You Who Grieve Tonight

The day was long, the night will be endless
Emotionally spent the tears won't come
Its just the heart that continues to beat
The soul has nothing more to eat

But ashes; dust and ashes.
Diamonds in the dust it may well be
Grief is an absolute entity
And living another form of tyranny

Speak of life and death, the details
Of what lies between birth and extinction
Rationality irks, cannot comfort the loss
Highflown theories until complete cessation

For those who grieve tonight, the pain
Almost too intense to bear:
Hearing, seeing, feeling their loss
And nobody, nobody with whom to share

The tears should come, do not check their flow
Tears can heal like a gentle loving hand
Calm the mind, ease the heart and
There is a lifetime ahead to understand.

Softly words will come
Someday grief will go
Forget the logical mind
Leave reason behind.

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The Wild, Wild Rain

Cold wind slapping tree branches,
The moon, frenzied, hidden, wonders when
The tempest and the temper will end.

Not yet: a lot more to go. the soldier in the train
The tramp in the tunnel,
The lone young man in a beige raincoat
Hurry along alone.

Then comes the rain, stinging,
The wild, wild rain, the cold drops
Stinging the eyes, the wind tearing at chimney pots
Some tiles will surely fall

The wild, wild rain will come
Dropping, dropping, onto the passive ground
Dark streets empty, the silence and the rain
The silence and the rain
Step to a wild, wild dance
In the darkened empty lane.

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Tree In The Wind

Buffeted by the wind, tossing and turning
Recklessly striving to hold ground
Existing, resisting, persisting:
The choice is to stand tall
Or fall.

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If I Had Been Different Long Ago

If I had been different long ago
I might not have been here now:
If I had been more defiant, less trusting
I would have had much more to show.

My parents never told me
The world can hurt and agress;
If they had been more clever
They could have explained the worry and the stress.

Now older and more defiant
I find life has passed me by
I tried to build my happiness
But on the road it does, wounded, lie.

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Obama Has A Strange Name They Say

Obama has a strange name they say
But then so do I
Strange for here but not for there
Stranger and stranger as the world becomes
Freer and freer, no frontiers
Depending for whom
Depending for where.

Travellers we are all: nomads in this world
That keeps contracting and still
Strangers remain strangers and worse
Foreigners remain strangers on
Shores that remain devoid of warmth.

What is foreign? Coming from which shores
And arriving where? Are foreigners strange because
They have strange names
Or they act strange? A strange kind of modernity dictates
That everyone looks and speaks alike
Devoid of accent, devoid of strange words

That's how it is and now Obama with his strange name
And mine with mine: we have associations to the past
To some far-off land; stranger I am still
My hair, like Obama's, says where I come from.
My eyes, like Obama's, say where I come from.
My skin, like Obama's speaks louder than words.

I am the sum of all that came before.
My strangeness is just that:
I brought a slice of the world with me when I came.

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Sixty Hours

Smoke, blasts, billowing clouds
Billowing curtains from carved windows
The railway station now also has it's widows.

The city, in a daze, unable to grasp
Daily life has stopped; now suddenly
Mumbai, in a stupor tries to awake from
This nightmare without an end.

One dawn, many down.
Second dawn, many down
Third dawn, day has come
What will this city become?

Sixty hours of tears, fears and passion
Sixty hours of waiting, hoping for compassion
The rat-tat-tat carries on, carries on
The loved ones have go on to become
Victims, heroes, or statistics
When the day is finally,
Finally and irrevocably done.

Cry, city, cry
Shed your lonely tears on the beach
Sixty hours, and your loved ones
Are far beyond your reach.

In this dying we are all one
In tragedy we are all one.
Now our day is, with sad finality done.

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26,27,28 November 2008

Dedicated in homage to the victims and those who who gave their lives to
protect the city.

Tears: Mumbai

Third day running
So many people down
Never going to go home
Never going to go home.

Tears in this crowded town
Silence broken by gunshots
Tears in this crowded town
Lives laying themselves down.

At the end of it all
Nothing much to tell
God must be wondering why
We seem to revel in Hell.

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Words, Like Tools

Words like tools, are my expression.

Words, unlike theories remain
For generations to come.

The universe will change, gradually
But words, like tools can express

Emotion and expression, and remove
Unnecessary lingering worry and stress.

Before we are we were
Now we are we won't be;

That, then, is the crux of this theory.

Words like tools lie idle near my hands
Pass through my mind
Insubstantial phantoms
Here and then not there
Never alone but living in isolation
Until total cessation.

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Purple Passion

Rain, being purple is quite a shame
But being rain, can come back again
Now then Haze, being a kind of mist
Can often be Jimi-kissed
Dye, Tyrian, and its natural tinge
Has origins which make us twinge
Purple, glorious, royal is pure passion
Its a pity it went suddenly out of fashion

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Today I Felt Like Sylvia Plath - II

A sharp sadness, diffused at twilight,
Haloed my head; The grief could not be driven away.
And even if it went, I bereft,
Would remain grieving. I would think all day
The night was a penitentiary
A gate I couldn't pass.

So often wondering which path to take
Sometimes the pain of living on frugal emotion
Would categorically just drive me mad

I wanted to see the emotion I poured into people's lives
Come pouring into mine from a stranger's eyes,
I wanted the softness of the silk I wore
To protect me from the cynicism and sarcasm
Every kind of chasm;
And blazing emotion to come in and drive
The demons from my soul
God, on what frugal emotion I dined!
Sometimes at twilight I just sat down and cried
Like Sylvia Plath I almost died.

Today I felt like Sylvia Plath
Chasing the nimbus on a saint's head.

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Today I Felt Like Sylvia Plath - I

Today I felt like Sylvia Plath.

The triteness of the present took my breath away.

Indifferent faces, hurrying, jostling on this anonymous street

My thoughts were fractal, I stood alone

Unable to keep up with those hurrying feet.

Why does life go on this way.

Where do people go to, these hustling crowds?

Where do I go to when I am alone?

I've no gifts of repartee; no, not even enough sense

Not to handle hot coals. All my life I've fought

And rebelled...and often lost.

In this twilight world, things are left undone.

In this silent world my brain fumbles and tries

To write, to form, reform and conform.

Thus, shutting out the present, drawing the blinds

I write these lines, trite, but I tried

Today I felt like Sylvia Plath.

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You Were, You Are

You were, you are
An indissociable part of my destiny.

At dusk when the birds settle in their nests
A calm comes upon me.

I think of the stanzas and sentences
That this hand transcribed into poems.

I think of the emotion in your eyes
Silent, unspoken.

I think of the years transcribed into days.
Oh, was that wise.

The world has a way of rending and rendering.
The world can tear you into two.

When in the silence of the night I wonder about you
The tears, tears, fill up my eyes.

You are, you were and always will be
An indissociable part of my destiny.

Rani Turton

In The Earth, People Sleep

In the earth, people sleep
Branches swing
As small birds sing

Some souls departed into air
Seeking mokshaic release there

For each and all
The attainment and atonement
The relief of leaving

Leaving all wordly goods and strife
The completion of one's brief life

Nobody to please

Just release.

In the earth people sleep
Elsewhere, millions have promises to keep.

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Destiny, Dragging On

My destiny is tired.
The slope leads upwards, onwards,

Into clouds and far beyond.

My destiny, like me, walks slowly
Mumbles softly
Remembers ancient rhymes.

My destiny, not knowing why
Hardly realising that every game has it's rules
Has decided to try

Though, tired, and betrayed,
A little bit frayed
Has decided

To carry on, far beyond, with aching feet,
On the winding path, the trees
The boulders and rocks

To avoid the torrent gushing beneath.

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Blazing Suns Once Blackened Me

Blazing suns once blackened me
My soul was bright
I watched the moon dancing
With the clouds at night

Cold winter wind bleached me
That was my misery
My soul became dark
A sad lonely destiny

I whispered and moaned
My life seemed thus sealed
My mind fled thither
Into wounds never healed

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The Silent Lane

My eyes on that door the silent lane beckons
My fingers scrape that door
Nobody opens it any more

My eyes brimming the silent lane beckons
Memories flow; how many have walked these old streets
And how many do not any more?

From the inner world of my own inner world
Comes the answers of despair
Comes the images of you there

Sunlight and silence, people pass me by
In the cavern of the past some of this will remain
The present is now free from pain.

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Instants

These fragments of time
Dewdrops in an oasis of a lifetime
Distance, duration and enduring

Instants transfixed by memory
Transferred to the mind and brain
These moments of memorizing who
What why when where

Life flows on, and episodes blend into episodes
Chapters begin, end, pause;
Instants of grace, intense and fleeting
Love heals all, even by a chance meeting.

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They Took Me To Your Tomb Last Night

Far from thinking any such thing, the day
Went in mundane details of everyday life
I was not even aware of strife

The night came as it often does, without any warning.

I slept. I dreamt.

And that night they took me to your tomb
I was dumb.
I stood there, silently, not letting grief show
Grief misplaced, grief that remained where it should
Somewhere. Nowhere. Everywhere.

I remembered soft phrases, I remembered places
I thought of unexplained things
What were your last thoughts and of whom?
Not of me, no, that cannot be.

I was as always, and will always be
That solitary entity

They took me to your tomb last night
I loved you, and passion spoke
And said that it was all right
To grieve and believe, that however
Deep the pain, however wasted the life
That I could silently, with my mind speak;
Speak of reality, of dreams and limits

You were far beyond words, touch, passion
You were my dream and my pain
They took me to your tomb last night
And that emotion troubled me once again.

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Hours

In spite of or rather because of
A boundless imagination bequeathed by my forebears

Leaping and skimming over life's incidents and accidents
Waiting and patience are not only virtues

In spite of or rather because of a certain sentence
That begins but doesn't complete the sentence

Phrases are like life; sometimes broken
At times unfinished and often unspoken

And these hours dribbling and dragging on, forever on
From the very beginning, the moment one is born.

When the end comes, alone in a foreign land
The hours will stop and nobody needs to understand.

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Captivity

Dried roses, crumbling into dust
All beliefs, convictions and trust
All I have to show for years of believing
Is tracks and traces of dust

Sifted by the wind and rain
Grains of sand fly here and there
Why is it here and now, a single cell
Transfixed, is unable to go anywhere

Much vaunted intellectual autonomy
The roots of epistemology
Senses spin in scented darkness, and
Wait, transfixed like those grains of sand.

Captive to thoughts and inspiration
Distanced by wild pointless aspiration
Waiting for the breeze to come and scatter
My life's blood, my life's matter.

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The Depth Of Longing

On this steep slope that leads to a far-off frontier
There is nothing, not even a guide.

Intention, detention and retention
Freedom lies in blue skies

Where lies my destiny?
A thread unravilled here and there

And a restless, weary spirit travelling
Never resting, never unravelling

The skeins of that silken yarn
To match the depths of the longing
The longing of the single solitary star
Skimming is cosmic spaces, brilliant and bold
The long-lost memory of belonging

For a single instant to somebody somewhere sometime
In an epoch that vaunts the lack of belonging

To the depths of this longing.

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And Eternity Did Not Push Me Away

Starlight, moonlight, candles burning bright
Oil lamps with flickering wicks
All this symbolises night

In the noblest sense; in the sense of darkness
But soft darkness, not a terrifying void

I can see in the distance
A path that runs between trees
A hill slumbers nearby and has done so
For ages; when the statues come to life
When the goddesses dances on leaves

When the earth breathes but doesn't sigh
The mundane world fades away

Was I dreaming when I heard the trees breathe
And saw the goddesses dancing on leaves?
When the river spoke to me
Softly, murmuring secrets only we knew

Was I dreaming or was I awake when the breeze softly
Silently carressed my face
And whispered sweet things to my waiting ears?

There is a lieu nearby here they say
Strange things can happen to people who go there
They can see things that do not exist
They can speak in several tongues
And understand every language in the world

This strangeness attracts strangeness; I touched stone
And they seemed to respond.
The woods were a comfort, the earth was alive
To my questing feet. My body was free of earthly pain
My heart, for once was light

And the mundane world faded away
For more than an instant,

I touched eternity and eternity for this time
Did not push me away.

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Remembering

Remonstrating against all memories and desires

Is the modern way; arrogant freedom beckons unless the body,
Unappeased by what should be done wants to follow another way
The body has its own burning hunger and it is not what all imagine
The body has its own destiny and desire and sway.

When pain and fever rack the physical sphere

When the brain follows its logic and the body its desire

And the spirit yearns for a fulfilling sun

Tell the body what should be done?

Reason and rationality are the lodestones of existence

And reason dictates our every sphere

But when reason flees, and leaves only illogicality behind

What 's to be done? Follow another sun?

The body has its identity and that is a personality

That walks and speaks with reasoning ease

Alas when that identity walks away and the personality flees

Is that the beginning of mortal disease?

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I Was Walking In Yesterday

I was walking in yesterday
Wraiths and city nights knew me
I walked far on into the past and then
The complexity of that endless road came across to me
I didn't use word associations, then and now,
Not even to try to place locations in
The map of my mind; I wandered here and there

I was walking in yesterday
As if yesterday was today
And as though the past was alive

I walked into yesterday and it was the friend
Whose name I couldn't recall; it was the wanderer's wine
Bought at a wayside stall
It was the cold water in a village well when the sun burnt the eyes
All the rest was lies

I walked into yesterday but I left my todays behind
I did not realise that I was leaving behind
The remnants of the rest of my mind.

Rani Turton

The Night, Glorious, Unbending

The night, glorious, unbending,
Takes and gives nothing away
The night, silent, refuses the alms offered by day

Day, loquacious, has questions and answers
But the night doesn't even ponder
Looks far ahead, yonder
Night silently turns away.

Day is curious about these silences
That stretch into infinity: silences that stretch
Until the pale dawn arises
Silences that from ages past and ages to come
Are the very inscrutable embodiment
Of what the night has become.

Rani Turton



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This Emptiness Within

This emptiness within, an utter stillness that could,
Would, should remain transfixed by eternity

Not a sunyatian stillness not the perfect void
A void, no, rather devoid
Not a perfect vacuum not even the space
To fill up a space that

Silences and stillness from analysis
Springs nought; not the naught but the knot
And the stillness and the silence in empty hearts
As far from perfection as existence
As far from existence as perfection
From where perfection springs
From the depth of the naughts

This emptiness within, then as still
As far from perfection's existence
As from perfecting existence

Transcends and permeates the fickle uneasy mind
Leaving mind and thought and emotion far, far behind.

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Drop By Drop

The most beautiful rose has thorns perhaps as a reminder
That thorns prick and fingers bleed
Drop by drop, dripping
You were like that rose: the most beautiful one
Entranced I caressed it's petals
In a trance I conjured up dreams

Drop by dropp by drop
I can paint the flower I cannot paint the pain
That's how it is
The very delight the sight the smell
Have contributed to this pain

Dew dropp by drop
Rain dripping dripping
Roses have thorns
And thorns have roses
And, when you walk on by
My fingers bleed dropp by drop
My heart, unseen, softly weeps
Drop by drop.

Rani Turton

Last Night I Dreamt, I Dreamt

In those familiar corridors I saw you in your room
I saw your head bent over papers
When you raised your head and saw me
I dreamt I dreamt I saw
Those oft longed for smiles

You got up with that characteristic quick movement
You had worn that blue shirt I knew so well
You stood at the doorway smiling and said
Well, I thought you would never come back

I thought that it was a dream that I had wanted to dream
Then I realized it was a dream and that I had wanted to dream
That I had dreamt of being a protagonist in it
That in dreams I still have you
Real life took you away

Last night I dreamt, I dreamt
Of today, yesterday and eternity in your eyes

Rani Turton

Forgetting But Not Forgotten

Trite phrases galore
Memory plays tricks with time
Mirages that with the years
Made believe what was unreal.

If I had thought I would have lived so long
Or come to this sad sorry pass
I guess I would have said-pass
But time trickled on
Like sand in the hourglass

There's a perpetual reason to go through the years
Amazing as it may well seem
Some think its destiny
And others a form of being free

And here in the midst of modernity
What is the belief that keeps people scurrying
Jumping running sprinting panting

Living lives that build and build
Mushroom clouds, and you and me and them
And women free and unfree
Walls that are higher and higher

Time, pass me by please
Leave me against this old stone wall
Just leave me be.

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Rani Turton

Deception And Deceit

The supposed focus of emotion and intellect
The body and the brain
The point it all began
The conception of identity
The brain and it's supposed capacity to reason

Reason, season, grieve

Dissimulation and assimilation
The body gave up or the brain decided
To give up before living drove it mad

Treason, reason and giving

The existence of the starting point
The boundaries within
The existence of a dominant will
All have torn me up within.

Deceit, deception and exception
Is there any hope of redemption
My mind, tired and lacklustre
Resounding with the same questions
Where does deceit begin
And where does deception end
And above all
When?

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Rani Turton

Storm In My Brain

Storm in my brain, no, not again
Suddenly the moment snapped
My life lay broken in my hands.

I yearned for the days
When the future was clear
I longed for the people
Who would listen and hear

All that I need now
Is to know when to stick
Pieces of life together again

Storm in my brain
That sad melody again.

Rani Turton



PoemHunter.com

Take This Day As Your Own

Take this day as your own
Trouble and pain loom large
The night brings no comfort
The dawn in silence turns mutely away.

Take this day, no questions asked
Reflecting, analysing and rehearsing
Won't bring you what you most desire

Peace, utter and absolute tranquillity.

Sunrise and rain
Tears and pain
Take this new day as your own
Believe, don't grieve
The seeds have been sown

All will be well
All will be well, my friend.

Rani Turton

Solitude, Singing

Being alone is knowing
That in in this solitary splendour
Solitude, stark and staring,
Solitude, singing a lullaby
Solitude, singing a dirge
Surrounded by so many sundry things;
Things seen and unseen
Factors known and unknown
Solitude singing softly, chanting without ranting
Solitude's songs that sing of solemn things

Silence singing golden songs
Silence healing ancient wrongs
If only silence could be
More than a memory
More than history
Silence can be more than words
Empty words echoing in an empty world
Echoing in empty valleys
Silence unspoken, unspoken, unbroken
Transfixed by time.

Rani Turton

Smoke, Mist And Nebulous Things

Tell me then your perceptions of the past
Tell me why hard facts are hard today
Facts tomorrow, then gone away
Do facts, then, rarely last?

Watching the march of time, the artefacts
The ruins they continue to dig up day by day
What remains of those wonderful beings
Who peopled our fables and myths
Smoke, mist and other nebulous things
Spirited them away

Tiptoe in history's corridors
Crowns, coins and chariots
People, peasants, and simple folk
Just spirited clean away
Where do they lie now?
Unknowns jostling in history's corridors.

Queens, courtesans, mothers of kings
Toys and things, necklaces and dreams
Smoke, mist and other nebulous things
Spirited them away
Tiptoe in history's corridors
The modified history of the world
Domination, nomination, abomination

Smoke and mist and nebulous things
Have spirited everyone away.

Rani Turton

Thoughts (I Spawned A Million)

I spawned a million thoughts, that taking form,
Whispered with the wind and gave birth
To a million more; some crept into a hollow bough
Nestled there, and went to sleep.
Some weary thoughts tiptoed into the woods,
Found an ancient tomb, and touching the weathered stone,
Said a prayer and moved away. As in a dream,
Others listened to the wind and the sapphire stream
Singing as it ran daintily on, tripping along
Over boulders and pebbles rubbed smooth like glass;
And yet some more winged their way
Into a marbled paradise, to keep fears at bay;
Stringing words into rhyme, and then
Over strange lands and unknown races they flew
Until they stopped, paused and saw you.

Rani Turton



PoemHunter.com

The Teacher Of All I Know

Here alone with all I profess
A faith, a belief in some systems of thought
Professors and priests, mystics and bards
All were often one I confess.

There were some unlettered men
Who knew more than the savants, then
There were bards who could sing and swear
And find their way to your heart there.

There were wild poppies dancing
Wild horses prancing
The teacher of all I know
Came for a few seasons
Then went for his own benighted reasons.

There was life's blood and show
The poetry and pain and pageantry's stream
Whirled around in a fevered dream
Life was what it did not seem
Thus taught the teacher of all I know.

Rani Turton

The Vase Fell On The Floor

The vase fell on the floor
Now that vase doesn't exist any more
Shattered and smattered
Pieces of baked clay that once come from earth
Dust it becomes and after taking birth
Dust it returns to soon enough

The body is the vessel, the vase;
Life the transient uncanny phase
Dust we came from, albeit from the dust of the stars
From Mercury, Venus, even from Mars
We hold the secret and in our tombs
The secret is that dust is just sleeping wombs.

Rani Turton



PoemHunter.com

Rumours

They say that your hair is going grey
That you are alone today;
Nobody knows where you go to
When you go away

They say that you have saddened
That your children look after you well
They say that you are gladdened
When news of me comes your way

They say that you are quite the same
But sometimes, when they speak my name
They see you pause; but then that is
The consequence of the silence of years.

Rumours say that after all this time
After all these years that you were not mine
That after all this time, you rarely smile
Rumours say its been a long long while.

Rumours say that when last I came to the city
You left, and what a pity
That I hadn't seen you for so long
But now, that is an old, old song.

Rani Turton

Just Believe

In our todays yesterday looms large
The present isn't the past;
In other words, the past is still omnipresent
Steering sometimes unskillfully like a barge
Sometimes disaster looms
Unannounced, uncalled for;
A wreck that lies on a shore.

The saddest of songs and the most ancient of wrongs
Can bring on the tears;
We are all equal before our fears.

Today has the faint tinge of bitterness
Tomorrow will come, with the steepest of slopes
To climb, to pause, to think
That you can stumble on the brink:
Just believe that in life, something is taken
Something is given
All is forgiven: tomorrow will come
That the gift of words that you have
Will remain articulate: you will inspire
Like the tallest of spires
Your words will remain in many hearts
Just believe, you are not forgotten
Not by man or deity or life begotten
Words of consequence and comfort
And love and life will come back again.

Rani Turton

Poems Of Longing, Languishing

There used to be laughter once; there used to be summer once;
The earth seemed warmer and kinder at that time
The fireflies at dusk came out for us.
The willow forgot to weep. Wounds went to sleep.
Then twilight came. Life changed.
But maybe it was me; maybe it was I who didn't keep
Promises and negotiated nothing in my destiny;
That in spite of all the things I did that I didn't want to do
That in spite of all that I didn't do that I was longing to do

To walk slowly through those paths, reach the fountain
I knew so well by sight or sound,
Water, sparkling, splashing, cascading onto stones
I knew as well as the lines in my hand or my bones
Watered by drops from this fountain,
Watered by the raindrops from the skies
From the tears in my eyes
Those pavements that bore the traces of your steps
And my bitter reflections and dreams
Life is refraction, a long walk alone;
To pause, my body aching, my heart breaking
Knowing that some things cannot be undone
Those windows are still there, the courtyard has changed
The doorway where I paused to wipe my tears
Far off the river flows, gently
Murmuring its passion and pain
These poems of love move my heart and cause it to plunge
Like the waters of that fountain that sprout
From the sculpted lion's mouth.

There used to be long ago
In this part of the city
My love, my beloved, an almost foe
My foe because of the pain caused
Unwittingly or deliberately:
Not because of the pity;
Pity comes from compassion, no, not that
The pain that pierced my heart
The pain that stopped my heart with his hand

That makes it just another episode in this city

Stoneflagged pain then.

Tear-washed pavements also.

Green benches for the weary;

Fountain-spouted words so.

Pigeons scatter and scurry

Clouds scud real low:

As above, so below.

Blow winds of change blow.

Rani Turton

The Ragged Rich And The Ragged Poor

The ragged poor in front of my eyes: sometimes so poor
The ragged rich in front of my eyes, sometimes so rich
The pitiful poor are so helpless in their misery
So miserably poor, fear fills the belly
Fear in the jutting bellies, fear is no luxury for the poor.

Empty bellies have their own logic of survival.
But in this world of egos and inhumanity
The rich have more than plenty
So much that sometimes they are empty
Sometimes they look as though they have nothing at all.
Then why do they act poor? Poorly unconvincing that is
Wear tattered clothing, turn night into day
Marriage isn't a necessity
But they have the biggest and best.

The poor it seems are rich with spiritual integrity
That's what the rich say
Do they know how many farmers put an end to their lives
Just because of loans and their strifes?
But they wouldn't know, would they
The answers to the non-existence of the
Psychopathology of the conditions of survival and depression
Of the fundamentally deprived impoverished
Indigenous populations through generations of privation.

The rich should know better than to flaunt their silly faces
All re-done, tucked in and chiseled
Winning, grinning, sinning
They should know better than to flaunt their silly bags
Made from some poor reptile's skin
They'll know when the reptiles finally get 'em.

Who is the reptile then? Is it a sin to be rich?
Reptile's skin, plumped up lips, and photographed
Taking Asian or African orphans in their arms
Shedding crocodile's tears, jumping onto a plane
Party sniffing until the next one.
Oh vanity and botox-filled dreams

Life is never what it seems
One day the poor will be rich and then
The whole cycle will start again.

Rani Turton

My Soul Wanders, Erring

My soul wanders, erring; to my great surprise:
I didn't know I possessed one.
That to this day and that when tomorrow should come
I will look at what I've become.

Mother had gone on, long ago.
Father was left behind, and now his day is almost done
My soul, however, like a trailing star
Wanders, erring, in an elliptical way, circling far;
The past returns often to confront me
The past is still present and Memory,
Another phantom, well-nigh vanquishes me.

Somewhere or the other, earth's cities and life's mysteries
Would swim into vision, blurred by tears
Church-bells, conch-shells, the muezzin's call
Awaken me; sometimes in the heat of day
I thought it was night, I watched, delusion's wide-eyed wonder
The flight of the wild Siberian cranes flying high
In my dreams, I heard the crashing of waves on the shore
My soul had wandered off once more.

At night stars would whisper, I would awaken
With a start it was as though I felt the moonlight
Caressing my face, tangibly:
Thus I had to confront the darkness to know that I
Was yet in another silent place, inevitably.

My soul errs wandering, wondering, waiting
The lanes are long and winding;
My soul wanders, weary, and waits with longing and fear
Wonders what lies next in the finding.
Of life, of mystery, of the unwinding of destiny's plans
The final outcome lies in Somebody's hands.

Rani Turton

This Burdened Heart

This burdened heart speaks low but clear
That today destiny's lanes are not very clear;
That pain, like rain, can mist up the eyes
That clouds, like pain can block out the skies

That somewhere else my heart wants to go
There are dreams and all I had to forego
Burdening my heart: where lies happiness
If my mind lies elsewhere, oscillating and vacillating:
Restrained and constrained, layers within layers
Life is but a stage and we are the players
But also when total liberty beckons, perplexed
My soul is vanquished, there are no walls to demolish
No mountains to climb, no one to care;
Nobody to say, nobody at all
"Not now, not like this, not this time"
That somewhere in this century we are alone, bewildered,
Abandoned, that we are
Parts of burdened hearts, that lie lost, thrown aside
Neglected, dejected, rejected
That there are no signposts on the crumbling way.

This burdened heart stops and starts
Carries on, bump-a-lump; will not give up
Life is but a brimming cup.

Rani Turton

Shivering Under The Hot Sun, Uncontrollably

The mind has it's own mysteries, and the savants know
That savantism and the mystic's glow
May not be same but can be similar, so in their similitude,
That thoughts and thinking
Earth's postulated shrinking
Are but the mind's onward driver
But then onwards flows the river.

That fish can dive and plunge, and whilst
The oyster creates its own sweet pearl
Trees start up suddenly in spring
My mind, constant in it's inconstancy,
Stumbles and runs in an outward whirl.

I am then and now, past, present and future
What I was, am and will be
The sum total of my story:
My thoughts have created me, with finality.
The rest, as they say, is history.

Argumentably, I can also become
A shadow of myself; I can thus become
A pale imitation of another, I can be, in sum,
Equally, and without the slightest difficulty
Myself and another me.

That is two halves of the same self
But wholly different in every way
On some days I am myself
On others, that self has left, bereft.

Where did that real self fly to?
Why this bitter despair?
What were the traces left behind by the tracks?
The fissures and cracks
Of footsteps on this strange path ordain?
That there was no eternity?
That this very existence was a fine exercise in futility?
Maybe, elusively, the truth written on the pinhead was

That I was just another mind, in perpetual quest
Egoistically, in pursuit of the unattainable, a wanderer,
Shivering under the hot sun, uncontrollably.

Of words, and selves, of wonder and pain
Of poetry, euphoria, realization, fever, laughter,
Reason, destiny, free-will and all the divinest things
Every portion that each day brings
Life's sweet sad melody has broken again.

Rani Turton

Absences

Silence. Long moments that stretch into years.
Restrained words, sometimes gaps where names should be.
Words, prayers, songs, imagination inflamed by memory.

Emptiness, loneliness, the world, the void.
Look behind, look ahead, look straight ahead.
The world is indifferent to your pain.
The world is indifferent to your sighs.
Nothing will ever be the same;
Nothing will ever matter again.
Will anything ever matter again?

Absences. Like a long lonely lane in an eastern land
With closed doors against the afternoon heat
Questions that taunt the tormented mind
All the answers that one had longed to find

There is a river that flows through the land
Its banks are full of plants and sand
Its soft murmurings are balm to the soul
I long to sit beside it and once again feel whole.

Rani Turton

Humanity In Pain

Books lie scattered before me; scattered like my thoughts
Spring has come to the city; blossoms fall and form a carpet on the ground.
Sounds are muted now; the day is coming to an end
Evening draws nigh. The cold wind will bounce off the river
The river that is both a taker and a giver

Flows of thoughts, floods of emotions,
I think of the earthquake in China, the weeping millions
Humanity in pain, and Myanmar, also in tears
War-torn zones, unrest and discord
Jaipur bleeding because of plots that are evil
And so many of earth's children without parents, fears
That will remain for all their lives

The earth gives and takes away, while we stand by
Tomorrow might come with our very own goodbye
Tomorrow might come with we know not what
The earth is but a boiling pot.

Rani Turton



PoemHunter.com

Jaipur, Bleeding

History and blood mingle together
For some people life and time stood still;
Terror strikes again
From whom, those who were hate-inspired;
To whom, the innocent as usual.

Who will heal the wounded? Who will ask
Why some people want to maim and then bask
In a kind of kinky glory
But all that is yet another story:
Families bear their loss with dignity
Jaipur will stand up and continue to live
Though it is hard to forget and forgive.

This poem is dedicated to Abha.

Rani Turton



PoemHunter.com

My Heart, Trembling Like A Leaf

My heart, trembling like a leaf in the first breeze before the storm
As clouds clash high above
Trembles and shivers in the deepest pain
This then is what is called love

My heart, trembling like a leaf in the scorching sun
Almost dried, almost died
My heart was after all, just a heart
Like others that sighed and cried

My heart, trembling like a leaf under the light of the moon
As nightbirds alighted on branches
Shuddered, as though underneath it saw
A cavalry that onward marches

My heart, trembling like a leaf before a storm
Almost, almost stopped still
All those fanciful theories of being and existing
Couldn't then this heart fulfill.

There was a leaf that fluttered in the storm
It silently waited for it's dreams to take form.

Rani Turton

Love Is A Prison, Amongst Other Things

Love is a prison, amongst other things
Love can find you and bind you
And never set you free.

Love is a bringer-home of truths
Love allows you a mirror-self to see
That years ago and years ahead
Are not enough to give you liberty.

Love is a prison, a power-quotient
Love should give you wings to flee
Instead of clipping them, silencing your song
Love should set you soaringly free.

Love is not as easy or free
As dreams have made it out to be
Love can help you or cripple you
But now, that is another story.

To each his own way of loving
Some weep and others keep
Their hearts in a cast iron chest
Then love becomes a prison, a life test;
Then flee-that is really the best.

Rani Turton

Through The Branches Of A Tree, I Can See

I can see the blue sky, turning delicately shades of violet and blue; soon darkness will come,
I can see on the horizon Venus appear, the brightest star ever;
The wished-for, the longed for, by children and lovers the world over
Dusk now will dimple over her shoulder at the night, gather her robes and depart
Leaving her fragrance behind, and Night, quiet, thoughtful and profound
As lofty as a prince in a far legend from the ancient tales, will gift his heart;
Will spread his cloak over the bowl of the sky: a cloak as black as velvet
As black as his eyes and hair; it seems the Day was fair and smiling
They exist in their opposites and they attract abstractedly.

I can see through the branches of a tree the faint glimmering, the first stars that begin to shine;
What if those flickering lights were lamps lit in so many planets and stars to guide the Milky Way
The eternal intergalactic roadway that runs through the universe ever since our notions of time began to exist;
I, the dreamer, am here but for a moment. The moments stretch onto eternity, composing my existence
But these moments are transient whilst eternity is endless and eternal
Are there alien beings living in those vast cosmic spaces and is it true that they are alien?
Who came first? Me or the alien? Thus we can deduce if the alien is an alien or is it me
Alienating myself and the others and people who don't think and speak like me

Planetary distances give pause; Planetary beings who might be kinder, better and more beautiful:
Who haven't a word in their language for hatred, war and bigotry
Is it possible within reason
The very thought is almost treason: for aren't we the best of all creation?

Through the silhouette of the tree the stars are now wild and free; I can see the light of a planet
Sometimes red, blue or white as the case the might be
And that light seems to say "what you see might not be there"

I might have been burned to cinders before you were born" now, how do I fit that into

My notions of the four walls of my familiar world?

The star is shining but is not really there. I exist but am I there?

Do the beings on that star who is not there see me as I am or am I not there? Or to be? Was I? Am I? Will I be?

Though even to my dreamer's eyes my body is planted firmly under the branches of this tree.

Tell me stars, tell me cosmos, tell me Big Bang theories

Tell me within reason,

If on those planets and stars that are, but are not, or will be,

If there exists other poets like me, who are or were or will be

Looking at us through the branches of a tree.

Rani Turton

I Will

It goes beyond imagination
Why you hold me so high
Sometimes I feel exactly like
A diamond in the sky

You ask me about my projects and dreams
But, then words go a-tumbling
And aptly enough even the world seems
To stand still; sounds are muted
I thought of my life blighted
I thought of my days a-stumbling
The desires and dreams
The wondering and blundering
All the fearsome things that I've done
And more than that, at what I've become

But something took root after years of tears
A seed that you mystically planted
Well I can truthfully say that this heart may have been
Metaphysically transplanted
I've done with fears and fright
I 've walked out from the shadows
Right into the light
Now I remember you saying something about
Reaching out for my birthright
Not to let them sink me into sadness
To walk out from this kind of madness.
That I should. I could.

I will.

Rani Turton

Dusk Comes

Dusk comes, softly, slowly, like a shy bride
Dusk comes with a golden-red veil as if to hide
The diamonds in the hair, the khol in the eyes
Heat arises from the earth and flies
Straight into the sky; birds twitter
Suddenly life doesn't seem to be so bitter

A mud path leads to a lane bordered by trees
Dusk falls, each home has its stories;
Clatter of pans, people back from work, now
Approaching darkness, trees in shadow
Now voices that rise and fall, babies cry
Dusk falls and the day bows and says goodbye.

Rani Turton



PoemHunter.com

The Necklace Broke

The necklace broke into bits
The beads scattering on the floor
Now that is a bit of jewellery
I will not wear any more

I wore at my wrist glass bangles red and gold
But they fell onto the ground
Shattered and scattered, those bits of glass
With just a faint tinkling sound

At my ears I wore that piece of gold
You know the ones I was given long ago
Those earrings I will hide away
Those earrings I will never forego.

Rani Turton



PoemHunter.com

Speak To Me Then

Speak to me, then, softly and low
Speak to me about all the places that you've known
Tell me about your life and why
Your eyes, your hands, your face
Reminds me of things long gone by

Speak to me then, about your feelings and fears
I'll listen, I promise, I never will stop
Your flow of words, the timbre of your voice
Gives me shivers and leaves me no choice

Speak to me then about passion and pain
And I will listen until it is dawn again
Your voice is so low, so beautiful, so grave
It sets alight the stars in the night;
Your voice is what when the years spin by
The missing substance that I will crave;
Your voice will bring the tears to my eyes
Years later at every sunrise.

Rani Turton

A Niche For Me In Your Heart

If you have some place
Some place you could well spare
Make a niche for me in your heart
To warm me within your space
I will never, never depart.

I will be more than a name and face
If you could grant me this grace
I would be more than a queen
To live in this honoured place
I would be part of your present
Not a part of your past
If only time would linger on
And make this dream last and last.

A silly poem it seems
But then, so are many dreams.

Rani Turton



PoemHunter.com

Shah Jahan's Dagger

This, the Emperor's personal dagger
A wonder in itself,
Made for him in his 39th year
Sold for gold
But worth much much more
This khanjar has travelled far
From the Yamuna and all that it holds
The splendor of that tomb
A poem in stone
Where the Emperor's was added
Almost like an afterthought.

Prince Khurram, if you have any tears left,
Weep.

This historical gold-encrusted dagger was sold for 1.7 million pounds on the 10th April, 2008. Shah Jahan was the Mughal Emperor who built the Taj Mahal.

Rani Turton

Thoughts Like Ribbons Strewn On The Ground

Thoughts like ribbons strewn on the ground
Trailing like wraiths but leaving no sound
If thoughts are things then they should not
Then they should not disappear
Walk away, in silence just like that;
Then they, like rainbows cannot be caught
Then they, like birds can scatter into flight
Then they, like hope can be sought
Or then they can
Like shimmering grains of sand
Take movement and form but out of sight
Thoughts like dreams can fly away
Far, far into the starry night.
Far across a green meadow
Without even leaving the faintest shadow
Blend into clouds, trees, fields and earth
But that is also sometimes the way thoughts take birth.

Rani Turton



PoemHunter.com

Consternation In The Constellations

My love walks on paved stones
On paved stones he walks
Far far from home
He is far away and there is no more sun.

My love walks aens from me under grey skies;
Dripping wet, at times clear skies that are dry
Just as are sometimes my eyes

My love walks and may never return
How do you ask the world to rotate counterclockwise?
The day is silent, the night is dumb
And now there seems to be
Consternation in the constellations
All is as quiet as misery
The stars blink out by billions
The tears that are gathered in the galaxy.

Rani Turton



PoemHunter.com

There Was That Then

There was that then
There is this now;
Then, the sun-heated tiles
And now, now the snow.

There were fat shady trees then
But that was then
And now the years have slipped away
The trees are now tall and thin.

Now I see the seasons pass
Spring, summer, winter and fall
But long long ago
All that didn't matter at all.

The world turns slowly for some
And not fast enough for others
The stars, the sun, the moon
Are now my sisters and brothers.

Rani Turton

Beloved

I heard about you long before I saw your face
I heard about your family, exploits, travel
They even said you played soft chords
On your guitar on moonless nights

Invited to your home, I expected to see
Someone extraordinary

I saw your hands first drawing aside the curtains
I saw your eyes then looking at me in silence
I saw your smile then and my poems became reality
We spoke about cities, countries, humanity

Beloved, don't share these moments with somebody else
Beloved, be gentle with my life
Beloved, leave me these instants of grace
And one day please let me touch your face
And say to you: Beloved.

Rani Turton



PoemHunter.com

Farmers: The End Of The Road

He couldn't see
The end of the road
Blinded by misery
What to do, there was nothing to do
Where to go
There was nowhere to go
He had nothing else to barter or sell
Not even his soul.
Loan repayment! What a dream!

For farmers the only way out
Is to cop out
Can anyone hear their plea?
The tears of an anonymous entity?

State by state, region by region
Their suicides have now become legion
Let the world now give them a voice
Instead of their being bereft of choice.

Rani Turton

This Moment Captive

I can call you my beloved
Softly under my breath:
Only my own ears will hear;
I can look on you as my very own
Until the hour of my death.

You are here and now, this moment captive
In the cupped warmth of my hands
You can speak to me if you must
I won't run for I'll be a prisoner of your words
Tied to you by soft silken bands.

I will always cherish you; and moreso
I will always remember how sometimes you,
Forgetting yourself, and the entire watching world
Let everybody see, so recklessly,
That your love for me was true.

Rani Turton



PoemHunter.com

Mysteries

There is a mystery in living
When, how, for how long and why
No need to use complicated rhetorical arguments
The devil's advocate I can play indeed
But the end is always the same
Its almost as if our lifespans are a timed game.

We can hop from land to land
For reasons only we can understand
We can lament and weep
Until at the end we finally sleep

To sleep perchance to dream
As a great poet once wrote
In lifespans, life's cycles, in moments of oblivion
I even forgot all that I wrote
The great mystery was not action or living
The great question was extinction and annihilation.

To come back to the essential
I, Me and Myself
My small insignificant life
Could I even presume to be remembered
After the third generation, the fourth maybe?
And what was it's essentiality?
Wicks flame, flicker and glow
That is finally the way I will go.

Rani Turton

Morals And Morale

Its evident for many and aren't they lucky
Its obvious that the two go together
Like a couple hand and hand.

Does my morale depend on my morals
Or the morale of the nation
Or does it depend on the morals of the world
Or the state of the nation
When bombs rain down on helpless people
Who never asked for it but just to live
My morale dives and my morals are uneasy
I can convince myself of anything
Cops and robbers stuff you know
The good and the bad, the guilty punished
The righteous basking in a righteous glow

But it is has not been easy. Morals and morale
Dive nose-down
Like those bombs on some nameless helpless town.

Rani Turton

Unfurl Your Wings

Unfurl your wings and fly
You can if only you would try
Let your mind free
Wander in total liberty
Shine like a multi-faceted gem
You can do it; show them.

Oft when we wonder and pause
It is just to complicate our cause
Let your mind free
Let it grow like a wild tree
Because thoughts, unlike branches
Should never be trimmed.
They should not be fettered
Never buried in trenches
Nor ever be dimmed
But like a fine vellum, lettered,
In gold, glow for ages ahead
When everyone else is dust and dead.

Rani Turton

The Surest Way

Each month consists of a million days.
Days that spin out endless hours and thus
Earth whirls around the sun; a mad cosmic dance
Repeated because it cannot fail.
Lives flicker and fade. Again and again.

What is life then? An essence of being?
A being of essence?
Why does pain thrust out its hand
And stand in our way; why does love
Beckon and then flee? Why do people go away?

Sometimes joy, like a mirage, promises wild things:
The end of a journey, but destiny's choice inflicts wounds
That bleed and bleed until death, like a friend,
Cuts into suffering and calls an end.

Surely there's more to it than this.
One being's individual life cannot really matter;
Though tears, like acid, can burn the soul
Until it is almost not quite entirely whole.
But to make the soul soar beyond suffering;
To remain impervious to trivial emotion
To remain suspended in exaltation day after day
To ask for nothing but to give everything away
Is perhaps the only surest way.

Rani Turton

The Wind Doesn'T Cry Mary

Tempests that howl over chimneypots
No words whispering Mary
Not a single name not a single verse in rhyme
That traffic light didn't turn blue
The wind didn't say anything at all this time.

Another time, another age, the wind
Played with us but now its through
Now there is nothing left to murmur
The wind doesn't whisper Mary

The urban lights twinkle and glow
Wet dark streets decay and buildings grow
Bombs splatter and fields decay
But that for most of us is far, far away.

The wind doesn't whisper Mary
But its true, we are still staggering along
The road is long, the wind is strong
But doesn't whisper the words of that song
And the wind doesn't cry out
Mary

Rani Turton

Ideas, Ideals And Delusions

I have some notions of nothingness
I have some ideals of illusions
Into the abyss then with these thoughts
My ideas, ideals and delusions.

I can sweep away those cob-webbed dreams
Wipe clean every troublesome image
But nothing, nothing ever again
Can help me really turn the page

There are persistent and resistant matters
That will come back like a boomerang
Like a half-latched door in a tempest
That will continue to maddeningly bang

Away then and into the vast starry night
I will somehow continue to live;
My ideals of illusions, my dreams of delusions
Can also help to make me survive.

Rani Turton

Lines To Sammy, Somewhere

Your guitar lies unused, forlorn
You will never be coming back home.
I remember the one you made
Wood and strings and song
Sometimes even the song goes wrong;
It wasn't easy it wasn't even fair
Is there a guiding power out there?
I remember when you tried so hard
Some fights are unequal
That was the hardest part
You took every pain straight into your heart.

I guess you would have been surprised
The place you took in our hearts
I remember your loneliness, your secret pain
The chords you taught me to play
That will echo on in another way
C major, F major, G7
Now you'll teach them all in heaven.

The worst part of dying Sammy is this
That though you will always remain young
The worst part of dying Sammy is also
The songs that will never be sung.

Rani Turton

Silences

I didn't know how to reply
When you said, You are more to me
Than all this;
I don't know why
My first thought was to lie
But do you know
I just wanted to lay down my head and cry.

The sun slanted through the windowpane
I looked at those hands sensitive and fine
I looked at everything
Pictures on the wall
So that the words wouldn't touch me at all

There are silences as thick as glassdoors
Transparent but solid
But when broken, can cause immense pain
So at four in the afternoon that day
I simply went away

Rani Turton

Moonlight

There is a stillness in the night that, softly
Unfreezes the most frozen of hearts;
There is a glow about moonlight
Which can touch your face
And set it a-glow: like candlelight it lights
And highlights even the most humble place.

There is the sun in everyone
But the moon, like a loom
Works on the finest of stuff
In a silent shuttered room.

Rani Turton



PoemHunter.com

This Point In Time

Then come to me with the breeze ruffling your hair
The setting sun in your eyes
The same blue as the sea and the skies

Then the whisper of your presence will tell me
You are not far
Strange thoughts will come to mind

That the sea is smooth tonight
That the harbour is full of light
That the cafés overlook the piers
That the rain will fall softly on already wet cheeks
And gentle waves slurp into the creeks

That waiting here is a fallacy
That I should be somewhere else at this point in time
That I should be somewhere else at this point in time.

Rani Turton



PoemHunter.com

Look, The Sun Is Rising

Look, the sun is rising
Yesterday's troubles have dissolved
In the morning mist; the past will go away
At last: don't fret and weep
This golden light will transform worry
Into calm acceptance without any hurry
It might even rain
Cleanse the earth and then
Wash off all mortal pain

When you pause and think
There are some people right on the brink
And that this might be their last night's sleep
And that this might be their last sunrise.

Rani Turton



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These Dreams

You weaved dreams with your skilfull hands
With silky gossamer thread
They shone in the sunlight
Rippled with the breeze
Sang softly at twilight
Those dreams and words and all that you said.

A wild winter breeze came and blew them away
They lie in the wet mud forlorn;
Those are the dreams of sometime, someday
But they might never have been born;
They took root in me and then grew and grew
These dreams I hope, will ultimately come true.

Rani Turton



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When A Woman Goes To Pieces

When a woman goes to pieces
Hysteria and fragility are often evoked
When a man goes to pieces
Its often just workload

The opposite can also be true.
If a woman tells her mate
I'm going to pieces he'll tell her
'Get yourself together,
Or soon it'll be too late'.

A woman is rarely alone when she wants to be,
In times of acute personal misery.
But alas when she doesn't want to be
People become rare in their scarcity.
So social fronts and smiling facades
Busy workers and perfect mothers
Mill around busy shopping arcades
What if a woman has the right to say
Please just leave me alone for today?

Rani Turton

Artisan Of Words

I am an artisan of words
Which I sculpt, chisel and fashion the way I can
I am a creator of worlds;
I pour my emotion into the poems I write.
I breathe life into them, blow them skywards
And finish them only when they sound right.

These remnants of thought without reason
Will remain on pages season after season
Long after I'm gone; when my task is done
The love, the longing, the pain
Will be evoked then by somebody else
Who in turn will remember and write again
To create another slow soft song
That people can read and draw into their hearts
Then pillowed by words, cushioned by dreams
My poems will ride high the moonbeams.

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Rani Turton

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The Turning Point

The turning point in every life
Comes suddenly
Nothing to signal its presence
Sometimes even intuition falls flat.

Sometimes even intuition falls flat
On its face and life keeps striding on
Even you are left alone
To wonder, blunder, stumble all alone.

Alone with your thoughts
Alone with your pain and open wounds
Wondering how to witness another dawn.

Long did I err, long did I err
Long did I wonder what I was doing here
Nobody to witness the pain, nobody to share
My solitary thoughts burning holes in my brain.

The turning point comes then, once again.

Rani Turton

The Waiting

I had been waiting
Night after night
Until my tears had
Almost dimmed my sight

I had been waiting
And wondering for long
If life was only this
Dreary long song

I was then thinking
I should strive and grow
And even let this secret,
This love of mine show

This then is destiny
A road chalked out alone
Written in tears
In blood and in bone

Mine then is this journey
An uncertain end
To never know if you will wait
Around the next winding bend.

Rani Turton

Poets

Poets have no tools, never
No tangible tools that is to say
Some people even call them fools
Poets have a different worldview
Built on emotions, sensations, lacerations
Splinters of pain
And all that the heart holds to be true.

Poets have no right way or wrong way
(Its true that they often lose their way anyway) :
Poetry has always been difficult to define
Scrambled thoughts, scrambled lines
That is to say
Perfect lines, perfect rhymes
Clockwork metric thoughts and thou and thine
Stanzas, couplets and all the rest of it
My emotions flew jagged against the sky
My thoughts often threatened to run away
Like me; I speak about pain and despair
People who are going to die
Corpus callosum, existence ad infinitum
Transient joy, the rainbow arching
Spectral armies marching
Tramping, tramping down history's worn-out lanes
And the lines in a stranger's face
His apparent despair, his evident pain
Jerk me from those absolute, imperfect rhymes
I am myself corpus callosum-like again.

Rani Turton

Secrets

I have been so many things in my life
A daughter, a worker, a beloved and a wife
I have sometimes sat down and wept
But that is a secret that should be timidly kept

I have often wanted somebody to reply
If all women were like me and if so why
Was I a loser? Was I wise?
That is a secret that I can summarise;
Insecurity, confusion, fatigue and while
I hid all this inside me behind a smile

My secret is simple and utterly pure:
Life is simply not sure;
I can choose to drop out of the race
Or choose to go on at my pace.

Rani Turton



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My Father, With His Arthritic Hands

My father, with his arthritic hands
Closes his door, picks up the bow
Tucks the bit under his chin
Tunes it real low
My father can compete with the world's best bands
My father plays the violin.

His eyes are dim but the notes are clear
His hearing is faulty but we can hear
The songs that pour out from within
People outside stop to listen
When my father plays the violin.

He opens up another world
Far from stress and pain
I become a child again
As without a word
He picks up the bow, tunes it real low
My father plays the violin.

My father with his arthritic hands
Holds a magnifying glass to his eyes to read
He sits out there under the clear blue skies
Now that he can hardly walk
(Luckily my sisters are there when he needs to talk) .
And when its dusk and he enters within
Then with his arthritic hands
Father picks up his violin.

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(an extract from the book of poems 'My Father With His Arthritic Hands and Other Poems' Paris, 2018.

Rani Turton

A Wooden Door, A Metal Key

A plain wooden door, nerve-ridden
A carved metal key, in my pocket hidden.

And secrets that lie behind that blank facade
A building, some windows, my dreams.

I wandered on those blind Parisian streets.
Nobody knew my name
Nobody knew where I came from
I was different, yet still the same.

A wooden door like corpus callosum
Holds my two worlds together
I enter now, I walk out at midnight I flee
The buzzing and the hum.

Rani Turton



PoemHunter.com

Rain, Streaming Down

Rain-slick roads, black and gleaming
Drops on the windowpanes, streaming
It seems even the sky is weeping
Even the sky is burdened by tears

I am alone, encircled by my fears.

The rain keeps dripping down
Like tears falling softly onto this suburban town
Huge big gigantic tearsdrops on earth's cheeks

But where will the poor sleep tonight?

Rani Turton



PoemHunter.com

A Mad Bird Was I

I walked down that lonely road
That sinuous, torturous bend
You know how I hated
The cold, the distance, my thoughts.

My thoughts flew back and forth
Like a mad bird blinded by the light
I was lost; I was lonely; I was in pain
A mad bird was I.
There was no way out of this blundering

Floundering directionless path to nowhere.
There was no way out and the how and the whys
Were the least of it all.

I was like that mad bird in full, haphazard flight.

Rani Turton



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Decisions

The decision I took today
Took up half of the day
The decision I took yesterday
Was exactly the same in this way

I would be better and wiser
I would be simpler, patient and gay
Break off all the bonds that destroyed me
I would certainly not wallow in misery

But the day dragged on endlessly
I was no longer so sure of myself
I took all my plans and decisions
And put them away on a dusty shelf.

Rani Turton



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If I Should See You Again

If I should see you again
Across some busy city street
If I should see your face as I've longed to
For years, for so many years
Will I just stand there stupidly
My face wet with tears?

But wait, there's more to come.
I'll probably just stand and watch
You walking swiftly from sight.
If I could have my freedom and words-
And I no longer want to be so weak:
Then I would probably find my courage and speak.

Rani Turton



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Questions And Answers

Under a dripping grey sky
Sad, soaking, shivering and wet
I wanted to know why
Why and why and why
On that rainy day when you said goodbye
On that sodden day you went away
I had to walk on, forlorn.

Now years later under a metallic sky
Sad, soaking shivering and hardly dry
I try to remember
The question and the quest and why
I needed to know
The answers, the answers, the replies.

Rani Turton



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Closing Years

In these closing years of your life
Each time I see your white hair that was once so black
Your body bent that once walked so straight
I remember you throwing me up in your arms
And waiting for you impatiently at the gate

Let time quietly glide away
And grace touch every moment that is left
Never to know distress, worry, stress
And when you close your eyes to rest one day
It might be to the sound of familiar footsteps I guess
That you can follow without any fear in your heart;
And to the sound of soft beloved voices,
Maybe that is the way loved ones depart.

Rani Turton



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