

Poetry Series

RONY PATRA
- poems -

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RONY PATRA(7th October 1989)

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Some of Rony's poems have been published in the popular youth magazine, KINDLE. Rony's poetry can also be accessed on his blog 'Poetic Adventures of An Aspiring Litwit' at [\[html\]\[link\]](#)

A Midsummer Day's Rain

It is the middle of May, and the parched earth
Induces people to pray for a much-needed dearth
Of ravages caused by the sun, and a little bit of rain
To calm their nerves, else they would turn insane

Lo and behold! Black turn the clear skies
To the countless weather-stricken ones, God sends a surprise
The arrival of thunder and lightning signal that rain is here
The onset of breeze and rain chill the atmosphere

Plants rejoice, man and creature revel in this respite
However short-lived it may be, from summer's dynamite
The earth sings paeans too, it looks replenished now
For this noble gift, it seems God must take a bow

People rush out of their homes, to feel the rain
Cascading down their roofs, into the main drain
The street-urchins seem to be intent on getting drenched
And on having their ever-growing thirst quenched

And then, finally, at night the rain stops
Much to the chagrin of those enjoying the refreshing drops
All good things in life have to come to an end
But there's no doubt that rain in midsummer is a godsend

RONY PATRA

A Walk To Remember

The traveller walks in the direction of the forest
Looking, as always, for a place to sit and rest
His countenance reveals him to be ill at ease
Which is jarring, in the midst of the autumn breeze

He laments the loss of humanity and innocence
From the world, in which his is an indecipherable presence
He wonders why no one consents to help him
And thus, mentally, he stands on a tumbler's rim

Then suddenly, out of nowhere, a Good Samaritan appears
And tells the awestruck traveller, 'Have no fears,
Generosity and goodwill still abound in this world
Obstacles are things that God has always hurled.'

The traveller says, 'I have no joy, I have no hope
Everyone discards me like a used bar of soap
I wish for somebody to understand my sorrow
Otherwise I may commit suicide in the morrow.'

The Samaritan says, 'It is a crime to grieve
About things that have taken their time to conceive
Don't look back, stare at the boundless future
Dream big, and safeguard your fantasy and culture.'

The traveller says, 'Thank you, O Samaritan
For hearing my rantings in a world considered partisan
The Samaritan replies, 'You are always welcome.'
And disappears as quickly as he had come

And then the traveller realises, with no trace of anxiety
That he just met a reincarnation of someone called the Almighty
Who has taught him one of the valuable lessons of life
That the flag of fortitude should fly high, even in times of strife

RONY PATRA

An Ideal Country

I perpetually dream of a country
Where happiness is spread among all and sundry
Where duty comes first, not pride or power
Where citizens get their grievances redressed by the hour

I dream of a country, where all
Follow the maxim, "All for one, one for all"
Where the golden virtues of equality
Are practiced with utmost sincerity

I dream of a country, where rising crime
Becomes a mere speck in the sands of time
Where women and children can safely reach their destination
Without having any fear or negative imagination

I dream of a country where religious tolerance
And human rights are given outright preference
Where there is a balance between the modern and the outdated
So that the old and young can always feel sated

I dream of a country where justice, liberty and fraternity
Are gifted to all, without any fear, favour or irregularity
I dream of a country whose art, sports, heritage and literature
Can be appreciated, without disturbing the so-called moral vulture

About my country, I dream of that ideal glorious day
But is it wrong to fantasise about it this way?
Our duties towards our land, if we, very well, know
To the world, the ideal country, we will certainly show

RONY PATRA

An Urban Summer

Summer is upon the city again, and this time it's far worse
The people of the city consider it as God's vile curse
Of course, the excessive, oppressive heat is no sudden thing
Something called "global warming" has added to this suffering

The sun beats down on its victims, and keeps spitting venom
On the hapless inhabitants of its seasonally sizzling kingdom
People pray to the Almighty for a much-needed April miracle
But all that they receive from Him is a sweltering debacle

The citizens crave for water and drinks, to remove their weakness
The water-tankers and juice sellers do rip-roaring business
Even the swimming pools and clubs laugh all the way to the bank
Refreshed and rejuvenated patrons do not find anyone else to thank

No child plays on the roads now, they all stay indoors
And wait desperately for summer to change its course
But alas! The mercury touches 42 degrees on the Celsius scale
And the children have no other option, except to hysterically wail

The tempers of the inhabitants go several notches higher
When they learn that rats nibbled at the main electricity wire
Everyday, for a few hours, their cool and patience is tested
And the doubts regarding the civic body's negligence are rested

The rich and the middle-class bask in the cool comforts
Of the air-conditioners and fans in their personal forts
But the poor, disadvantaged beggars and labourers are not so lucky
Deaths due to heat and sunstroke are reported with alarming regularity

Rich or poor, all have the same prayer on their lips now
They want July to arrive fast, and the summer to take a bow
But time will take its own course, and till then everyone
Will have to face the wrath of the sweltering sun

RONY PATRA

Change Is In Everything

I set off with my dreams, knowing not where to go
With a little bit of hope and optimism, minus the sorrow
I try and look back at my past, and realize one thing
Necessary or unnecessary, change is in everything

As I set off on my journey, I look back at my den
And the city I lived in, of which I was a citizen
I realize that I'll be haunted by this dominion of dirt and grime
And then slowly, silently, it will be lost in the sands of time

I look back at the melancholic parents who gave me warmth
I get flooded with emotions and get lost in its labyrinth
I turn back to see my crestfallen friends, and their moist eyes
Convey a whole lot more than they can ever advise

What will happen to me, where I will go, who knows
God hides his cards close to his chest more than he shows
I have myself, and only myself to trust in this big, bad world
Only time will tell whether I'm lucky or left out in the cold

I hope I eventually come back, somewhere in time
To my city, my den, this dominion of dirt and grime
By then my worldly knowledge will have vindicated one thing
Necessary or unnecessary, change is in everything

RONY PATRA

College Street, Kolkata

At daybreak, with the rising of the sun
When the night-duty of the moon is done
The engine of life starts revving and roaring
And brings forth a day that is far from boring

I trudge along the concrete footpath
And see old-timers live the aftermath
Of a movement that changed a generation
And showcased the communist colour of a nation

Shopkeepers open their dens by noon
Street dogs howl, while birds croon
Booksellers peddle IAS, science and literature
In their half-hearted attempt to promote academic culture

Taxis and trams sail through, side by side
Bringing back memories of those who died
Or are most likely to, given the reckless speed
Enjoyed by office-goers for doing thir daily deed

Schoolchildren and college students throng the road from nine
Some are eager for their lessons to begin, while others whine
Juice-sellers and food-stalls do rip-roaring business
And often leave the peripheries of the street in a mess

By four to six, education gets over
And one can catch a child, walking as a rusted lever
Exhausted and sleepy from the day's activities
And not even pausing to look at the dozing canine beauties

By nine at night, the street is empty
With remnants strewn all around, of the day's activity
The street steals some hard-earned precious rest
Before it starts another new day, with added zest

RONY PATRA

Haphazard Lives

We are inhabitants of a fast, high-octane world
Which promises every possible comfort to all and sundry
But the brave new age which it has unfurled
Is rapidly destroying every tangible moral boundary

People are clinging on to their cellphones, hooked onto MP3 players
But they have scant time for even a simple conversation
The elderly detest this, but unheeded go their prayers
Which the young and swish are glued to the PlayStation

Social systems have disintegrated, taboos have faded into oblivion
Values have no place in the world of the 'possible'
Relationships are getting redrawn and redefined with alarming regularity
And then obliterated like an overheated crucible

Everybody is pursuing the elusive thing they consider 'happiness'
It could mean love, sex, money, power or fame
But happiness remains elusive, lives turn into a mess
Characters keep falling into the bottomless gorge of shame

Crime abounds in all its despicable versions
The cities have become vile and full of complexity
And psychological disorders make dangerous incursions
Lines have blurred between the unreal and reality

Everybody is on the move, chasing something or the other
But nobody has the time to enjoy life's simple pleasures
Which are always by their side, but they are too busy to bother
And thus their lives become knotty and full of fissures

Is this what the usherers of this world had dreamt of?
If it's so, then we should seriously introspect
About the way in which our consciences are getting switched off
And the way our tech-savvy world is getting devoid of respect

RONY PATRA

Heartbreak

As I set off to experience the unknown
Optimistic about my chances, in spite of being alone
Melancholy and sadness take me back to my past
And remind me of events that still leave me aghast

For I committed a crime worse than treason
I murdered someone's unconditional love without reason
She had done no wrong, my fallen morale she would rouse
But circumstances portrayed me to be, in love, a louse

I think of those pleasant autumn evenings
When two lovers would talk about the usual beautiful things
I think again and again of those cold, wintry days
When, hand in hand, we'd walk into the foggy haze

The elders detested it, they always saw red
They tried to put age-old wisdom into my head
That this was all but a passing fancy
That there'd be many other beauties for me to see

My heart is still rent with the ignominy of the decision
That destroyed our brittle Paradise with precision
This lone lost soul still cries out for her silently
And prays for her to return to life's affairs happily

RONY PATRA

I Search

I search for that something called an Identity
I search for the eternally dynamic being called 'me'

I search for that ever-elusive ray of Hope
That'll steady my walk on life's tightrope

I search for that stroke of Brilliance
That'll make me stand out among millions

I search for that much-needed Common Sense
That'll help me to decipher utter nonsense

I search for that slippery thing called Fame
That'll erase all my past memories of shame

I search for that quality called Tenacity
That'll help me cope with life's complexity

I search for that something called a Carefree Life
That'll remove me from worries and Danger's knife

I search for something called an Identity
And I still search for that being called 'me'

RONY PATRA

In Mooniverse

The grass grows; there is no light,
Yet luminescence exists for the night
The neon-lights have long gone out
But sparkling Eden gives Darkness a rout.

I stand among the pearly blades
On the carpet-like white glades,
Looking at the elegance in the nude,
Of the silvery blaze you exude.

Sweet shimmer scents up the blowing breeze,
Which kisses my tousled hair with ease.
Your soft whiteness hypnotizes my mind
While I am lulled into ecstasy, by the wind.

Human dots flit in this white open crypt,
Bringing life to an unscripted script,
Of which you are unyielding director
And me, the wonderstruck spectator.

Will you not shine over this haze
And trap me in those timely delays,
That induce poets to produce verse
When your languor invades their universe?

Why must you burn like magnesium
And hold sway over my heart's atrium?
Why do you, belligerent yet beautiful,
Choose to cover all that's dreadful?

Don't go away, don't break this spell
Of enchantment in my mental dell
Because I wish for self-obscurity
In your luminescent, mysterious felicity.

RONY PATRA

In The Event Of An Accident

An accident, a car accident, has happened quite suddenly
On the road, near the sweet shop which is feeding people happily
The contentment of the customers is broken like a brittle glass pane
They immediately rush out to save the driver who is in excruciating pain

On first sightings, nobody dares go near the wreckage
Of the Santro which at best now resembles a mangled cage
The driver, with his bloody face, hangs out of the window, half-dead
It is only then that somebody cries out, "He needs a hospital bed! "

People rush out of their homes, offices and shops in a ton
To see the smoke-emitting damage that has been done
A multitude of people mill around the wreckage and say one thing,
"This is what happens when a person does reckless driving."

The owner of the sweet-shop, who, till now, was watching silently
Thanks God for his luck and feeds the multitude merrily
He does not see the driver lying, half-dead, like a twisted sickle
He does not hear the dying man praying desperately for a miracle

Suddenly, flashy red and blue lights burst onto the scene
And policemen and hospital staff take stock of what has been
The hospital staff stretcher the dead body of the driver,
Cremate him, and dump his ashes into the nearby river

The next day, politicians and the public raise Cain
And want to find out why a man could not be rescued from pain
They organize strikes and protesters march downhill
And they bring normal life in the town to a standstill

Allegations of negligence are hurled thick and fast, one by one
To all the civic departments, for the reason something could not be done
Though it doesn't do much good, as after some days
Everybody forgets about it, it gets lost in history's haze

The sweet shop resumes feeding its loyal customers, life goes on as before
Many more accidents occur, the loss of life and property becomes more
But there is a final question you and me should ask ourselves
Are we still human, or have we become heartless elves?

RONY PATRA

Let's Talk

Let's talk, let's open our hearts out to each other and talk
You may laugh at this plea, at this suggestion you may balk
You might scoff and tell me, "You've gone mad today."
But reflect a bit and you will find many things to say

Come hither, and let us bare our sorrows to each other
So that we can feel lighter and be not in a spot of bother
Good or bad, let us talk about our dealings with life
It's much better to be open than be cut up by tension's knife

I don't care whether you are friend or enemy, or what's your background
In the vortex of worldly relationships and people's moods, I'm not bound
For each other, we are just voluble speakers and patient, well-meaning listeners
We can remove the burden of sorrow, or else our hearts will ache even worse

You and I will discuss many things, and give each other advice
Maybe we can do all the talking-listening over drinks and fried rice
Who knows, maybe we will become bosom friends
And in the future, this friendship will pay rich dividends

You may want to praise me, scold me, abuse me, tell me I'm bad
I wouldn't get angry, or get into a brawl with you, or feel sad
It's better to take out all the misunderstandings and ill-feelings in the heart
Maybe it will help us understand each other better, instead of driving us apart

Maybe you do not know, but it is extensively proven by history's pages
Due to lack of communication, wars and fights have occurred for ages
Even in this day and age, battles and more battles are still being fought
As all attempts by warring parties to talk to each other have come to nought

Let's talk, let's open our hearts out to each other and talk
It's better to be garrulous, rather than be silent as a rock
When you will open up and say things, a dime a dozen
You will then enjoy life and keep considering this world as heaven

RONY PATRA

Loneliness Is Killing Everyone

“Loneliness is killing everyone, loneliness is killing everyone”
So sang Himesh Reshammiya, India’s favourite nasal son
Though truth be told, he was spot on with that one
Because loneliness does INDEED kill everyone

Loneliness is killing everyone
It has no friends, it spares no one
A person’s world turns upside down, because of it
He cannot cope with his social life taking a hit

The Blessed Teresa of Calcutta had once proclaimed
That a lonely person is always socially maimed
In this regard, with her we couldn’t agree more
In life, loneliness is a lethal suppurating sore

Company is a basic necessity, like food or water
It could be anyone....mother, son or daughter
With whom a person can share his innermost thoughts
It would help him untie life’s multiple knots

Jesus Christ had once said, “Love thy neighbour”
Why are there people then, for whom no love we harbour?
We must shower love, give each other company
So that no soul gets ripped apart by lonesome agony

RONY PATRA

Money Cannot Buy Everything

Ladies and gentlemen, let me tell you all a story
That is emotional and tragic, in spite of being gory
It is the sad story of a young girl, free-spirited and bubbly
Who lived with her mother in a small hut in the surreal valley

While the girl lived her life without caring for the past
Her mother, a stout lady of seventy, was a complete contrast
She was weathered in the tough arts of life and hard work
And always told her daughter, her responsibilities never to shirk

These words of wisdom from her mother
Were the only ones that made the girl bother
About her rudderless life, otherwise she was gay
And played around with friends and animals all day

But in spite of all this, sometimes she felt a gaping hole
In her heart, and longed for somebody, to call her own
She dreamt every now and then, of the rich Prince Charming
Who would treat her like a queen, and gift her a wedding ring

One wet day, as she looked outside through the window-pane
A young man appeared, tall, handsome and wet from the rain
He was rich, or so it seemed from his attire
She gladly allowed him, for the night, to retire

The girl and the stranger hit it off with each other
They met one day, then another, and another
Gradually, they fell in love and one day, he proposed
Marital union to her, which she never opposed

They got married in the huge, spacious palatial environs
Of his home in the city, with its huge pillars and columns
His family had seen her, and already taken a liking to her
Into their home, now her, they wasted no opportunity to usher

The first few days of married life went off like a breeze
Sometimes, he would kiss her forehead, and give her a squeeze
He gave her all the material comforts that she could wish for
And she enjoyed them, sitting in her new home with the lavish décor

But the newly-married wife soon tired of this life and understood
That her husband was also a hard-nosed businessman and often rude
Very often, he would go abroad on numerous business trips
And to tie him down with love, she faced many hardships

She would sniff, she would cry, she would wail
But all of her sufferings would, in comparison, pale
To the realization that she had tried enjoying riches like a dove
But in the process, she had become the world's biggest loser in love

She longed for him to come back, spend some time with her
But this growing marital disenchantment, he could not decipher
Gradually, happiness and affection pushed her aside
Feeling unloved, one day she drank poison and committed suicide

I sincerely hope all of you have tried to grasp
What I have tried to say, that it is easy to clasp
Fame and fortune, but it is a momentary thing
For, in life's stakes, money cannot buy everything

RONY PATRA

Mother - The Divine Apparition

There is a person, a very special one
For each one of us, she is second to none
It is well-established that like her, there is no other
She is the divine apparition we all know as "Mother"

She experiences great pain while giving us birth
In order to safely make us come to Earth
When she sees her newborn(s) , she weeps like a child
She vows to take care of them, when their bodies are mild

She feeds us, waits on us, with us she sleeps
In times of our illness, she silently weeps
She never lets us go, even for a brief period of time
When we feel sad, to us she recites a nursery rhyme

From her, we get encouragements, rebukes galore
As also stories which are part of fairy lore
She hits us, scolds us, in order to correct our wrongs
But afterwards she also breaks into a flurry of sweet songs

But what do WE do? When she becomes old,
And we grow up, we leave her out in the cold
We never listen to her, we feel she's bossy and snooping
Her feelings are hurt, her shoulders start drooping

Our mother wonders, "What is my crime,
Why are my children deserting me at this time? "
She starts feeling lonely, depressed and sad
She thinks her entire motherhood was bad

She leaves this world, a broken and hurt creature
Once upon a time, she was our greatest teacher
We wail and cry during her last rites, we sing and dance like bards
We don't realize our indifference has killed her like broken glass shards

To all who read this, think of their mothers, I make a request
We may win, we may lose many things in life's quest
But one thing we will never lose, remember, my brother
The love and faith of the divine apparition called "Mother"

RONY PATRA

My Parents

From an envelope of darkness
I came to the light,
And saw two people
Squeal joyous nothings,
Wanting to hold me
Me, the bundle of happiness,
That they had wanted,
To bring some order
To their annealed lives.

They brought me up,
Inculcating values in me,
Shaping and moulding
Their precious plasticine
Into the long-desired shape,
That was meant to resemble
Their dreams, their aspirations
And liven up their existence
Like Joyce's portrayal of Araby.

As I've grown up,
I've made mistakes
And bungled things
Yet they've stuck by me
Being my emotional anchors
And my patient listeners
While I explain to them
How I broke the neighbour's window
While playing cricket.

Some times,
I've misunderstood them
Never thinking of their viewpoint
Yet they love me
I want to tell them THANK YOU
For all that they've done
For the upbringing and love
Which they've bestowed on me
Unconditionally.

RONY PATRA

Ramblings Of A Drunkard

'What has happened? What am I seeing?
Am I mad, or am I a nervous being
The world is swaying from one side to another
And this unnatural sight has put me in a spot of bother.'

'Wait, wait! I see a lamp-post in the distance
Or is it my imagination conveyed by my sodden trance?
Now I can hear a stray dog howl
And I can see, perched on the oak-tree, there's an owl.'

'No! Damn! The lamp-post has disappeared
Unexpectedly, my movements and eyesight have queered
The world seems to be rocking more vigorously
The dog seems to be howling even more ferociously.'

'Oh God! I should not have drunk so much liquor
I should have known that it makes me sicker
I wish I had gone easy on the drink
At least, life wouldn't play pranks with a wink.'

'I want to go home now, I've had enough
Of life's tricks, which are sometimes rough
I'll love my wife, begin anew, start something
And then.....' Nothing.

RONY PATRA

Rantings Of A Hassled Teenager

I know not where life takes this soul called "me"
Maybe to a world, where at every step, there is tribulation
I hope I can be wary at every second in history
For yours truly to savour life without any guilty notion

Sometimes I think I never will come back
From the depths of guilt and heart-wrenching sorrow
And other times, I vow never to look back
So that I can work solely for a better tomorrow

My mind is confused, often blank
About the places to go to, and the things to be done
But living life is like walking on a pirate ship's plank
I have to know your strengths, or I'm gone

There are two people, in spite of perceived eccentricities
Who, in supporting me in life, are just
I wish for my fate to not cause any more oddities
I wish for myself to not break their trust

And then there comes another lovely being
Who comes to me and stands by me
She loves me in spite of everything
And I wish, in future, to live with her happily

So many dreams, so many ambitions
But what good is all of it without any aim?
Time will patiently go through all its motions
And it will reduce life to a cruel game

I don't want to lose them, they are my life
They perpetually wish the best for me
I wish, in my fate and mind, there was no such strife
So that I could make my family proud of me

I still don't know where life takes "me"
I hope it brings, to my life, success
Peace, happiness and prosperity
It would definitely be better than life's depressing abyss

RONY PATRA

Separation

Among fallen hopes and broken dreams
Where happiness falls like concrete beams
Distances widen, lives collide
Sadness often doesn't get a place to hide

Everyone goes away, every person leaves
For the unknown, to see what Destiny weaves
Ideals are shattered, fate turn bleak
All before you get a chance to speak

Child leaves home in search of a new life
Relationships crumble in times of strife
Lives turn haywire, prudence spins out of control
As the Maker observes all through Fate's keyhole

Separation is the name of this odd game
Which brings both fame and shame
Lefts and rights are traversed by "splitting" pain
Like a sullen river meandering through a plain

None can escape Life's unending lawlessness
And the manifestation of our roots' restlessness
Some dreams will meet, others will separate
On this basis will weird Earth operate

RONY PATRA

Tenacity

Tenacity....that eight-letter word
Everybody stakes claim to it,
But few actually possess it.
It makes those few stand apart
From their countless compatriots.

What is tenacity?
Is it having the courage
To be a jawan in the Indian Army
Stationed in the glacial world of Siachen,
Stationed at sub-zero temperatures,
With no family by his side,
Braving intruders, snow,
And inclement weather?

What is tenacity?
Is it having to put up
With being the poorest student in class
Even after putting in his best effort,
And subjected to much derision
By parents and friends,
And still keeping at it
In search of that elusive good result?

What is tenacity?
Is it having the nerve
To be a goalkeeper in a soccer game,
Safeguarding not only the goalpost
But also the dignity of his team,
And facing insurmountable criticism
Whenever he concedes a goal,
Still keeping his sanity intact?

Tenacity....that eight-letter word
Everybody stakes claim to it,
But few actually possess it.

RONY PATRA

The Death Of A Milkman

The unthinkable has happened, with just a single fatal fall
Bhola, the neighbourhood milkman, has gone away from it all
Yes, he has escaped from his daily tortuous duties
He now lies dead, surrounded by his healthy bovine beauties

When he was alive, he tirelessly sold cow's milk day and night
And this service of his took his reputation to a new height
But no one paid attention to his poverty and drooping frame
And Bhola became the latest victim of Death, God's cruel game

Some passers-by notice his body, and pull it out of his hut
They want to quickly dispense with it, rather than get into a rut
Some of them quickly dig a grave, and organize a small funeral
But no one sheds tears for him, as his body gets a hurried burial

Days pass, months pass, milk has run woefully short in the neighbourhood
And Bhola's bovine beauties seem to have given up giving milk for good
Babies, children, wrestlers stomp their feet and cry a bucketful
"Get a new milkman!" becomes the new mantra of a handful

A new milkman does arrive, from the colony next-door
He starts charging the people fifty rupees for packets of four
Hearing this, the people of the neighbourhood lament, fume and fret
They realize that the much-criticised late Bhola was a much better bet

But what had to happen has happened, there's no turning back
God has a plan for every living creature, which no one can attack
In the open field where, after dark, wayward youths smoke cannabis
Bhola rests in peace, surrounded by his dying bovine beauties

RONY PATRA

The Futility Of War

The sun is receding from the sky,
Which is now painted a deep crimson red
But the blood of bodies lying, left to die
Have filled this red sky with unease and dread

For, a few hours ago, a battle was fought
One side was victorious, the other was mercilessly defeated
But the value of human life came to nought
Jesus' maxim, "Love thy neighbour" was severely dented

Among the battered bodies, a soldier rises from the ground
With great discomfiture, and holds his bruised knee
He looks around at the destruction and carcasses strewn all around
And it is only then that he starts crying inconsolably

For he is all alone, in this desolate picture of heartache and grief
He starts looking at one bloody corpse after another
For his friends and comrades, with whom his association was brief
And then he, with watery eyes, looks at the body of his brother

His brother had just joined service, he had not served in the regiment long
But Fate and Death selected him, and played a cruel joke
With his brother, with whom the soldier would sometimes sing a song
And when catching him rob apples red-handed, his ribs he would gently poke

It is only now that the lonely soldier realizes
How utterly futile it is to fight a war!
He surveys the dead fathers, sons and brothers of all sizes
He regrets his mistake, the rest of the world he wants peace for

And then he decides to do something in this endeavour, there and then
He will preach to the world the foolishness of battles
He does not exactly know how, where and when
But nobody can stop a man's resolve, when his conscience rattles

War is NOT a necessary evil, it can be stopped
Peace and dialogue have never hurt Mother Earth
For it is better, than to have bodies mercilessly chopped
That, to a new happy world, we give a grand new birth

RONY PATRA

The Invasion Of Apathy

The streets of brick and asphalt are suddenly painted red
And littered with innocent civilians, who are now dead
These people were drops in humanity's sea, always on the go
But Fate and ammonium nitrate conspired to deal them a cruel blow

The explosions in multiple places took everyone by surprise
And it's unknown victims had to pay a heavy price
For the actions of some people, who pursue propaganda with zeal
Without pausing to think how the kin of the dead would feel

The injured, with their scars, still battle for their lives
And certain religious zealots instantly brandish their knives
Spreading death, distress and destruction all around
In mutilated carcasses, the streets further abound

But those who view these incidents as spectators
Show little concern, as do self-styled 'political commentators'
Allegations and counter-allegations are traded, thick and fast
With ferocity and precision that would leave even animals aghast

And the common man? He continues as before
Unmindful and exhibiting apathy, he does his daily chore
Without realising that he could be part of a future, deadly jamboree
Without realising that in a few moments, he could be grotesque history

RONY PATRA

The Outsider

There is a person, sometimes big, sometimes small
Who has a tendency to stay away from it all
When the rest of the proceedings are looked at, with wonder
This person is what everyone calls the quintessential Outsider

The Outsider could be a scavenger or a hangman
Or anybody considered unusual by a layman
He could be the maligned goalkeeper in a soccer game
Or a war-weary soldier, back to civilian life, devoid of fame

He wants to be in the thick of action, but cannot do so
He is misunderstood by a friend, as much as by a foe
His position is always lonely, always desolate, always solitary
Whether he be in a high-pressure game or the military

In every type of setting, he is a stranger
To some, he is a misfit; to some, a danger
To the well-established norms and stereotypes of the world
He is a character whose thoughts are best not unfurled

He refuses to give in to sycophancy, in this world so biased
Or conform to convention, so he is ostracized
No one seems to have time for his views
And thus his boredom with life blows a fuse

So, he is reduced to a mere observer
Of circumstances, which he becomes with little fervour
And in this way, he enlarges his experience
Of the development of life, surroundings and conscience

RONY PATRA

The Photograph

The other day, I was dusting my rarely-cleaned room
Whose pathetic condition requires more than just a broom
I looked at all my memorabilia, trying to trace my life's graph
When suddenly, I came across an old photograph

It was of a younger, rudimentary version of me
The waist was bulging, the cheeks were chubby
And there was a look of innocence on the round face
Which, it seemed, was ill-suited for life's fierce race

I gave a wry, all-knowing smile to the faded snapshot
And reminded myself that it was only a dot
In the zigzag line of life, with alternating joy and sorrow
But it would not matter, as I prepare for the life of tomorrow

I suddenly realized that I'd come a long way
From being the shy child, who never had anything to say
Now I'm more confident, and not so scared of life's obstacles
Sometimes I'll face success, and at other times, debacles

Life has given me a crash course in hard knocks
Weaklings never survive, so I've had to pull up my socks
And in our heads, there's a lesson life always tries to fit
Whether one wins or loses, one should never quit

RONY PATRA

The Warrior

When the light is afar, and darkness near
The human mind is not averse to fear
The clouds of terror block out the safe sky
And roar ominously with an evil eye

There is a heavy rain of guns and bombs
That leads to many premature tombs
Another round follows, and then another
Earth cringes in fear like no other

In such times, there emerges a ray of hope
The Warrior appears from nowhere to cope
With distressing stamina of devilish force
That threatens to run its full evil course

Wearing the cloak of cold, forced fortitude
The Warrior fights with kind, or in solitude
Against the demons his machine-guns roar
And the morale of the people tends to soar

Fighting brain with brain, and brawn with brawn
He gives the multitude the dream of a new dawn
His family fears for him, but cheers him to glory
While he slays the Satans and makes history

Strikes and counter-strikes come thick and fast
And the Warrior vows to take it to the last
While the devilish predators wait to pounce
He uses all his valour-yea, every ounce

At long last, the battle rages to a bloody end
Bodies lie strewn at every curvaceous bend
Many villains have been wiped out by this ignoble strife
But the Warrior has paid Victory's price with his life

A nation slips into grief, the sobs are uncontrolled
But it should not fear-many more Warriors untold
Still slay the terror-clouds and wipe out distress
To guard our country, put it on the path to progress

RONY PATRA

Unanswered Questions

There are so many things in life
That I wish to know about right now
For instance, why is there so much strife
Instead of worldly happiness, why is there only sorrow?

Why can't a mother give her child enough food?
Whom has she ever wronged in life?
Why can't world leaders, shielded by diplomacy's hood
Prevent them from being decapitated by hunger's knife?

Why do celebrities suffer from multiple-personality disorder?
They behave in a way towards one, differently towards another
To the tabloids, their messy lives keep providing fodder
Yet they keep on acting, as if they couldn't bother

Why do crimes, rebellions and terrorist activities flourish,
And steal from the world its peaceful, much-needed sleep?
Why do power-mongers yield to them, rear and nourish
Their outrageous fancies, and make us weep?

Why do we marvel at outstanding art
But screw up our noses at everything dirty?
If we took some initiative and played a part
We could certainly turn them into objects of beauty

There are so many questions in this world
Which remain unanswered, due to lack of clarity
I fear these issues would keep getting unfurled
But would probably remain unsolved for eternity

RONY PATRA