

Poetry Series

Saroj K Padhi
- poems -

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BIODATA

Dr. Saroj K. Padhi, an Associate Professor of English in the Govt. of Odisha is at present working at J K B K Govt. College, Cuttack. Born in 1962, he has been writing poems in English and Odia since his school days. Till date he has published innumerable poems in most of the leading magazines of the country and abroad. He has published two books of criticism: 1. JAYANTA MAHAPATRA'S RELATIONSHIP: A CRITICAL STUDY 2. ENGLISH ESSAYISTS: A CRITICAL STUDY and about 12 research articles in different journals and eleven anthologies of poetry in English namely PEARLS OF DEW, SHATTERED I SING, RHYMING RIPPLES, PETALS IN PRAYER, SILENT SIGHT, MOON MOMENTS, A SLICE OF SILENCE, ELUSIVE SPRING, MONSOON MEMORIES, WHERE BUDS REFUSE TO BLOOM, THE ENDLESS FLUTTER. He has done his doctorate on Indian English Poetry from Berhampur University, Odisha under the guidance of eminent poet and Prof. Dr. Niranjan Mohanty. He is also an active member of various poetry communities on the website where he regularly posts his poems. He also has his poetry blog and his poetry page 'Saroj Poetry' where he regularly posts his poems.

He has been designated as AMBASSADOR OF PEACE, INDIA BRANCH by World Institute of Peace in 2016 and this year 2017 he has received ROCK PEBBLES NATIONAL LITERARY AWARD and the International Enchanting Muse Award by PENTASI INDIA WORLD POETRY FESTIVAL-2017.

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A Breezy Hug

The craggy rocks shiver
under an illusion of earthquake
as your arms go round my neck
in ecstasy of a warm hug,
when the cold wind makes a leaf of me
and I fall to the ground of your desire;
trees in the forest clap
like children at a magic show,
clouds form collage of our union in the Sky
and tears of joy
accumulate in Mahanadi's hazy eye;
we grow speechless
like the mountain silently drinking rain
under a silhouette sun,
the windows of our soul open
like the floodgates of the barrage
letting in the dancing waters of the river
inundate the banks of our body.

Saroj K Padhi

A Bunch Of Words

A bunch of words beneath the dust of indifferent time,
occasionally wiped by hands of curious souls off-stream,
I'll come out of the engraving silence of a few books' pages
to hug the live burns in your chest and douse your scream-
in icy embrace of my arms with flickers of sweet fire within
when you might be faced with the enigma of an existence
without the essence of real love in your life to find therein,
as mango buds will burst from the pages with such fragrance

that will carry us into the corridors of heaven's rainbow floor
where koels sing undisturbed by sounds of shutting any door
where grass leaves sing of gentle swaying of an eternal Spring
when in the bosom of the earth the sweetest songs would ring
to describe the beauty of life after death, without Time's sting
and when Nature in richest treasure would unfold her blessing!

Saroj K Padhi

A Cool Old Flame

Splay of an old flame like a crimson sunset
on an afternoon sky's soft, shrinking chest,
in all seasons on this heart is eternally cast
in glow not diminishing, as if time to outlast,
whose smokes have turned into dark clouds
in search of a long lost home in distant past
where on mud walls of memory, charcoal wrote
tales of burn, by layer of lime now overcast;
as with each day's burn it sings a vital part
with promise of pure ashes till finish from start,
bound like rose to fire, under its spell I dwell
with moments of ecstasy and agony that swell,
with each wind from trysts on shores and rivers
woods and dales that sprinkles love's sweet smell
drop from showers that the flame tries to quell;
now I live as cool smoke at center of this flame
witched by aroma and art of burning in its frame.

Saroj K Padhi

A Creeper

From guts of dusty village road
picked stray pebbles and glass balls
to play country golf
when the bliss of innocence
unaware, unnoticed slipped off
between the fingers, along with the balls
that rolled into the narrow holes;

from contours of Youth's supple body
and glen of green heart,
plucked gems of joy
when years swiftly slipped away
rocking the bones with Time's shocking ploy;

in the thorny desert of age ripe
as I search for some rich moments-
a pilgrim soul homebound
trying to take off the slushy ground
and relate with the absolute
I fall and bleed without a sound
on quicksands of life, unfirm, irresolute!

Saroj K Padhi

A Father From His Grave

A FATHER FROM HIS GRAVE

Buried beneath stacks of books, old newspapers
Medicine covers and chits of scribbled papers,
I'm a cold, yellowing memory with a damp scent
Inviting rats from holes to gnaw at my years spent,
With ramshackle bones, hollowed midribs, dry marrows
Dream-drenched words and outdated, juvenile sorrows;

Why do you bury me with those tall wishes?
Try to bamboozle me with such annual flashes?
Without going into the root of the fire that burned
To turn me into these handfuls of nameless stray ashes?

For I burned as a wet termite-eaten log during lifetime
Without money to buy a litre or half of catalyst kerosene,
Emptily I lived on dreams oozing in quick intervals
From the doted petals of a vanished jasmine!

I lived in the shrunken cocoon of my hollowed ideals
Of honesty, righteous anger and some needed self-denials
Without the art to hide all originals
As you do now under garb of high-tech expensive facials!

Remember me dears as simple earth without love of gold
As simple wind across a jasmine without any artistic hold
A keen, cool fire without causing to the nearest any rashes
A stream of water, with from the Sun, occasional green flashes
And above all a skyful of dreams with some meaningful dashes!

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Saroj K Padhi

A Girl Of Eighteen

I'm a girl of eighteen
In love with my own tune
And my dreams umpteen;
Why do you bother me
With slings of your dry swoon
When I'm in a fling with the sky
And drunk with a wild moon?
I am a girl of eighteen
Envyng those rose-cheeked girls
At the college canteen
Trying to flirt with my sweet friend
Who from a fairy land did descend
But now, he my heart does rend
With only tears in my eyes to fend;
I cry under the bower of a silhouette moon
And hope to find that real friend very soon.
I ask myself many 'whys' wherever I go:
Driving at night I ask 'Why am I afraid
While crossing the thoroughfare
Even of persons quite familiar?
Why am I afraid of my own shadow
While chasing my dreams lying afar?

Why am I stared at so long and stalked
By greedy bees who steal all colours
From all lovely flowers?
Questions are many
But answers a few,
I'm still not bothered too much
As I find
My love to be so fresh and new!
My love of grass, my love of dew
My love of self, my love of the world
And my love of all him, her and you.

Saroj K Padhi

A Hot Noon

Memory is a crippled bird, wingless
Disabled for any flight,
Softly cooing in corner of a tree
Like a stuck-up torn kite,
Sulking in sad voice of a noon wind
Away from common sight.
Your jasmine body drenched in rain
From yester night's sky, is formless now
In the heat of smokes rising from lightly wet sands,
Heating up in the dead bank of our river,
Lost to obliterating strokes of times;
Making it quite difficult for me to restore
Your aroma and form in nuances of my rhymes.
I'm a dot in the outlines of your thoughts
Transpiring thro' pores of your wrinkled spirit
That pines for salvation in the folds of old desires
Shrinking and then withering
Like petals under this noon, blistering;
And I, seething like an embattled desire
In the womb of fallen mire,
Writhing like an insect
For redemption in the dark web of a noon fire.

Saroj K Padhi

A Journey

Let me like a shadow to the bed of soft grass alight
before I spread as wet beams into folds of the night
where in caves of dark, lone moments of loss torment you
fear and an unknown inner void keep you in constant fright;

hold my hands, come, don't mind the thorns injuring you
as we rush in to touch the waters of eternity in rippling flow
under the caress of a wind in its light dusky blow
where the pole star takes an ablution before wearing its nightly glow;

we will feed on the honey of night dew under glowworms' glimmer
as the river will pass on its peace under stars' constant shimmer
unseen hands of wind will wipe the tear drops from each sad face
when each atom would be dancing in ecstasy for moon's tight embrace;

we will watch shades of agony vanishing from the dales of inner eyes
into a green valley of love where death like a loner softly, sadly sighs.

Saroj K Padhi

A Mountain Kissing Clouds

As I try to jump to kiss those candyfloss clouds
floating above and over tantalizingly so very near
with tiny droplets of honey in their swollen bosoms,
my legs stumble and slip into wild slides
of sun-mad glaciers on a rampage to ruin
the earth with all artistry on surface as they glide;
my hands reach out to a dumb darkness
in the silent vault of the heaving sky
staring hard into my blind eye
my lips go dry
empty shudders rock my thigh
and I bleed on the vast platter of barren desires
on all sides of my impotent limbs
as I fall from my daydream's summit so high
not knowing how to fulfill my desire
downward I go
dwarfing my pines
in hot tears I swiftly flow
kissing dust as cold winds blow
trying to measure life in terms of wounded dreams
in the flux of cruel Time's ceaseless flow.

Saroj K Padhi

A Night In A Tribal Village

Here the moon has lost idea of her own self
with hangover of 'salapa' in night's cold vein,
with the pristine stream's eternal delight in
soaking in her ever burgeoning rustic pain-

of days of wallow in hunger quenched by mango seeds
of long bouts of malarial sleep on bed of dry weeds
under low thatches, where the moon descends to hug
the tears of their inexpressible sorrow's obstinate bug
squatting on their silent minds of profound innocence
where glowworms read startling chapters of patience;

in face of no roads and for years no visits by Babus
and with none to redress their small, little woes,
they have learnt one lesson so well in everydaylife
to love whoever comes their way, and love of strife.

I have forgotten myself here in dance with 'Dhangdas' and 'Dhangdis'
In beats of their handy drums, with wooden horse rides and cool music
Let me not awake to my reality anymore and be lost into this joy ethnic.

N.B. 'Salapa' is an intoxicating drink from a tree of the same name; 'dhangdas',
'dhangdis'—tribal unmarried boys n girls

Saroj K Padhi

A Slice Of Silence

One day I know I will turn
into a cool flame of silence
under a heap of words that would
be turning sides in search of new names;
an ember tapering under heaps of ashes
with a desire to burn to the core
till assuming the color of dreams
nestling in bosoms of roses galore;
I would like to bleed to turn redder
with pricks from my own thorn
to fill your fancies with hues newer and newer;
don't call me back to the noises of this world
where fake love speaks louder and true love
sighs in silence, without conviction in words to utter.

Saroj K Padhi

A Song Of Spring

Koels turn cacophonous
inside the nest of my chest
as you blush on the cheeks of a misty wind
emblazoned by light from a crimson sky,
when mango buds cast their clammy spell
across the jungles of memory stretching nigh
and words leap from body of crushed grass
into the air in ecstasy to swim
in faint light of heavenly bodies grown soft and dim;
yellow leaves drop like old ideas of grandfather
forming a bed for children to roll
as new twigs sprout from aching bodies of trees
to renew our dull and drooping soul.
Where is that hug dear Spring,
promised in the twilight of our secret meet?
Where is that sweet taste of your lips
that dry up under blows from encircling heat?

Saroj K Padhi

A Strange Tale

Each day the same old story
of loss and despair, of success and failure,
of sudden break-ups of old ties
and new love looking for glory;

of births unwanted,
beauty mutilated
march of masks in the fair
and death due to despair,
doldrums and worry,
in the midst of excitements new
and expectations in flurry;

of the daily battle
between filth and flowers
sun and shadow
burns and bowers;

and the enigma of life
as a light, curved smile
in midst of disease, damnation,
drug, defeat, drunkenness
ruptures, riddles
and Nature's taunting ires!

Saroj K Padhi

A Sweet Drink

Why does darkness again and again fill my cup
As I try to drink your beauty
In morning or evening
Midnight or noon
Late or soon?
You are always getting laced with
A sweet poison from past
Sinking like dregs into the bottom of mind
And changing the texture of the drink,
The colour of dreams,
The nature of imagination
My thoughts
My emotion!
As I move on
After the drink
Into a peace do I sink
Like dew
Into the grass' hue
Under drunken stars' unsteady wink
And I lovingly die
Into a shrouded Moon's helpless blink.

Saroj K Padhi

A Thorny Bush In Ravine

A thorny bush in the sparsely green ravine
as I breathe ecstasy of wind riverine,
this winter morning wakes me up from nightmare
to symphony of birds that coolly settles into spine;
the hushed, mottled pink flowers in my body
wink at a mild, yawning Sun
like women at dawn, reaping and stacking paddy;
leaves tremble under the dew-soaked blanket of mist
as the rosy hues of sky, to the tale of night
give a pleasant twist;
my neurotic mind is yet to revive from trauma
of terrible shocks and clots of grief
as I shivered in fright
from a molested dusk till the end of a raped night
when thunderous vehicles tore open my guts with shrieks
and a sweet moon was ravished near me by the freaks
the hungry jackals yelled and dogs howled
rodents gnawed red bones of the uncanny truth
liquor bottles broke head in the hands of the uncouth,
the place got littered with plastics and burning cigar stubs
and my heart lost the regular throbs;
the entire night an owl came to solace me with its hoot,
I'm yet to get over night's smokes, burns and dark soot!

Saroj K Padhi

A Thorny Bush In The Ravine

A thorny bush in the sparsely green ravine
as I breathe ecstasy of wind riverine,
this winter morning wakes me up from nightmare
to symphony of birds that coolly settles into spine;
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Saroj K Padhi

A Throb

As the evening birds grope
the chest of the dusky sky
for answers hidden in dark
to Day's each, every why,
and the jasmine buds itch to open out
to a familiar darkness in your garden;
I keep waiting for that throb
lost long back in the corridors
of my heart's Eden —
replicated here in the trembles
of tender mimosa in the soft wind
their leaves in excitement clapping
in tune with my heart heaving;
the surfs of memories
tossing my awoken desires
on the bed of a scented night
where grass leaves ruffle her skin
worn like a chiffon garment tight.
On the ebony of this night
dreams, like fairies alight
and look how our soft breaths revive that throb
before our souls sweetly unite!

Saroj K Padhi

A Void Within

A void within sometimes takes me to the top of the hill
beyond the river, where another river in the heart of the hill flows
inside caverns of his blasted chest
in the crimson Sun's glimmering glows;
where the trees once throbbled with touch of Spring in their boughs
shadows of which the fire of endless burning in cool whispers douse.
I sit on the topmost rock as I did in days of my boyhood
counting the stars vanishing from the breast of the sky
without any rhyme or reason, leaving me in the absence
of my mother-star to cry,
and now you not being there, again I sit here counting them
and the grief of their loss melts my heart, melts the rock
forging another river to flow from my once - lovely - dreamy eye!
Tell me why your absence haunts me like that,
taking me across the river to the top
of that hill in whose heart there another river silently doth lie?

Saroj K Padhi

A Widow At Dusk

A WIDOW AT DUSK

Widowed every dusk by her incapacitated, weak, impotent husband-
the Earth that helplessly wallows in stupid, infertile, hopeless dark
for an escape from turmoils of all sorts over his wounded body,
the Sky wipes the sacred vermilion of the setting Sun off her forehead
in protest, but to sob soon like an orphan in the lap of a promising Moon
as stars sit at her bedside spinning stories of solace in the soft wind
applying balm of beams to assuage her supple, tortured body and mind;
oft' she cries out with thunders of pain bursting out of her throat
with fire of lightning in her fiery unsatiated eyes, as helplessly she lies
with marks of savage bruises on her nipples, navel and ravished thighs;

Earth has his imbecile argument stretching out from shores to peaks:
curfews, killings, bomb-blasts, rapes, robbery and a reign of terror
battle of faiths, hate-campaigns, intolerance, incertitude and horror
that eat into his vitals spewing fire, filth, futility and ashes of fear
emasculating him in blood streams of poisoned rivers, seas and glaciers
enervating his zeal, impounding his energy before he can spring to hug
his Love that delicately waits with blushes on her cheeks at a corner;

her waits for hours long turn futile as the Earth is rendered so sterile
days after days she waits till bitter grows her life and bitter her love
till one fine evening when she finds him sulking in arms of an engulfing sea
as dark enveloped everything, her Love openly flirting with foaming tides!
Since then she prefers to live alone away from the smokes of his false love
and asks the Sun every eve to disarray the vermilion before leaving
so that her Lover would come with a new mark of vermilion every morning.

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Saroj K Padhi

Absence

Pigeons jump on the grass field
Engrossed in their picking worms under a warm Sun
Like words on a green page in the eyes of Dyslexia,
When you appear with your intense invisible presence
On my white page like the deep scar of a black aporia,
Untying riddles about my secret love of the infinite sky
That stretches out beyond the reach of rustling trees
Like an inexhaustible enigma of an ambiguous silence;
As I pretend reconciling myself to a life in your absence.
The distant swaying banana leaves unfurl
The mystery about your secret love of my agonized heart
Like pages of a romantic novel turned one after the other
In the white heat of engagement with unknown shivers
In the depth of my soul
Craving for your surrogate presence!

Saroj K Padhi

Absent-Minded

ABSENT-MINDED

Spring has made me quite absent-minded
and more absent-minded is my scooty
that strays into strange paths,
winding streets and a blind alley
of this burgeoning city
in search of a few moments I dropped
and lost somewhere;
on wheels as I think of you and look aside,
the leaves on branches turn still greener
flowers grow wild in their smile and look fairer
breezes scatter your fragrance everywhere

and bees hum still louder,
looks in corners of the eyes take on the stars
and your pomegranate lips turn redder;
I don't know how to come back to myself-
this Spring has blown me away from the center
and plunged me into the oceanic blue waves
surging in curves and contours of your youthful body
where bewildered butterflies oft' love to play
in quest of honey before making their stay;
Spring has made me so unmindful these days
even in hours of morning mist
as I forget my way back home
after with Nature having a short tryst.

Saroj K Padhi

Aching Soul

Where shall I carry this aching soul
overwrought by time
moss overgrown relics of the body
smacking of changing clime?
The burden of thousand indecisions
lurking in some uneasy, active corner
that pulls the mind down
and imperfections of sorts
urging one to rise up to dull repetitions
even in face of the proverbial lotus
retreating to deep waters
that keep us bound to battered breaths
in the shores overrun with mud and slime?
We pause to ponder over anomalies,
defeats, deaths
dreams dead and destructions,
shrink back, sigh for a while
but to shovel forward again
trying hard by not to be bogged down
by the business of living
but to reconstruct fractured selves

with the help of some new rhyme!

Saroj K Padhi

Acid Attack

Your acid no doubt has burnt my body, my soft skin
But my tormented flesh has tautened my resolve
To fight for my right and bring to life better sheen
In halo of love by selves that around me revolve -
With a desire to change the mindset behind attack;
Love forced is not love, not even a shadow of love;
For lovers true have died in remorse or at a bivouac,
But dared not force, knowing it drizzles from above;
How could you think that you will rob my freedom
By such dastardly act of spraying hate across a sky? -
That must be burning you inside with a big, big why
Which you may not show but to self how can you lie?
Believe me, one day you will drink that acid you threw
With your bitter self under burns from hates of acid dew.

Saroj K Padhi

Across The Kathjodi Bridge

A monsoon gust carries us across the bridge
with its fresh sprinkles on faces, for hangover
of the night of deadly anguish, readily to release;
as we awake to morning's graces and prepare
in our stride to enjoy life to the lees
and traverse dreamy distances on way to progress
towards a new dawn, without a single cease;
look at the gush of new life into its lean stream
filling every little pore in dry banks, to the brim
and ripples in excitement lapping the drizzles
in tune with the new times, of a new song to sing;
as the river delights now at the riot of colours
cast on the face of the beaming eastern sky
that she tries to capture in her muddy eye,
dabchicks and waterfowls over the vast expanse,
like low-lying wet clouds, make their moves and fly
grey cranes drop feathers during delightful flights
when skylarks sing from a lofty high,
but swallows content, hide somewhere
without sobs, sighs or a desperate cry;
the bridge takes us across to the other side
where aromatic weeds play hide and seek
with an amorous wind that sways boughs of trees
and tries deftly to denude flowers that fight shy.

Saroj K Padhi

Adieu Spring

Hurt by the abrupt end of Spring
In our familiar garden
As I turn to Summer for a fling,
I listen to the hazy whimpers
Of burnt out mango buds
Engraved in soil under leafy covers.
Deciding not to be hurt by Summer's words
That cut like sharp beaks of hunter-birds;
Afraid, I hugged your thorny silence
To end my duress
But alas! I bleed like a wounded rose
On your lovelorn terrace -
To find my morning Sun too
Pushed into a pool of blood
Where Love as a casualty is made to croon
About moony whispers of past drowned in the new flood.
Music of Koels splits into broken notes
In nests of displaced crows who are now in search of proof,
Your words hit me like hailstones banging my asbestos roof,
Your looks grope the contours of my luminous mind
To locate some fragrant alien image roosting like still wind;
In the land of our love's ever widening mirage
I wander like dry foliage
And you too suffer from the noon Sun's rage
When both wait for a wild noon behind closed-doors-cage.

Saroj K Padhi

Adolescence

Walking past swaths of sand
on the bed of a dead river, I see you
dipping wings in a trickle of stray water,
like a winter bird in a puddle, cooling old burn
while seeking warmth from a demure Sun
in order to catch a few pangs of green fever;
footloose I come
to tread a pubescent bank
with its luscious grass and fresh blooms of flower
as the scent from a river-side garden
fills the air with visuals of bodies in union
like heaps of golden corn
lying carelessly tangled in a barn
and the silver trinket around your neck
dances like a drunken bee of the morn
at the low neck-line in the vale of youth
where under soft rays,
desire is quietly born
to fill all bosoms with honey of love
that overflows in dreams of buds
my supple mind so densely to adorn!

Saroj K Padhi

Affection

Why do I search for tear drops from the body of dry lips?
For long lost sighs inside a shrunken chest's dark creeks?
Wherefrom your tears flowed into a swollen heart's deeps;
When salt of my tears has hardened into rocky cheeks!
Drinks of salty tears have turned the soft lips into stones,
Lamps of heart have been marooned by heaps of bones
Where hope flickers inside dark caverns of clouded mind,
And shadows from a long past, of true love, to us remind -
Stories of past that jumped to death in the deep waters
Awake like sleeping night leaves into dawn's new flutters,
Making me drink from the glass of old memories' poison
And sing, being inside heaps of debris, of glory of fusion;
What is life that offers little respite from trap of affliction!
What this search from heaps of ashes, a grain of affection!

Saroj K Padhi

Aflutter

AFLUTTER

Aflutter like the wings of a bird in mid-air
at dusk looking for some place
for a short roost for the night somewhere
but unable to land after miles of flight
over rough terrain, bald mountains and thorny fence,
hostile borders, clouds, smokes and forests dense,
poised at a height
from which hardly can it alight;
suspended like a dot in moonbeam;
dangling like an aerial root that sucks dew
sprayed from an unknown stream;
I wait for the right moment for a descent
into some nest
where for a few hours I can rest,
without torture of thoughts for the day
without congestion
caused by farmers' burning hay,
without reek of outraged blood
from thighs of a bleeding Moon
and without the shadows of death
trailing the Sun
that's rife with desire
as an eternal rainbow to bloom!

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Saroj K Padhi

After Shock

Shocked out of our wits by jolts from Mother Earth
In the throes of imminent death,
Seated on a volcano at the dead end we die each second;
With scares of eruption paralyzing our minds,
Tremors of all sorts traumatizing each moment-
We are a generation of a half-decayed civilization
With our fancies overruling ethics of Nature
Our demonic desires destroying roots of our culture;
Who will save us now? Who will keep our habitat intact
When we have connived with the devil
To strike hard at our own roots, severing life in the shoots
To embrace so called material success?
Who can guide us now save our own conscience
Found faltering at the half blind end
Of life here in this unloved planet that we heartlessly rend
With our greed for more?
Are we a generation destined to bear with a life
With all kinds of ugly sore?
Let us sit down to think once more
Before at the cost of Nature we desire for more!
Then only perhaps Death's blow
Will be a little painless now

Saroj K Padhi

Afternoon Shadow

My afternoon shadow elongates
into the loving bosom of a dark night
like coils of smoke rising from city's garbage fire
that bend to merge into the lower sky
when a handful of stars blinker at the fringe
in dusk's weakening eye;
comets of past love shoot up
to slowly fizzle out into the air
as rosy dreams of farmers
get devoured by bustling planthopper pests;
leaves of crops flutter
like ineffectual wings,
buds falter under weight of smog
before they bloom, in twigs' shallow swings
still born corn crackles in silence
and sounds of growth whimper in stillness
as fields and farms are under fire;
let me wait for the half moon now
that promises to come with stars to brim
for me across blue ocean of love to swim.

Saroj K Padhi

Ale To Drink

Anyone there? Please come,
Stop this telltale heart from fluttering
Among the artificial branches of unreal city trees
Where nests of birds wounded by the last cyclone
Echo but sad songs of betrayal and desertion;
Where serious words uttered by intimate souls
Are swallowed by clatters of hollow affection;
Where clanks of wheels speak of empty progress
And emotion is exchanged across clinks of glasses
Without thoughts of the hapless lot of our civilization!

Prayer to my lord goes unheard in the din of clamours
Desires fade in body of wounded petals
Trails of dowry deaths confound conjugal relation;
Gutters drown the aroma of jasmynes
That promised breezy kisses at the end of dusty day
And drinks only douse us to temporary oblivion.

Come, give me a peg of your artificial ale of elation
For the night to end
Before again like a phoenix I rise in morn back to action.

Saroj K Padhi

Alive!

To live on is to go on in best of times, in worst of times
with oneself and others as well, believing in the best
though feeling low at times, pondering over the vanity
called life, yet clinging on to a grey leaf, like a tiny pest;

staying alive in this Corona-devastated world is a wonder
when your lips dry up in empty expectation of ecstasy
humans with mask draw away from love in fear of fever
and in company of inanimate things you dream of fantasy;

gone is the splendour of rainbow, the grandeur of all sight
the Moon looks on like a slut with hunger in shadowy eyes
war-planes scale over border, under a sky torn by fright,
yet with self I try to build on, more and more of creative ties;

thank God, I breathe on when many are in the ventilator
and flowers lovely bloom on, despite ghosts' empty flutter!

Saroj K Padhi

Alphabets Of Lust

Out of pity you swallowed me like a huge hungry python
of wild Chandaka, without qualms, a heartless predator you were,
I was a bunch of darkness under claws of your light playing on;

You hung from my cold rubber-like teats for sheer fun,
gnawed at my bones like a white tiger, tore the secret chamber
of my flesh, with the shards of your angry lust, turned on;

this frail vessel you emptied time and again to fill it with pittance
and left me dry like the vast corn fields of my land sans water
when in Winter, I'm burning like a Summer Sun, in nearest distance!

Saroj K Padhi

Am I In Love?

Furtive looks from your eyes seem to fill the void in my soul
like waters of sea sating invisible chasms in the shore,
like wind puffing the shrunken heart of sagging sails,
like a dash of vermillion spreading across the sky
that blushes in a new morn's expectation of a positive reply.
I swim into the translucent mist of a maddening scent
from million mango buds spilling message of consent;
dreams robust hijack me from me;
chugs of water at the root of a stream propel me
till I turn into a sweet little flowing river
with froth of a white desire foaming up to soul's brim;
hues from flowers taking on to rainbow-dream
inside the mist of your garden like eyes awoken,
where two cute birds colour their plumes
before to each other's heart they sweetly sing

Saroj K Padhi

Ambiguous

AMBIGUOUS

Expressions on your shrouded face, my Love

ambiguous like the vague shapes of distant hills

scuttled by a hastening dusk from the horizon

turn inscrutable like the sea that with love kills;

like a night bird in search of his nest, I too skim

its surfing surface, in light of stars in confusion

to wonder at trickle of tears behind each sad smile

when throttled, my desires prefer a holy ablution

in the shallow river of a drying subcutaneous smile

where you seem to work out the difficult sum of life

against heaps of burnt-out dreams, scorn, poor zeal

with alphabets of dead lust, odd numbers of strife;

come up you stars with your true radiance and thrill

come up you Moon to lend my Love's face its true feel.

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Saroj K Padhi

Ancient Earth

I'm a common plowman
with love of the ancient earth
whose brown body intoxicates me
with raw smell from its upturned soil;
I love to walk and walk in forest and groves
along tracks covered with fallen leaves,
with the scent from new born twigs
wafted by the gentle breeze;
in dark I love to listen to the soft sound
of seeds sprouting in my field
and as I wallow in mud and marsh
I think of the golden yield;
flowers breathe a strange peace into my soul
that sustains me thro' sad days,
hoppers and crickets singing from stubbles
lend me the seasonal joys;
I'm a plowman in love with husk, hay and grain;
with harsh sun, floods, storms and gentle rain.

Saroj K Padhi

Anger

In a fit of rage long back
I asked my little daughter,
"Do you know who I am? "
A tiny tot of six,
she bloomed a smile on her chubby cheeks
to add, "Yes, I know... you are Saroj...
son of so and so...."
in such a militant spirit
as if to cow me down
with her affected style
accent on each syllable,
with twists and turns
as she used then to babble;

the situation was eased soon
by the intervention of her mom
who said, " Mr husband,
she is too small ... please don't frown."

Later in a cooler moment
when I asked her
how she could be so fearless
when I was angry
and expected her
to be either calm or afraid,
she simply smiled and said,
"I answered your question.
That's all."
There I thought how beautiful
life can be in eyes of innocence,
when to understand simple things
our complex nature, lacks patience!

Saroj K Padhi

Aroma Of Spring

Fragrance from bodies of buds
In the deep mango grove,
Under a Spring sun's bower,
Thick, Intense, but mischievous,
Overpowers the dangling air,
Muzzling its present desire,
Under weight of an overhanging mist,
To blow away in small wisps of wind
Leaving the garden behind,
To escape from an asphyxia
Caused by mangoes' odorous hysteria.
Petals from flaming Palasa drop off
At sharp pecks from birds in ecstasy,
To reel in the throes of a sweet pain
As they are sucked again and again.
Down they fall onto the heads
Of dithering jasmines
Dazed In their light oozes,
Before they fall to be casually sucked by ants
On a leafy and grassy ground,
With shiny drops of dew around.
Your jasmine soaked body
Has shed petals of night's sensuous dream
Awaking to the wonders of a sensual Spring
Steeped in mischievous aroma
From zillions of mango buds
That scribble endless love lyrics
On barks, petals and leaves.

Saroj K Padhi

Ashen Kash Flowers

Look here, we're still there
where you saw us months back-
beside the hill and craggy paths,
in pools, puddles and tanks
on swaths of fallow lands
and wild river banks-
almost everywhere we're there
but without the old beauty or flair
burnt under the sun's hard glare-
our vibrant white faces
tinged with an ashen hue
though washed by morning fog and dew
nourished by the same sunlight and air
but looking like grey masses
of scattered bones-
brown, befuddled and bare
without the charm of October days
when we were Goddess Durga's sweet lyre!

Now we have learnt a way of living and loving
we've matted our petals
like locks of yogi's unkempt hair,
grown indifferent to fog,
smokes and harsh rays
and to return early to earth,
for a rebirth,
our soul so fervently prays!

Saroj K Padhi

At Fifty Four

At fifty four
Dreams hardly endure
Under facts' hard hammer;
Butterflies lose colour
And faint in the heat of perplexities galore;
Emotions ache
Inside dried up joints of a fragile body;
Feelings sink deeper
Into inner rivers of heart
In search of a silent sea;
And sentiments grow louder than before.
A wearied mind wanders on body of wreckage
Trying to gather bits of values
And draw all around closer,
As love's voices grow fainter than ever.
Past is an acquaintance now
Facing me on special occasions;
Present, a friend without inhibitions;
And a companion of illusions is my future -
All carrying me farther from things and beings
Without any decipherable grammar.

Saroj K Padhi

At The Lidder Stream

At Pahalgam you sat beside the Lidder river
throwing occasional pebbles into the stream
when rainbow trouts jumped to kiss the Sun;
their fins blazing
in the sizzling fire of your latest fantasies
about moments of intimacy in the cool breeze
under the newly procured pink Kashmir shawl
with red roses silently beaming all over,
as I lay on the flowery meadow of the shepherds' valley
looking absentmindedly into the shifting wet clouds,
and at the snow-clad peaks assuming a golden hue,
our horses ran unbridled into the cup-shaped glacier
wherefrom trickles the liquid glory of the Paradise
whose roots stretch out
into infinite flows of life, love and devotion
shrouding the ice-stalagmite lingam at Amarnath,
that waxes and wanes with an intoxicating moon,
in a dark mystery across miles of an inhospitable terrain-
of uneven rocks, deep forests, dancing streams
thro' which we had to travel
to reach this temporary state of a blissful dawn
to achieve which all through we strived;
and as we landed up on the grassy bed
of a remotest valley
where ice, water and vapors of clouds commingled
to give us that soulful love of a grassy lawn
where million rabbits of unpretentious love
jumped, hopped and played with lots of cool fun.

Saroj K Padhi

At Times I Feel

AT times I feel I don't exist
I feel I'm a specter, a shade,
a nebula wandering in hazy light
a shadow getting lost
into a fading twilight,
a lone mote in the vast cosmos
driven by forces unknown,
running out of sight;
drifting toward a horizon
with dreams
fading like stars in day light;
neither do I feel the weight of body
nor the heat of a gruelling mind
nor an aching heart;
rather a ray of vision
with eyes purblind,
floating like a foam in an ocean,
a glimmering speck in the wind.

Saroj K Padhi

Autumn Fever

A depraved Monsoon signs off stealthily
leaving behind a half-starved earth
that looks up
for a few more drops from a blank sky,
when Autumn silently takes over
to breathe quieter moments in lap of dwarf days,
flaunting brighter stars
and a lovelier moon in heaven's eye
with love of pretty hues
of flora running high;
world grows intimate
with endless gossips during fests
under cotton clouds in misty evenings,
walks on forest paths in mild mornings
as music of leaves lifts the spirits to fly;
O how much I long to catch a fever
as the wintry wind knocks my door
with promise of rest under a warm cover
this full moon night
as maidens worship the moon
leave me alone
to enjoy the ecstasy of Autumn shiver.

Saroj K Padhi

Avian Angels

As the avian angels swerve past me
In dawn's twilight to shock me with delight
I suffer from a temporary fright;
But alas! The grains I scattered on my roof
Miss their loving, penetrating sight;
For the flurry of their excited wings scatter
Pearls of misty blinding dreams
That overshadow the Earth
Making them revel as they fly
In thoughts of yester night
With its dizzy romantic height-
On the smooth glade in the jungle
Where their great grandparents danced
With the sweet children of their nocturnal desires
In the halo of thin streaks of sun light
Streaming in thro' dense foliage
Awaking the forest to the bliss of dawn's
Elevating delight.
Look how hastily does the whitish Moon slowly alight
From the steep steps of the sky
To watch, and then dance away with clouds
Into a new sky strewn with petals of roses,
Burning all bright!

Saroj K Padhi

Awake

You adore, worship me as a goddess
in dawns of your strange, quaint, male mood
when you feel how imperative it is to show
that you, like an angel, can be noble and good;

dispense doses of such lethal love
that obscures my embroiled self behind sun-light
inducing a life-long sleep in middle of the deep
where neither can I swim nor to the shore alight;
you drag me under veils to the slave market
where you sell my body in kilos and soul in grams
but love to sit in judgment over minor ruptures
when it comes to love and all other social shams;
you try to nip me in the bud as a fetus in the womb
and if by chance I survive, you carve my early tomb
trying to make me a handy doll, speechless and dumb
so that to your fond passions and pressures I succumb;
you employ your wit to turn my kind against myself
so that each of us perishes like a lone embattled self;
but your turn is gone, your politics is outworn
there as a new woman I'm getting born
to fight my battle for my own sake and for you as well
to open all eyes to the morass where we sadly dwell,
and to heights of a new, just civilizational joy to swell
with true love and peace for the tumult in soul to quell.

Saroj K Padhi

Awake Thus

Why am I awake thus, this morning?
To shafts of sunlight sucking from lips
of a grief-stricken river in furrows
of her endless quivers after night's burning fever?
To the merger of wounds of ancient love, of crumpled
petals in soul's pockets, into the scintillating beams
of a morning caught in Sun's sweet, new shiver?
To smokes of clouds writing your name
again and again on the changing screen of the sky
with many 'whys' in my chest's silent shiver?
To the bloom of roses in Spring's white navel
that overshadow wistful beams of million moons
inside the heart of a ruefully murmuring river?
To mild blushes on my own cheeks
as Spring comes with jasmines in hand asking for
the secret unpublished poem of my new love affair?

Saroj K Padhi

Awake To Dream-Ii

s it true dear that one is awake
when some loving one keeps dreaming of her or him?

In the dead of this night is this awakeness dear
due to your dream of me soaring there?
Dreams of scented flowers in sway inside ivory towers,
your desires riding rainbows of my blossoming youth
in thousand colours of imagined union-
flashing in the eyes of a teary sun
when dark clouds rush out of the sky's warm sighs
there my head, loaded with thoughts, in your lap lies...

keeping me awake to your cravings for moony moments
on the waves of the glorious, glitter of sea
with your bangles ringing to the tune of wind in tree
of your nectarine lips turning me into night's black bee...

your dream of drinks of vanilla
in the fountain of my flowing love
under the bower of a star-studded sky;
of steamy 'momos' in college street nearby;
of nonstop sweet nothings over drinks during outings;
of things sublime and flings with kitsch
of a continuous play of love's old itch...

propelling us to heights of ecstasy
and nights of reflection on what should have been
and what things really have been...! ! !

Saroj K Padhi

Away

Away from you

I am into an abyss:

of dark clouds about to burst into rain,
of tears drying up in hearts of trickling rivers of Summer,
into the thick of nameless Wintry fog in its endless shower,
into depths of oceans thirsting for a drink of simple water,
into spaces among sands weaving dreams about a new sun every hour
whereto I sink in search of my name, address and identity
when you seem to engulf all my time, space and reality.

Away from you

I'm into the innermost heart of all other things and beings:

into the hunger of cattle that drives them to sods on riverbed,
into the cries of crows at tree tops in the graveyard of my hamlet
where my humble villagers in their death beds are softly laid,
into the peace of blossoms white, blue, violet, pink, green and red
trying in their endless sways and swings a Hot Spring to woo and wed.

Away from you

I'm into the heights of a few things too:

I'm scattered into a few dots of blue in the chest of a luminous Sky;
into the brood of dreaming birds in their post-coital ecstasy's high
into the spiraling smokes of love from trees into the breast of Sun
into the echoes from caves of mountains sheltering lovely beasts of fun
into the silence of rocks folding their invisible hands into prayer
into the joy of yogis almost dead in the depth of bliss in shower.

Saroj K Padhi

Balcony

Mists of sorrow on the face of Spring morning
are wiped by eager hands of a sentient Sun
as a new wind of gentle love keeps softly blowing,
when dawn is intent on healing all ancient wounds
in body of trees, under bower of heaven glowing;
old shades of misunderstandings among neighbors
vanish in quick succession, under the touch of light
as dark of Winter recedes from the corner of mind
with honey bees' buzz of new song away from sight;
there the birds of love sing in the garden croft
with an intense aroma from mango buds set afloat
and from my balcony I watch bulls grazing the tuft
when butterflies' wings with new dreams are aloft.

Saroj K Padhi

Battered Wife

Bitterly battered by my most beloved husband,
I helplessly cling to my one-year old doll of a baby
For balm to my deeply etched bruises and burns;
Knowing well the diplomacy of words in future store
For my dying spirit, in their Macho twists and turns -
Devoid of slightest mercy you moved your robust arms
To ravage the delicate petals of my body and thoughts-
Those arms that took vow over sacred fire to guard me
How could they move like swords to inflict such grievous hurts!
Your hands that promised to catch stars and moon
Now clutch handfuls of mud as worthy flings of wedding boon!
Now I keep asking to myself what is this love
That made me breathless during coitus!
What this bond, this battle
The burns, bruises and this sad hiatus!

Saroj K Padhi

Battle Of Breaths

Million frictions of various kinds relating to matters

petty, big, domestic, familial, social as well as official

unpaid school bills, chokes in toilet pipes, foul gutters

fused cutouts, forgotten marriage parties, blunt refusal;

see how tendrils of passion recoil at the thousand denials

of hectic marital life with its sickening hastes and wastes,

one French kiss a day is a dream and emptied nuptial ties

threaten to crumble into pieces thro' partners' silly quests;

when the other (wo) man has started looking more seductive

and children are big enough to freely pursue own interests

when chemicals are derailed on the platform of true mating

one needs to sit back awhile and think of renewing the zests;

then sensual Moon of awareness blooms in the bedroom sky

and thro' intimate battle of breaths, ties fly to a new high.

Saroj K Padhi

Beguiled

I'm in love with such beautiful Evenings on run
That pass thro' uncertain nights of casual love with moon,
Sometimes ending up with vermilion of Sun
On their foreheads, acquiring new recognition all so soon;
Here images of trees in the pool are more real
Than promises made by creatures of flesh and blood,
For they keep on constantly trying to sip at the depth of pool
When Evenings change the nature of human blood;
Images merge into the sky despite the layer of moss
On surface of pool's water cooling anarchy of passion in wind,
When Evenings are restless like insecure stars at loss
Of wit, in face of temptations made by false suns at the hind;
O God why do you put man in such situations of beguiling mid air
Forcing him to sway like a hopeless plantain leaf under Sun's ire!

Saroj K Padhi

Behind The Temple

A trail of clouds uncertain about rain
hangs around neck of belief in pain.

Standing silent at the back of the temple we see
how wishes transpire from body of offerings,
miles stretch out from the tongues of desire;
in the stubborn bodies of ancient stones,
and from fragile limbs of mire in mute prayer;

doors of our temple are not open yet;
with wait for fire from high spirits
dormant like layers of sands wet
they look heavenward for heights.

Are we ready for the front door?

It's a terrible question that continues to haunt,
so often as we try to a false appearance flaunt
in our misplaced love's wild, wild hunt,
for some peace that lies at the root of mind
but not at the edge of our faith grown so blunt.

Saroj K Padhi

Bent Coconut

A mute, black song bird
ruffled by an unkind wind
alights to the half-uprooted bent coconut tree
that hangs onto the bed of tuft like an etherized patient,
looks up to the dim, demure Sun
from under the curtain of blackish fog
perhaps for some new words in the wind to take wings
as zinnias free their petals from the asphyxiating trunk-hug
and of an imminent storm, harshly the crow sings;

I don't know where to move this cold December morn
under the weight of thoughts heavy like the mist
when pachyderms stray into my hamlet to devour corn
where like stacks of hay people lie
before on pyre of despair they would burn;

I move on the river bank, wading thro' sands like a poor hawker
with my coin-pouch filled with outdated memories
in search of some stray customer who would like
to buy the whispers of my sad feels, hues of lost love, bitter- sweet agonies;

the 'Phani-hit bent coconut of my holy land
musters courage to rise as beaming flowers start nodding in light
I hope to meet my customer at the bend of sea's mouth
where fairies from Moon-land bathe in love's true light!

Saroj K Padhi

Between Your Ponytails

Katak,
Why do you always try to cage me
between your two pony tails
in their cascade-like flow
down to vast fertile lands of imagination
where I am a captive to the moist musk
of million flowers bursting with affection?

Why does your sandy mud stick to my tired feet
like obstinate memories,
like dust on old cowries
with anguish of adolescent love so replete?

Why do you always haunt me
like a youthful dream in the corridors of eternal Time
turning me into a dumb lover
of your ethereal beauty in morning mist,
your holy chants from a devoted priest
singing the glory of Goddess Durga
in Autumn's pleasant evenings
when Goddesses Chandi, Banadurga and Gadachandi
offer flowers of joyous blessings?

Your heights awe me
with enchanting views of the Mahanadi
from the steps of Lord Siddheswar's temple
where my beloved God-mother
offers ambrosia from heaven
as my steps to a sweet world above does quicken.

Saroj K Padhi

Bewildered Butterfly

I wander here like a wounded soldier of the last battle
with my battered breath, thro' the bent grass to scuttle,

without strength to scale the lowest height to a flower
my rain-ravished wings fumble in the wind, shorn of color,

flooded with some weird smells from many a broken heart
my rain-filled gut swells like wet log, ere sinking into dirt,

I know not how to carry weight of misfortunes of humanity
without home, food, marooned by the waters of uncertainty,

heaps of broken boughs, rotten leaves, stale water on rise
glimmer but with little hope of rescue in the distressful eyes,

now from nowhere Sun suddenly flashes to fill my dying lungs
as from stacks of withered flowers, for honey my soul longs!

Saroj K Padhi

Bier Bearer

The bier moves ahead
couched on kins' loving shoulders
with its weight slowly growing,
(it's believed that corpses weigh heavier)
hushed by wailings of near and dears,
teetering over tottering steps
yet sure of its going;

without a return look at life,
back from shore,
to pits of unknown depths ebbing
as the body hides under heaps of flowers
and the face under a blistering sun
into a wilderness, keeps sinking;
smokes from incense sticks on it
like intriguing questions, keep coiling
when a voice emerges from the wind
and is heard saying
'Stop me not from my way to the pyre
where logs ready before my birth
with the lure of a holy fire
to twist the tale of my suffering
into a happy ending.
I'm awake to the white whispers now
in my dead ears ringing
as with each step towards the pyre
nearer to Him I'm turning
like a beloved into her lover melting;
I know after a while my beloved bearers
from apparition to real, go away
leaving me here where the last desire
that lurks in my ash is to sway
like a blade of grass
as I turn into common clay.'

Saroj K Padhi

Black July

There is a silence at the depth of the soul
which mind can hardly fathom,
nor can reasoning reach out
to the root of its agony at the bottom
whose invisible shores elongate to infinity,
blotting out the vision of eternity;

the waves in the heart can partly apprehend
the texture of its undefined identity
that take on all attempts to glimpse its beauty;

fumes of discontent rise up into the sky
darkening the clouds of black July,
deaths galore surround this dying animal
and riches hardly can any happiness buy;

Inward I turn like a turtle to dive deep inside
to find the changing nature of self and time,
with a fragile protective shield against the virus
to brood over some lines of hope for you to rhyme.

Saroj K Padhi

Black Money

What can white money get for you?
Not even sufficient food for your family
Forget about pleasure trips, get-togethers
Parties and presentations
Not even an expensive dress for your spouse
They say and live in utter discontent
Always hoping for a windfall
And gloss over black money
Eulogizing its potency and power
To influence people to an extent
Where nothing else can with it vie
Placing money at the ultimate high.
Raising the respect of the hoarder
The expectations of the receiver
Increasing saleability in the bazaar
Enhancing all prospects too far.
'You are backward' they say
And shoo your ideology away
With such words where
You come to ask yourself —
If all this loud talk about
Honesty and integrity,
Cleanliness and morality
Not end up with a big,
Very big why?

Saroj K Padhi

Black Pagoda At Night

His overstressed aging Khondalite body
over time grown powerless and imbecile
stirs, as stars cropping up high above try
to retrace the lost link of sands awhile;

cracks in granite wheels clank and cringe
as half-moon comes new woes to impinge,
horses at halt look up in absence of whip
as the charioteer Aruna is inside in sleep;
and cold wind from casuarinas of Chandrabhaga,
the mythical river lost to live in ancient saga,
of Time's new elegy, does sadly harp on
as damsels on his walls wane and wail on
at acts of indignity on girls of new generation
drowning trumpets of elephants subdued by lion;

A waning moon declines now on the firmament
as she evades dark clouds in a fight vehement
to meekly wink at his dim, down, drooping soul
with dancers, warriors and lovers in their role;
and sends shock waves down the shrinking spine
as all motifs and reliefs, for new body do pine,
through wailings of mid-air night birds in tears
piercing chest of the night with unseen spears,
sad thoughts come floating from the sea's heart
about demise of Dharama after his last brave act;

and about acts of violence, horror and blood shed
with which our common, silly daily life is overlaid:
the loanee farmers who betrayed by failing crops
gulped down cheap bottles of poisonous insecticide,
atrocious acts of college ragging and brutal homicide,
of nightly drunken blind races along the marine drive
of misdirected, lost youths without urge to retrieve;

it's too much now to bear these manacles of time
in vortex of bantering wind from coast's sand and slime
as I silently move to the dance mandap where damsels
emerge from walls with their anklets' soft, sweet rhyme

with a promise of release from this melancholic clime!

Saroj K Padhi

Blooms In A Pathless Wood

This morning my dream barged in on me

like a whip of air from some ancient land

stirring an old spark from ash of memory-

a Spring's new touch with her breezy hand;

there million roses bloomed on her cheek

turning me into a nameless wandering freak

to fly and flutter thro' the pathless wood

like a nestless lone bird with swinging mood;

entwined with cobwebs of desire to smell dew

in bosoms of flowers fighting shy of Sun rays,

I staggered on as leaves fallen restless grew

to smell agony of fog-burnt buds lying in daze;

long lines of leaves burned in smoldering heaps

when thorns in rosebush pricked my finger tips

I know my salvation lay in the tongues of flame

but a few soulful pauses hold a key to the game;

Neem buds like diamonds cascade from heaven

blooms of Spring in pathless wood life do enliven.

Saroj K Padhi

Boat

A leaking boat at a relatively less haunted ghat
half-sunk to be anchored to an eroding bank,
gently swept by the lapping ripples for a restart
but lost to a world of beams-dreamy and dank;

when a pubescent Moon blushes at her selfie in river
filling spines of silvery streams with unknown shiver
and the cool breeze across my mad, marooned chest
recalls yore's golden moments of love's first fever;

the boatman on the other side perhaps thought
I would float back with oar of soul in basket of wood
but drunk with love of water, I'm simply at naught
a stranger in my own world, a queer creature of mood;

my salvation perhaps lies in this beam-induced oblivion
as I drown in love with my own shadows, in magic union!

Saroj K Padhi

Boatman

The leaking boat trapped in the marshes
is repaired and rescued to the ghaat in the bank
where the boat man is ready with his oar
with an overdue promise to ferry me across ripples
to that estuary with a silent sea shore
where the tides hug a sparkling stream
and where harsh reality merges with dream;

I will deposit the runoff of my ego
in the silt of the river, by the sea to be taken in,
silently flow into the confluence
where fresh water is sipped by the salty tongue
of a greedy sea thumping in
and be a particle in the flow of waters joining
in rhythm of winds, wings and glistening fin.

Saroj K Padhi

Boring Without You

Life is simply boring without you
A loiter in the corridors of memory
When shadows dance on the walls of time
To the tune of Moon's changing mood
Sometimes sad, some other time rude
Sometimes pleasant,
Sometimes just good!

A long wait for a wink from the star
Of your glimmering look in the mirror
Of an old lone Summer's pitiable sight
Sometimes blooming jewels in the face of the sky
Sometimes so dull but sometimes so bright! !

Now the Moon smiles here
In the still waters of your eyes' shining little pond
Spellbinding me to memories of your smiling away
To a land far away from my gentle touch and this eye
That stretches along lost love's past lone Highway! ! !

Saroj K Padhi

Breath

Let me sit back, take the right posture
and try to breathe like the boughs inhaling Spring
without a lump in the nose,
and entreat the Sun a few rays to fling
on carcasses corrugated by Covid
and reveal the poverty of science
in healing mankind in throes of pain,
when cruelties on animals go on as before
by some humans gone so insane;

let me wait without joy in the bones
or laughter in the flesh,
without drops in eyes or feigned smile on face
to fill my cells with ecstasy of rain
at the end of a futile day
when phantom stars sing in night's tired vein
and the Moon overpowers the dark clouds
in her endless fight her real beauty to regain!

Let me sit down like a roadside Budha
without the mythical mirth in my marrow
to seek in the midst of din and smoke
a way out of all encircling sorrow
with my mask tucked in
and with a mind sanitized by a big zero!

Saroj K Padhi

Bride

What pearls do dangle from your lips!
Which stars of the evening sky
did you kiss! !
What dreams
do hide beneath the curves
of your belying cheeks!
Confide in me, O bride of the night
I want not the thought of this
sweet moment to miss
when this golden time has
come knocking the doors
of Love's heart
with showers of pure bliss!

Saroj K Padhi

Brief

Winter was there for a brief spell here
setting fire to the dry twigs of my desire
that lay in the arena of your wet longings,
wilted leaves straightened as they burned
twigs twittered about the warmth of your hold
sparks from flames spilled out as fumes of gold
rainbows danced under kisses from a morning sun
as it drank nectar of fog from lips of a green earth
and like rain, it was a season of many a joyous birth;
caterpillars took to wings after sojourn in damp cells
and birds of colorful plumes danced in our dry vales,

cocoon burst open to vindicate flight of colors in air
yes, we had our share of winter when it was there;
the slow sample Spring blowing now with a mix of chill
reminds us of Winter and its fiery, frolicsome thrill.

Saroj K Padhi

Broken Journey

How to toe the line to the redemptive sky?
How to approach thee in this damp, dark night
when bogged down by a derelict body, my sprit wavers
like a severed, torn kite lost in the blue spaces of hazy horizon
and blown by a miscreant wind, my limbs fritter like paper
onto the surface of a roaring sea engulfed by temporary oblivion?

My brothers of kiln factory, burned by acid, wail in dark dispensary
when creaking speed claims a heavy toll on grave highways,
the old totter theirways to the brokers for a paltry pension,
golden paddy grains give in to the wrath of rain
relentless terror hits at the spine of the nation
and democracy wades thro' the mud of politics and blind religion!

A difficult time indeed for initiating a walk to thee
with our pious breath caught in the overhanging smog,
when rain stripped of romance pulverizes seeds of earth,
oil-lampssearch for better light to see the face of love
and overdone reeds of heart grope for a piece of music
to rise from the corner of some unseen cove!

Lend me your hand dear, give me the courage to prove,
give wings to my words towards true freedom to move.

Saroj K Padhi

Bunch Of Beams

The petals of your jasmine lips
don a bunch of moon beams
at the secret hour of the night
when dark in the body screams
to assign colors to visible forms
silencing all inner storms:
your voice pervades soul of birds
at midnight giving the final call
before into a sleep they fall,
as the moon tries to scale heights
to accommodate our new flights;
fold me into a flower in the bower
of your braid tumbling to your lover
smell my blooming thoughts for you
before I tumble to my grave's cover.

Saroj K Padhi

Bunch Of Dreams

The petals of your jasmine lips
don a bunch of moon beams
at the secret hour of the night
when dark in the body screams
to assign colors to visible forms
silencing all inner storms:
your voice pervades soul of birds
at midnight giving the final call
before into a sleep they fall,
as the moon tries to scale heights
to accommodate our new flights;
fold me into a flower in the bower
of your braid tumbling to your lover
smell my blooming thoughts for you
before I tumble to my grave's cover.

Saroj K Padhi

Bunches Of Flames

Trees ablaze with love's fire or studded with blooms of sweet desire!
These rising flames tell all about the passionate Spring's story entire;
As a boy as I climbed to their topmost branches, sucking in fresh juices
Watching river Birupa, with songs tumbling out of her secret sluices,
Weaving dreams about my new golden ideas of more and more loots
from difficult bodies of thorny bushes yielding berries from shoots,
after drink from the river in love's simple quiver sparkling in flashes
drenching face as I bent down to slap the waters to cute wild splashes.
Do not know when the flaming Palasa grew up so fast as to be abuzz
with scandals about my love doing rounds in their aroused branches,
in hums of wild bees, in songs of breezes and birds' excited screeches
in whispers of some dwarf trees around, about my heart's secret itches.
The forest is awake now to many such stories of new love being written,
in hearts of new lovers drawn to dwell in such secret branches smitten-
by arrows from God of love at the advent of a new Spring and spreading
the myth of Goddess Parvati cursing God of Fire who had disturbed her
in her privacy with her consort Lord Shiva and incurred her fiery anger.
Hence the God in flames of petals keeps writing stories of love in air
And keeps ablaze in million hearts love's time-old sweet, lovely fire.

Saroj K Padhi

Burning In Sun

O how rare is the beauty of this soft burning
under the warm caresses of a mid-day Sun!
The luxury of melting as penitent thorns of Winter
morn, into beauteous petals of noon-time blossom!

when the shady bower under your golden brows
showers the musky dew of passion into the chest of day,
I love to burn like stalks of paddy lying on stubble fields
without thoughts about the drought-hit poor farm yields;

the butterflies love to carry the heat of the Sun on wings
before landing onto the swaying little, twittering twigs-
of sunflowers that dream of overflowing honey
at the edge of Winter, with the onset of million Springs;

shores echo with parties under the canopy of grey clouds
as little crabs dance around us on the warm sands
and nights' sighs are subsumed by the titillating sea-wind
that quickens the Sun-light thro' our freezing hands!

Saroj K Padhi

Call

How long and which lexicon of love
will I search
to recover that invisible word
you softly uttered
under the shimmer of moon light;
when our arms ached
in the embrace of a charmed night
and longings hugged climax
at the end of tears in half light;
you were a picture
of complete surrender then
and I, an interminable flow,
in the shadow of trees
we were like fallen leaves
waiting for the wind's gentle blow;
in the magic of that moment,
we smacked a peculiar silence
under intermittent shower of dew
when onlooker stars grew dazed
to fizzle out into a number very few;
you called me by a strange name then
that now I fail to remember
but it had drawn us into the depth
of our souls, where we lay together.

Saroj K Padhi

Call For Freedom

Enough blood has been shed, dear Netaji
but where is that promised freedom?
The much hyped, jinxed word sounds hollow now
as democracy is caught in a conundrum!
Ideals of noble souls who fought so much for it
are erased to raise statues of imposters
the young are fed with fads, fetishes and fashions
as virtues and values rot to wallow in festers;
honor gets compromised for mere money and gold,
labor cheap is bound by serfdom without liberation
hapless farmers, ragged students, poor rape victims
are driven to death by suicide in utter desperation;
no doubt a miniscule celebrates its benediction
but citizenry is yet to rise from stupor of contradiction!
On the brink of regression we pray for your return
with you to taste glorious freedom during our sojourn.

Saroj K Padhi

Catch If You Can

Catch if you can when you want to win,
Pearls of silence at the heart of noise
confounding reason from all sides;
the breeze of breath beneath all storms
when dust of destruction there rises;
catch if can when you want to win,
defeat by the pointed grey horns
when caught at the edge of success
and the pounding heart sadly burns;
catch if you can when you want to win
tides of dark levitated emotions
in the sure net of your inner smiles
with sponge of love to soak tears
as you walk your lonely miles.

Saroj K Padhi

Caterpillars And The Tree

The caterpillars of your desire
swarm around, from top to the end
where the hungry root pierces the ground:
their wild hands wallowing in dark
in stillness of the night without much sound
on my gnarled trunk's dried-up bark
in search of some cozy place to nest
and build the cocoon of choice to hibernate;
their spiny bristles tickle me a little,
their whip-like organs they too wiggle
as they suck a green toxin from under the skin
and scare predators in their high-pitched whistle;
red ants of your lust fight many a bloody battle

at the line of control, to save your dream
and spread the good news
of your taking to wings of many new hues;
hence in the silence of this wintry night
under ceaseless fall of dew
I'm waiting for stir of that freedom in my leaves
that will bring Spring to me and Spring to you.

Saroj K Padhi

Chariot Fest

As the morning Sun kisses the thatch eaves
of my lone cottage on the vulnerable shore
and the crow on the rain-drenched casuarina
asks me to open the long shut damp wooden door,
I draw the chariot of this body with my Lord
in the sanctorum, along sprawling sands of time
across million shells, with crabs sinking into slime
and a breeze smacking of hapless creatures marine,
the waves turn still harsher with louder throws
of their painfully true voice from depths of eternity
about phases of undesired pauses and uncertainty-
in the journey we have to make across time
with our love of flora and fauna changing shades
in tune with clouds changing rhythm and rhyme
till we reach the door of the sanctum that leads
to a redeeming silence at the end of life sublime!

Saroj K Padhi

Child Inside

A child sleeps inside us
like a winter frog in hibernation;
a submerged instinct too deep
to swim up as a clear passion!

Sometimes when it's late
and I crawl out of bed
in my blind urge,
in my desire's dotty surge
to secretly see the moon
from the roof;
she follows from behind,
and tugs my ears
though causing little pain
I feel, I'm a child again;

when children are seen playing
in a puddle, splashing waters
or I'm in a game of football
under hours of showers-
smearing the sandal soil
on each other's face divine,
we all are kinds of kids
who for love simple, always pine;

when my children teach me
how to take a screen shot
on my old mobile,
the sheer delight of such a shot
makes me feel I'm a child, idiot;

when beams burst upon us
like tigresses of the lusty night
and has sweetly torn us into shreds,
we long to recoil to moments of past
where we played couple-game in dust!

Saroj K Padhi

City Walk

The street dogs sleeping peacefully
on sands spread sparsely
beside a busy city road
do not bother
about the noisy headaches
going on inside my overstressed head
when bliss lands on them
from some unknown agents above
to this family of three
snoring under the shadow
of a moon-lit tree;
college guys smoking
on the veranda of Paris bakery
do not bother about Spring
secretly injecting juice
into supple mangoes
that hang like nocturnal bats;
my wife wipes her hands with tissue
after a few sips of cappuccino
in a middle-class hotel
when I notice a red rose
aflake on her lips.

Saroj K Padhi

Cloud

A cluster of wet desires on float
bent on whetting the thirst
of the Earth and the sky
in form of heaven's high drink
its soft cotton body for fairies
like pillows galore lie
as they on wings downwards sink
on boats of air in multiple hues
under the canopy of a sun
to dance in endless fun
we also love it in its hue and cry
as it breaks into drops
rushing to kiss seedlings
that under brown earth lie
you form the luscious breasts of the sky
for flow from which we mortals pine and die.

Saroj K Padhi

Cobweb

A dark dungeon of desires
at the edge of the jungle
feeding on memories' corpses
caught in the dank threads of Time
as our heart towards an awkward silence
round the clock races;
webs of wild love
woven by a huge black spider
whose intricate sticky cells
sometimes break
but instantly rebuild themselves
like a magician's wishes;
to catch you unaware
when you prod on
to find the final meaning
like the glow-worms on the riverside
trying to read the lines
carved on the waters by anguished lovers
in their hearts' million pines
and hardly the mystery uncovers!
Why are you afraid of these webs
that oft' stick on to your skin
like some unwanted thoughts
during a prayer or a reflection
as you move on and on
before reaching the desired destination!

Saroj K Padhi

Colors

The butterfly fallen from grace
searches for colour in dark night
from thicket to grass
and from grass to the branches again
wandering like shadow of a star
on the terrace of moonlight,
in quest of lost identity —
the pollen grains dropped
into an unknown vacuity
where colours are simple dust
covering the face of leaves
heaving in dark;
to this fall of pollen grain
let me hark
to its soft murmurs in rain
before I weave a new spectrum
from mind's sweet hues
and from heart's old pain,
to cascade from beams of moon
and glitter of stars
to the wings of the butterfly
caught under the bash of rain.

Saroj K Padhi

Compassion

A clear stream of pure love across the green valley of life
throbbing with an invisible expression of a kind concern
for every living being engaged in ceaseless, endless strife;
a ripple of demure desire silenced in the body of a mellow river
withdrawing to sleep at the bend of her bank in the depth of night
but sleepless before the night bird's twitters at the brood's hunger;
a flow of relentless energy in all forms replenishing bees and trees
filling sun light and moon beams with a priceless treasure trove
that gives strength and urges us to survive after all calamities.

Saroj K Padhi

Coy Cooing

There was a time
when the thousand blooms
on your face
even in shadow
of Spring's presence
rocked the Sun's heart
with riots of color
ripples of ecstasy
and rhymes of love;
inflaming its young body
to dive into the cold sea
of nocturnal sob
and still your petals shied away
with the help of wind
from white kisses of flying dove
but now the scene has changed
turning blooms into brides' hearts
where my lusty heart dare not tread
for fear of birth of imminent love
prodding a poet's heart
to prefer a self-consuming silence
inside the nest of a softly cooing dove!

Saroj K Padhi

Crawl

CRAWL

As I crawl between hell and heaven
in a dark pit on this earth
like a distorted image of the ideal, crestfallen,
not knowing how to distinguish
between the garish glitter and holy light,
with the untimely storms enhancing my fright

and flicker in the encircling gloom
sans the power to attain selfhood
like a lone lost lamp in fear of losing flame
beleaguered by wind's many a foul game-

hounded by crackle of conflicting voices
tormented by cacophony of distracting opinions
and burdened with the need to take a decision,
I fall back on your image for the right directions;

not knowing when some unseen hands wipe out
the pervading gloom with whispers to burn more
for brighter look, before as phantoms they fade out,
there as a speck of dust I rise, heavenward to soar

without need to look back on image's uncertainty
or the wealth of long accumulated worldly identity
to be swallowed by the tides of the sea of your love
that engulfs million Moons and Suns with impunity!

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Saroj K Padhi

Craziest Lover

Katak,
You're my craziest love
in spite of your many betrayals
and tough trials
you're my sweet pain,
my cherished freedom,
and my desired chain.
I'm a pebble under the waters
of your rivers,
rolling on propelled
by the sands of your desires
with my lust for the contours
of your sensuous body
changing into flowers inside my stony loins
before adorning your shabby groins.
Caught in the cobwebs of time
the butterfly of my dreams
wiggles before being devoured by your hunger
sizzling in the huts hemming the flanks;
I love to nestle like a runaway lover
In the burrows of your quicksands
offering recluse to my wild pranks
with the offer of the elemental water of your love
and the balm of your breeze on the banks.

Saroj K Padhi

Crazy

Why do I go so crazy when I see the Moon?
Why does my heart for her so secretly croon?
Look how the crazy Moon tumbles out of heaven
like a daydream, all the time to turn me insane
as she always does, sweetly her face she braces
and fills her cheeks with unusual hues of blushes
like tint of pink rose on lily even under hot noon
and her tears echo but footfalls of a lost monsoon ?
Why do I love to compose smiles on distant faces
of passing clouds, as her images appear in flashes?
Why do I arrange stars on the black braid of lone nights
as her footsteps echo in fall of each leaf from low heights?
Why do I touch her as I touch petal of every blossom
as her absence blooms as flowers in ever pining bosom?

Saroj K Padhi

Crescent Moon

Confronted with the specter of death on every face
as I crawl between a fallen sky and a famished earth
like an insect- wounded and wingless, awaiting grace,
the crescent Moon of your smile my woes does address
dangling like a slice of dream from lips of a tinted sky
drenched by the fog of love drizzling from Dawn's eye
to wean me away from anger, angst, envy and sickness
when a racked heart pumps anxious blood of restiveness,

and body is rocked by threats of burns, blasts or crashes
a mind emaciated by pining, pondering, races in wilderness;
you wait for me, the mythical bride of morn my soul to adorn
wiping every dot of anxiety from face and nursing every burn
redeeming nights from nightmares of horror, hate and violence
with shower of that love that helps my roots calmly to retrace.

Saroj K Padhi

Crow

There was a time when our days
broke with cawing of crows from thatch eaves
with the magic of sun light on its enchanted wings
that traversed miles in quest of corn and carrion
to scavenge the world with a mission
and reveal the beauty of an eco-rich world
through its constant noisy communion;

house-wives could read the dear raven's tone
that augured the arrival of guests
and priests could predict the day from its voice;
mothers would feed their obstinate children,
to the crow at the bough, pointing their attention
and late-risers, wake up from sleep
by its fond morning commotion;

every pious morning
and on death anniversaries of our ancestors
we wait with our offerings of food
for its holy return
but they say the immortal bird
to a distant land forever is gone!

Saroj K Padhi

Cruel Waters

Liquid terror floods thro' Jammu and Kashmir's body
telling altogether a different ghastly story —
of human flesh ripped apart
as if by acid rain
to reveal a large skeleton of broken ribs
rocked by waves of muddy waters;
unleashing the face of some dark demons
that lurked inside the rivers on spate
to muzzle the humans
and munch bones of the poor hapless dead;
spreading horror of epidemic into the spines
of the surviving who scramble on the sheared banks
gazing into a big blank sky
occasionally filled by some spectre of promise
by dronings of choppers targeted by stones pelted
out of sheer frustrations of the hungry at them.
When will the beautiful valley again sing
of the beauty of waters?
Of the glory of flowers?
Questions like this in the broken nests ring
as we sit here on the banks
thinking only of today's meals
that seem to elude us like morning dreams.

Saroj K Padhi

Cruising On River Phrya

CRUISING ON RIVER CHAO PHRYA

Damsels with golden crowns greet you to river cruises
that resound with rock bands playing latest numbers,
barges vibrate as they glide on chest of russet-brown waters
slowly to take on a crimson glow
cast from the fringe of the intoxicated Bangkok sky
till it catches fire under flash lights
from soaring hotels, temple tops, churches and condominiums
and the Moon descends to the pier in jaded jeans
for the hip-hop on the undulating, unsteady deck
in tune with the youngsters' joyous screams;

dance your way to the deck, sing and swing
forget all about life's lapses, crazy highway rushes
and hearts' ancient bruises
on way to the ride, all those unwanted brushes
of thoughts' unwanted clashes;
move on, grab the glasses of fresh fruit crushes
and jug your way to the juicy Thai dishes;

you're no more alone in this world as the stars hem in
guiding the way thro' cacophony of soulful songs
to the bow where the unseen hands of the wind
lull you to a gentle sleep in the lap of a dreamy Siam princess
and sprinkles from the river's overflowing chest
dip you into the unknown depths of a redeeming floor!

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Saroj K Padhi

Cul-De-Sac

You promised me a skyful of dreams at dawn,
offered me two new wings heavenward to turn!

How enticing really it was to get into the fold
of lush green vales of sweet bends and curvatures,
push way thro' sanctuaries of the thorny bushes
and enter the honey sieves of flowers in raptures!

The wild trek into the pinnacle of magical feelings
how thrilling, the swim in the vortex of emotions,
juicy ruminations about each happy moment spent
and about the proposed union, fond speculations!

Ultimately you're left in lurch like an ensnared bird
in delusion about freedom, without a foreseeable vent,
and crushed by dark in cul-de-sac of a lonesome life,
to ponder over fake tears and smiles so evanescent!

Let me burn here in the heat of your passions ill-spent
setting the soul adrift like boat in river without current!

Saroj K Padhi

Culprit Moon

As a fleet of dark clouds in sky of an imperiled mind
struggle hard to shut up memory's Moon behind the bars-
into dark prison of apathy, unconcern and indifference,
large chunks of them that fight with Moon's celestial light
get infected with smiles oozing from her face all bright;
swathes of them that arise from the secret coves of time
like locusts to swallow crops of happy meets and trysts,
flounder at heaven's gate in dismay, disarray and distress
without being able to erase single dot from her divine face;
their victory of temporary nature is nothing but an illusion
as she reappears with an untarnished rapture for the union
that she envisions in the wake of menarche under wet clouds
with stardust of cosmic delight in her frenzied, roving eyes
as million dream Suns melt and sink into her glorious thighs.

Saroj K Padhi

Damn Fool This Heart

My words fail to plumb the depth
of my heart today,
in the heat of emotions
churned up by that look from Spring
when Summer still boils within
choking all voices willing to sing.
Why do your looks pine
for those tremors in the spine
that tossed our souls to heights
during nights of heart-ache under the vine?
Why do you look for those specks
from paints on canvas of hearts in green
when all hues of love fade like morning stars
as daily battles for life turn grave and grim?
Let me seal this damn heart
before words search for their familiar ring
and find the tune to sing,
and silently listen to its noiseless croon
in these hours of wars in the outside world
where Spring is destined to die soon.

Saroj K Padhi

Daughter

When the world around me
seems to crumble like a pack of cards,
agony seethes within to swell
in silence without finding release in words;
earth under my feet threatens to sink
and hopes drop like dead birds,
when mistrust pulls all heads down
and smokes of despair rise heavenwards;
when life becomes a futile journey
and in distress I drag my steps backwards;
it's your smile that lifts up my spirit
from the dung heap to the sky upwards,
erasing dots of dark shadows from the face
and stirring the stream of peace from inwards.
When unknown fears tread me down
crises crush me down
illnesses break me down,
and life is filled with irritation, hate or frown;
it's your love that keeps me going
in the midst of every other thing sadly falling down.

Saroj K Padhi

Deaf Dumb And Blind

See how my "I love you"
Has created troubles new!
To the koel, I said "I love you";
And the bird sang so much into my ears
Day in and day out about each of her tears
In a tone sweet and sad without any fears
That I turned deaf to the world of all my near and dears.
To the blossom, I said "I love you";
It blushed and beamed
She was quite mad it seemed
Offering her sweetest smile and cheers
That have turned me blind to all other possible colours.
And to the butterfly I said "I love you";
She was drawn to my lips
With such pollen under her feet
That sucked all my words into her hot mouth
Turning me dumb for rest of my years.

Saroj K Padhi

Death

Death is lurking everywhere
like a familiar shadow tiptoeing
behind the body, off and on
at every twist and turn
waiting for the opportune moment to strike
when life does breathlessly burn-
in the fire of desires to scale new peak
and create in the white heat of passion
something that would endure
and beyond time, turn everyone on
as leaves fall like virtues,
trees vanish like a pack of dreams
and the impudent dare plod on
not knowing that it's always time
this world to shun
and emboldened by the shadows
love being entranced by every wind
blowing from eternity
and be ready without any plans
for sudden return!

Saroj K Padhi

December

December is the sweetest month
blending Winter with heat of desire,
culling choicest memories to light
as dead leaves are flung into camp-fire-
around which frenzied youths dance
as into blazes of body their secret affair
does loudly transpire-
forgetful of deaths
caused by pounding pachyderms
or by wary, blood thirsty Naxals
with their landmines and gun fire;

nights rock with lights
emitting from sleepless lovers' eyes
as drops of dew shed by night
silence weeping flowers' sighs
under Moon's ceaseless shower
and stars with zest
keen about the glorious fest
wink from heaven's lofty spire;

let me catch hold of a moment
from the jungle's bower
where lilies are quietly born
in tune with the billowing buffalo horn
from the nearby hamlet,
as birds from the shady boughs
a song of Spring time love,
so keenly do inspire!

Saroj K Padhi

Deep Down

Startled by my own foot steps
I look back to find your shadow mocking
my dreams shattered into shreds
on the floor of a wounded time bleeding,
in the veins of those red flowers constantly
ravished by cruel hands of routine morning;

the snake of my fear leaves the growing anthill
to stalk my failure and frighten me from the back,
of my lone cement bench in the park
constantly reminding me of the lapses
in the fragile breath of my love in youth
that flew away like the dumb white herons
into the blank chest of an impotent sky
as I sit here brooding on this very big why;

when the question grows heavy
in the shrinking horizon of my eye
a cool breeze moves from somewhere
with its soft, soothing and sympathizing sigh!

Saroj K Padhi

Democracy

Ours is a great democracy,
we proudly say -
when lies rule our lives here
and truth is a poor casualty,
fear gags the voice of conscience
and ugliness butchers beauty;
tingles of coin decide tones of relation
in the blind alleys of living,
terror treads easy miles
into open spaces of our breathing;
muscles of mafia muzzle voice of truth
when cops mock law
and justice takes the back seat,
news about anti-nationals hug headlines
when millions affected by malnutrition
have hardly anything substantial to eat;
We are a great democracy, we proudly say
where babus enjoy fruits of corruption,
capitalists savour crores' tax exemption
but poor farmers, unable to pay off paltry loans
commit suicide out of frustration!
We are a great nation indeed
for our people still practise
those old ways of thinking -
making gods of babas
who enjoy sexual anarchy
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in the name of religion,
when our teachers are roughed up in public
during demand for right remuneration!
Our democracy is great indeed
for our patience with injustice knows no bounds
in our ceaseless crawl for a living
without a solid purpose or any direction!

Saroj K Padhi

Deogarh

DEOGARH

The sweating Sal leaves smell of your aging body
as I amble along the craggy bends of your woody path,
sitting on the undulating hunch of my grouching camel,
to whet thirst with sips from your thinning stream
at Pradhanpat, you go back on your promise of honey
from your mimosa mouth, shattering my sweet dream;

the Sun sinks into the dense forest
like a bird losing address back home,
as a pall of gloom covers the beechen hills
burdened with the fear of Ultras in dark;
the Moon sneaks in
like a guilty lover to confess her sins
from behind the blind of dark clouds
to a host of stars brooding like saints
and blinking more before passing judgments.

Night birds silently shed tears
over loss of current in Kurudkut stream
limping down from the root of a tree uphill
to a sleepy gulmohar town in wakeful dream;
butterflies roam flapping wings in wild abandon
scattering droplets of peace
as Sal leaves rustle in tune with the fountain
to gather moments of bliss!

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Saroj K Padhi

Depressing Rain

Posies of buds under drizzles
of depression rain
under cover of a misty look
as if a ruin from heaven
swaying their battered heads
under ceaseless pain
with their boughs not being able
to hold them back again.
Young blossoms before full bloom
with shrieks of sighs and nonstop swoon
and young leaves shed as corpses
not being able to bear with lashes;
their young dreams
crushed under layers of mud
breaking sleep of birds
with their repeated thud
pounding their hearts
with rough wind and rain
from which it seems
none can recover again! ! !

Saroj K Padhi

Desire

The half-moon is not so bright
But awakens dormant desires
Of many shreds this very night.
The sky of your body spreads out
With desire in every pore
Pining to contain love
Behind heaven's closed door.
Honey of affection from across the foliage green
Drenches my entire being,
In a blue ecstasy of music
Does my soul sing.
Hold me longer dear Cool
To your empty spaces, thirsty crevices
Swallow me gently, suck me to the full
Silence this restive spirit-
Time's wandering bull.

Let me die slowly into your sluices
Like the foamy waters
Of the Salandi in spate
In tides of wild overflow
Without any trace of hate.
For we are all love-
In showers of crazy beams
From heaven's wet boughs;
You are my wild infinity
And I, a captive geometry.
Here dissolve all dark beneath my skin
Into the colours of your white petals
That spring from the Earth
In tune with love's quiet glow
O fountain make me your flow
For you are my root
And I a foisted bough
Waiting for the wind's blow;
I flounder, I stumble
Make me a little slow.
Suck me into the blue smokes
Of the silent fire that cools the hot Earth

Let me have that final fall
Let me, let me die
Into a honeyed new birth

Saroj K Padhi

Different Sight

Arrested in her rainbow-tinted eyes
I could hardly remember:
the color of sorrowing hearts wailing at night or day light,
the misery of sparrows stripped of their nests and joys of carefree flight,
could hardly feel the heat of wild fire engulfing whole forest ranges,
could hardly hear the sound of blasts
piercing the chest of cities,
the piteous cry of poor villagers munched by bears or mauled by pachyderms,
nor could I feel the sting of pandemic virus burning unfed bellies
or choking lungs of the beautiful earth;

She held me in the shade of a spectrum of blinding light
where the sun beams dazzled like
luminous wings of birds in flight,
like beads of diamond on fins of fishes
swimming in sheer delight,
where a phantom Moon came to play with clouds in the courtyard of the sky
like a blindfolded girl with barred eye sight,
there was an aroma of black basils and white jasmines doing round,
of musks and marigolds
blown by a wet wind all around
raining perfumes of sheer delight.

Saroj K Padhi

Dilemma

Sediments of muddy passion that burns like an ancient flame in mind
Sink into the deep ocean of your pious eyes, like the Sun into the Sky's hind
To merge and mingle into the infinite flow,
Into this life's vanishing glow
Like the ritual bones of ancestors dipping into the depths of a mythical river
Whose streams fumble now as they stumble over a crust of polythene cover;
I recoil into my dingy room at the base of the temple
Wherein birds of freedom barge in singing of love blissful
Lying like nude shingles on the bed of sands dry, dreary, dreadful
We dream of those stars of the night basking in blue light
When petals drizzle from plants to my court yard like stars of day light
Sparrows hop and sing at the skylight
Monkeys play on the music of life like noisy innocent children on stage
Leaves old and young sway to the moody swing of drifting rays;
Again I'm aroused to life of a temporary lusty breeze
Aloft from the frail boughs of musky humanized trees!

Saroj K Padhi

Distraught

Caught behind the bars of heavy-line electric wires
the half-Moon languishes like a poor trafficked woman
behind cell wall of poisonous pimp clouds that conspire
to toss her as a petty coin into rapacious hands of man;

distressed she sheds some drops into heart of the wind
that moans over heavy-hearted city of accursed night
with wounds all over from blasts, burns, and acts unkind,
to be infected by stinking gutters and bars in dim light;

now she broods over her joyous days of the near past
when she tended to scented turmeric fields to run free,
as leaves hilarious clapped and the animals looked aghast
at her celestial beauty, when silver beams danced in spree;

how much intense is the craving now to play hide and seek
with Moon in mustard fields of yore like a young lover freak!

Saroj K Padhi

Diwali

All thro' the pre-Diwali night
light showers of desire from heaven
spread the musk from Moon's moist hair
into the crannies of an awakened mind
where red roses sipped nectar
from the bosoms of a doting, darkish sky
to bloom into white lilies of love
in the lap of a cloudy day;
turbulent waves in the nearby bay's body
surge ahead in wake of newer passion
when the pole star strives hard
to pacify the angry clouds on rebellion
like irate workers trespassing
into government offices after breach of cordon,
and all alone it trying to restore peace
in their world, caught in throes of isolation!
Goddess Kali stirs from hibernation
with promises of release from dark
and with light in love's eyes
to mark an epoch's culmination
and write life's new definition!

Saroj K Padhi

Don't Play Your Flute, Govinda

Why are you playing on your flute Govinda
Turning me on to shameless heights
Of exposure under this excited moon
Tickling these impatient Kadambas
To shed every bit, what to say about
Their orange sarees under a white glare,
Sticky with bees' ceaseless love-bites
As you give your stunning looks
And endless cunning stare?
I' m neither happy with you nor your beguiling song
For Jamuna is rotting in trickles of her black tears
And the streets of Mathura, Brindaban, without rain
Romance of peacocks, growing stale with cow dung.
How can I make love with you in this night of fears
Threatened by Dengue, violent torrents and tears?
Please stop playing that flute of yours that sends tremors
Thro' my timid heart soaked in love for you, but without its cheers!

Saroj K Padhi

Dreaming Palash

Ripples in the river freak out in wind multiplying,
Filling in the blues in my mind with beauty of waters
Rare like blue moon in a placid March morning,
Lost into her joys of giving the peace that she offers;
As I sit waiting for you in the labyrinths of my desire
Hangovers of dilemmas familiar still haunt faintly,
When squirrels rush out of tree tops with tails flicking,
Their excited chittering merging into waves so lovely;
White butterflies flit across carrying the glory of a Sun
With loads of grains of dreams on their wings shining
Like the lost stars that were so bewitching but are gone,
And the luscious young mangoes in love cutely smiling;
Don't touch me for I'm now a red Palash in bloom
Waiting for beaks of Spring for an end to my gloom.

Saroj K Padhi

Drooping Petals

You're a wonder bloom of endless jasmines
In my outlandish, virile land,
Desired by dawn to be plundered by its unseen hand;

A suppressed smile between the lips of melting clouds
Merging into the tears of early dawn,
My hunger for beauty every morn,
My exciting search for ways to fly;
As birds fill in the sky of your blue eyes
From the secret womb of an unknown horizon.

Thoughts about you invite butterflies from all sides
To flit across the enchanted lanes of my memories,
Scattering dusts of dreams from their scented wings,
As away from a world of agony my heart this moment swings;

Mind dwells in an icily cool house of your sweet love
Where I croon like a stranger dove
Secretly chasing your teen fancies and smiles filled with fun
I'm in love with you, my sweet youth
And am ready every now and then to burn
As your fingers swipe the petals of my face
Drooping under an angry Sun.

Saroj K Padhi

Drooping Sun

As the Sun droops into a desired corner of darkness
Under burden of day's random thoughts
And the hills at the distance drown
Like flakes of ice in light floats
Inside the crimson drinks of a sighing sky;
Blinking fireflies
search for memories of their soul-mates
lost in last cyclone
and the dry river trickles on alone;
the washer man's wife in a cool resign
folds dried up clothes on the bank —
and their children in bare feet look on
into a dim horizon;
buffaloes burning with hunger
chew hay in the darkening fields
drawing their calves still closer;
I'm lost in remembrance of ripples
of the vanished waters of a young river
whose sagging breasts now
reflect a glimmering half moon
with strands of pale sands
and bits of stray skeletons around
where like the specter of a gliding snake
your sinuous memories surround.

Saroj K Padhi

Dusk

Dusk came calling my nick name then
softly from behind the wood vines
as I kept composing the epitaph of my first love
in hues of saffron across the sorrowing vines;

she was in robes of my lost dreams
with honey in her husky voice, though tinged with sadness
as she tried striking chords in the heart's dried-up streams
with a promise of release from all pain and distress.

I kept wondering if she was that invisible bird
that always heard us whispering into each other's soul
till descent of stars into the hairs of the woods
and till Night, us into a dark, perfumed blanket did gently roll!

Alas! My Dusk is a mere shadow of my Love lost to a fading light
My Dusk is the music of a lone bird homeless in maze of the night!

Saroj K Padhi

Dusk Delight

As the Winter dusk descends like a drowsy damsel
into the lap of the anxious lover-boughs,
and from behind the darkening western hills
the sinking Sun, like a sad loser, their union does browse;

flowers sway to the music of birds returning home
and aroused by the wind, entreat bees to halt for the night,
ripples reconcile the river to her overflowing gloom
and stars keen to control our fate, to the floor do alight;

the sighing ocean raises the veil of dark clouds
from Moon's bruised face for kind beams to abate our distress
no more fear of bomb or beast our mind doth enshroud
as the breeze wafts our spirits with love the night to brace.

C.R: @ Saroj K. Padhi

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Saroj K Padhi

Dusky Sea

For God's sake let the surfing sea
touch and feel you, as I did
when tides of youth overtook thee;
allow it to scratch your skin,
tickle the nerves, caress the bones
and to the bare soul seep in
before we're taken in
to the vortex
where like toys we're made to spin,
till by tides we are torn
and fall off like stray pieces of coral reef-
all ragged and shorn
by a subterranean current unseen, unknown.

Why do you bother about the sun
that was temporarily lost to the dusky waves
when the voluptuous moon glistens
on the wet sands of your desire
and the night wind knees
onto your skin taut and bare,
before the very eyes
of the shivering casuarina
who chuckles during its keen stare;

sands write stories of love and loss
with pens of tiny sea-shells
as the waves in orgasmic spells
crash on the bare bodied shore,
when sea lilies excitedly beat their wings
deep down desiring to float ashore;

come, let's hug the waves
and ride the crest of our dreams
before Time's hollow tides sweep us away
and our bodies fritter away into faint moon beams.

Saroj K Padhi

Early Spring

Why does this early Spring tantalize me
with its light ooze from mango buds
that does not sink deep down my nose
to our familiar garden for the cuckoo in me to sing?

Why are these buds caught in a dilemma
between the fog and an aging Sun's first flickers
when the flaming Palasas' cores are caught
in the grips of beaks of some thirsty birds
that suck nectar from half-lit lips of petals
who are all very willing to fall with abandon
at the slightest flick from cool morning breeze?

Why does the cat on my quietly warming roof
who curls up to winks, is touched again and again
by grey leaves that fall on her furs to elicit secret purrs?

Why does the river so frequently delete
rhymes written on her body's rippling Timeline
by a wind amorous and insistent
but wavering so often without taking a beeline?

Saroj K Padhi

Early Winter

Winter creeps into my sleeves
like faint light of a secret thought
from a lazy wind
into semi-lit crevices of a sleepy mind,
breaking all rules of decency,
inciting skin's crazy hungers
behind the windows' tight-lipped blind-
to erupt like popcorn on hot oven
in the early morn
from under the blanket of thirsty dawn,
awakening from the pleasant pangs
of light bee-stings of the night
to cherished shafts from a glowing sun,
but filling morning tea cups
with fumes of air-borne carbon
when the city limps back into action
like a wounded soldier trapped
to whine inside trenches with a stifled gun.
You promised me lilies in moony night
and moments of lusty fun
but alas winter threatens to fizzle out
before booming,
like a weak daydream
under growing heat of an angry sun.

Saroj K Padhi

Ebb

Emotions once full like the tides of the bay
have turned into endangered Olive Ridley
in search of suitable sand holes
for a few eggs to lay,
in the noisy shores of our living
where frolicsome shells of love
are no more at play,
where words have hardly anything to say
except the old cliché
about poverty and hunger,
about global warming and Nature's anger;
and we loiter like a stale wind
over the wailing sands
perhaps before the sea takes over!
Relations once vibrant
like birds sprinkling songs
of rare sweetness over an effulgent sea,
are on a long poise without any direction
and life, a marathon of staccato rhythms
thumps on
with fond syllables of repetition!

Saroj K Padhi

Echo

The empty chair to extreme left in class-room
stares at the big vacuum in my life's afternoon
like the blazing, bare sands missing coolant wind
in inner, intimate spaces, as they sigh and swoon;
the crescent moon on her cheeks no more rises
to grace the clouds of my desire in monsoon bloom
cross-marks on register bleed my days to death
on crags of crampy evening in its encircling gloom;
ripples in pond rue silent slip of a beauteous image
from corners of its eyes caught in constant mirage;
scented shrubs in the eco-garden recreate aroma
of her presence in the breath of all flora and fauna;
some books in library long for the touch of her hand
as the music hall echoes with her songs and her band.

Saroj K Padhi

Elements

Why am I always in love with excesses of elements?
Wind in excess that blows past
your sweet soul, doesn't fill my lungs or me,
the aroma of your increasing desires therein
too doesn't fulfill me!
Rains from the sky that falls drenching your name
And that my peacock soul drinks on,
Doesn't fully quench me!
Thoughts about you
Hunger for more space in mind's ether
Always vibrant with images about you,
Doesn't even suffice for your complete view!
The dust in my mind sketching your image in air
Or memories scribbled by your aroused feet
On the body of Earth want to gobble more land
To accommodate more and more of you!
The fire of longing for you rises
Across centuries needing more and more of fuel
From my liquid soul pining for you!
Why do I need every element in excess
To feel you, to get you, to be one with you!
Who will tell why I love you!

Saroj K Padhi

Elixir Of Rain

ELIXIR OF RAIN

See how Rain seeps deep down flooding soul's lighted shores
like water into anthill's body entering thro' pores,
sputtering the deep-seated sadness of spurious soil out,
for light to enter the inscrutable mind's mythical floors;

baring the body of the ancient trappings of dust
opening the floodgates for repressed spirit's outburst
water drips from leaves, eaves, roofs and wings
into the secret sluices of a regenerative earth to be lost;

drench me dear Rain with your ecstasy on drenched wings
that impels butterflies, birds and bees to scale new heights
as they soar into cold wind that into their ear softly sings
and the dawn on palanquins of clouds, to the earth alights;

drunk with elixir of rain like an ant into honey hive I sink
as the river by my side is abuzz with sound of heavy drink!

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Saroj K Padhi

Elusive April Spring

April's morning Spring chants your name
in the voice of a frantic koel invisible
thro' songs making your presence audible
in the solitude of the idyllic vale
where you unfold like the first ray of the Sun
fondling the frenzied tulips of a crimson morn

with your head resting on lap of a lover-sky
where a passing cloud stops awhile
to peep at the messy vermillion mark
on your blushing forehead
caused by hands of a wild amorous wind
during a stormy love play
that about your post-coital mirth
so silently say...

but soon from nowhere some crows fly in
with a shadow cast by their heavy wing,
of a harsh truth
overhead loftily to sing
and in their characteristic note
about the truth of your absence
in still a louder voice declaring!

Saroj K Padhi

Elusive Monsoon

As you turned away so early from our land,
steeped in doubt we wallow around widening cracks
under the wrath of a blinding September Sun
in quest of those drops that sank before our eyes
into the parched womb of a ravished Earth
with hope of nourishing roots of plants in deep sighs
with a veil of pallor all over their face
when yellowing reeds sing of beautiful golden lies;

drops deluded us like self-proclaimed God-Gurus
who outraged million maidens in the name of a religion
only to fill the protesters' skulls with venomous rain
after burning houses and properties of a teeming million;
come back yee clouds like simple seeds of folk's faith
to save us from tyranny of drought and piteous death!

Saroj K Padhi

Emerald Eyes

As dawn breaks in your half-open eyes
turned emerald due to lush drink of poison
from bouts of my deep ablution
during ecstatic union of souls' intimate night
that silenced whirlpools of thoughts
about recent incidents of bloodshed and fight
into the abyss of a silent oblivion;
and as I move closer to myself
on the surface of the painted green mirror
to hug some moments of cool reflection
in the depths of a faithful sight,
before the day's race
for pride of place takes us over,
you hold me like an amorphous dream
inside the red buds of your darkening lids
that droop under shimmers a dying twilight
without the power to hold a slice of sun
during Time's hurried, unholy flight;
I retreat to the coves of a lone self
with its lengthening shadow of solitude.

Saroj K Padhi

Emotional Clouds

Marooned by the muddy flood waters
of the angry river thatswallowed a large chunk
of our village yester night,
we came rowing in old leaking boats
to find a safe haven on the nearby barren hill
where constant spray of rain on sleepy eyes
keeps us alive thro' nights and days ofsighs;
copters fly over, drowning in their pointless drones
the elegies of little cormorants, larks and tattler birds
that circle over the under-water paddy fields
smelling of raw fish;
telephone towers in the distance twinkle
like wounded stars of a high-tech civilization
unfolding a grim message aboutimpending storms
as the crescent moon is caught in a whirlpool of clouds
grown highly emotional
about healing burns on body of far-off hills;
our boats slowly sink and the oars are gone
as startled, grey cranes on the brink look on;
we long for our home and hearth
washed away overnight and wait for floods to abate
inside our temporary tent
as a faint rainbow appears in the eastern sky
unfolding new hues of hopein the morning's eye
and we awake like lotuses, withheads inside water
during storm, that rise backin refusal to droop or die.

Saroj K Padhi

Emptiness

You are an emptiness now inside a weak flow
Of tears down my hollow eyes, into a slow wind
That scratches the skin of the sullen tributaries
Who once with excess of waters, flooded the mind;
Summer has spilled sands on shores of sad bodies
With lone longings of a past running complete dry,
When feelings of loss overlap desires deep within
And memories, like noon wind across palm trees, sigh;
It seems I'm in secret love with the silent emptiness
Lurking in half-lit corners of a dear, lonely, lost being
Susurrating monologues with self in a soft drowsiness
Without being able, of love's real greatness, to sing;
What's my fault if times on emotions caused such a drain
Of what else can I sing now in this state if not of dear pain!

Saroj K Padhi

Enigma

The enigma in your smile
stirs a whirlpool of emotions
in my turbulent heart
ravished by flash floods
unleashed from mountain top of your looks,
the crevices of my drooping mind
overflow temporarily
with a glacier of expectations,
my desire takes on a junked boat
across the muddy stream of a Mahanadi
lashed by the unpredictable monsoon of your mood;
the showers of the past repeat themselves
to bring us nearer and turn us
into prisoners of the intimate season-
like wet petals of a crumpled kind
beneath the bed of thick grass,
wherein the blades infinitely whisper
under a wind's gentle thrash;
moments of eternity jump out like hoppers
as birds say their prayers in joyful numbers.

Saroj K Padhi

Enigmatic

Burning sweetens my heart you say
Like potato in a live microwave -
With a somewhat burnt surface but boiled to the core,
Like a hard Sun churning the petals of life more and more
When soul slowly awakes to beauty of cosmic life
Blossoming like morning stars behind heaven's doors in galore;
See, you are there in my body in sweats of each secret pore,
In my coagulated blood and crumpled desires,
Inside my corrugated chest and ageing mind's imbecile fires
Bent upon even loving your shadow in spite of yourself-
Steeped in the mud of insensible mires;
despite the sky's falling on my dreams each time
I try meeting you at the towers or at the tops of tapering spires!
Why am I so in spite of myself?
A bundle of contradictory desires, a bunch of hollow fires?
With a parching tongue and spirit caught in time's rising ires?
Who is going to contain me and my stupidity,
If not your shadow from an unknown infinity
That can engulf my breathless enigmatic entity!

Saroj K Padhi

Entering You

For heaven's sake
for the first time
as i entered you
like a gentle breeze
groping into a dark cave
i became the flow of a stream
surrounded by a wild wave
of a roaring sea
under Sun's pink beam
i encountered
a liquid flow
of inflamed flesh
around my vital being
not knowing when
it had rained
into the muddy earth
of your desires
turning me into instant ashes
of many sweet fires! ! !

Saroj K Padhi

Epiphany

Shadows of humans move past me whose steps I sense
as I stand here in a sort of trance near the Pipal tree;
my eyes caught witnessing the dance of praying leaves,
clouds above forming into images of my God in breeze
as if a strange hallucination doth my mind strongly seize
or is it my destination here, where I for so long do freeze!
With the smell of unripe magic mangoes wafted in the air
and the conch blowing from deep inside my soul in fire.
Krishna astride in the chariot with Radha beside him, smiles
with colours new floating in to drape them from long miles;
painting all those dwelling in the temple of their one soul
in hues that flow from awareness of life's one possible goal.
What makes me stand here like a jilted foolish boy?
Am I waiting for the final call from His bamboo toy?

Saroj K Padhi

Evening At The Bridge

Is glory gone with the with the crimson sun
engulfed by swathes of dark clouds on a rush
from the distant horizon
sweeping away the last dot of rose
from the chest of the evening sky
that with simmering desire of a few stars
to be watched and loved
in the white heat of a fire, seems to burn
when mating calls given out by female birds
from coves in ridges on the middle of a dry bank
get drowned by the cacophony of honks and horn
when headlights streaming along the ring road
overlook the groaning narrow streaks
getting drier and drier in a monsoon-time river;
the full moon paled by city smokes sadly looks on
to end up shedding a few unseen drops
to the chest of the river, to our utter unconcern
and as night moves on
she is further blackened by smokes from pyres
of innocents
killed by flames from blind superstition;
trees of the city seem to droop further
under burden of clouds of distress
rising from eaves of poor hutments
on the river-side- ragged, leaking and outworn;
as we retreat for the night
to a sleep beside our secret graves
to be racked by nightmares
till the rise of a clear, bright Sun!

Saroj K Padhi

Evening Rain

The damp walls of my aging house
smack of day's romance with rain
that has seduced each one,
even seeds dropped by birds
in cracks and crevices
grow into sweet, leafy saplings
of a wild smelling variety,
dangling in air from dark, dotting cornices,
grasses overgrow
to spill out of earthen pots
on roofs, windows and terraces
mocking the precious plants in greenhouses;
drizzles descend to the ground,
down the dark, lush body of the ivy
without any sound,
to touch, smell and feel the cucumber flowers
whose eyes bespeak dreams of a full moon
long since home bound;
the inebriating wind under drizzles
hugs the jasmines and tuberoses,
before wafting the scented smokes
from burnt-out wicks near evening Goddess
to lofty heights in the sky of praying souls
where they form dense clouds of love for rain.

Saroj K Padhi

Faces Of Moon

You always made all of my moments so beautiful:
while I loved to sip milk from mother in courtyard
in milky white you hung from sky, a toy delightful;
as I wrote secret letters as a boy to the girl of love
your beams gave a sheen to unformed green words
to make her blush at herself, you a mirror beautiful;
as honey dripped from the mouth of luscious Youth
you gave wings to my years, to make flight delightful;
in days that sorrow grilled me and the sun burned me
in sympathy at night you wobbled in black in lone sky
pointing at me to rest, your nights then were mournful;
in you I see my joys, tears and the desire to be hopeful
every new look at you makes me about self so forgetful
your face wipes out all hurts and terrors in looks merciful.

Saroj K Padhi

Farewell

We meet now in the semi darkness of our minds
with our foot prints etched on its cobbled floor
that silently blush as we open the closed door
reviving memory of a past where once our souls
whispered some enchanting words to each other
in the language of eloquent lotus in the pond
as the swans nearby kept listening
with their occasional trumpets at our open secrets.
I have lost track of many more things we did
big and small,
so might have you too,
but I remember how restlessly I searched for that black speck
troubling my image in pool of your windy eyes
where I saw love glistening
and how much concernedly you licked my finger when it was
found bleeding
torn a little by a thorn as we sat near the bushes
with heady fragrances so exciting
and with a bush lark, about new Spring listlessly singing!
Today as we part, the sparkle of a few drops in the river of your eyes
echoes fluently words about a desired union
but they are all pronounced so silently
across their banks in whispers of the reeds of your dark brows
that shelter the clouds of parting love ready to burst into rain;
today in this semi darkness of our farewell meeting
let us have a dance in tune with falling leaves' rain
and forget all about parting's killing pain.

Saroj K Padhi

Fence-Side Jasmine Bud

Much of my world is within.
my beauty
my fragrance hidden,
like a secret turmoil seething -
search for a vent
to pop out and kiss light
on wings of air beaming;
the barb-wires prick me,
stray bulls try to munch me,
alien twigs punch me
and greedy hands try to pluck me
without an ear
for the music that murmurs
in my virgin chest for the eager drops
from the eye of the sky that in frenzy rolls
to hug my soul in blinkers.
I know my salvation lies in my martyrdom.
hence let me bloom more and more
before I die in the bosom of my lover;
or my petals wither under its shower.

Saroj K Padhi

Fire On The Mountain Peak

Little did we know that there could be such fire
on ice-capped mountain top till you fell off the gliding skis
and I lifted you up to the bare bold rock for a little rest
before we resumed skiing down to the tent at Sonmarg's waist
where the logs had caught fire in the heat of wheels skidding on ice,
the boughs of Alpines shook in the whirl of a rain-storm
and flowers in the meadows looked aghast at the maelstrom-
of smokes being silenced by the rain of snow on the leaking roof;

we were pure drops of rain then on rocks bathing in pure bliss,
butterflies stuck to petals in frenzied kiss;
peacocks came out of some secret caves pacing the rocks
to dance tearing themselves to fine shreds,
as peahens cried in ecstasy of union on emerald slopy beds
our wetted ponies at a distance neighed out in fun
waiting to take us back down the slushy trail to the common run.

Saroj K Padhi

First Rain

FIRST RAIN

Every first rain smells of telling tears of love
in the silently fuming star-crossed chests on earth
that burn like hot twigs in summer garden of separation
when sighs of smokes from disheveled night jasmines coil up
into a sky of expectations, fuelling the clouds with desires-
dark like the mascara in the deeply draped eyelashes of stars
that yearn for a moon, marooned in mundane monsoon mires;

drops that drench a thirsty earth in hope of feeding new seed
and breed hopes in fresh blooms wilting under waves torrid;
rain that revives Harsingars from a temporary tomb
stirring their old aroma in earth's newly moist womb,
unleashing memories from an uneasy past hush
redeeming the scent of pain in grasses' fresh blush
echoing in sounds of pitter-patter, bees' honey-rush!

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Saroj K Padhi

Flame

Now you are an elusive bite between my faltering lips
Desiring but dithering at the jagged edges;
A half-spelt beat in an unevenly thumping heart
Striving hard to reshape your broken images.

The rays of youth that fathomed the impenetrable region
Of your fragrant darkness, have mellowed
Into an ageing river of timid flow near the mouth of a sea
Not knowing when the waters engulfed.

A riddle somewhere in between passion and compassion
Needs be resolved before images are complete for reunion.

Come, join here in the dance of these crazy moon beams
Before the final flame consumes our love's silent screams.

Saroj K Padhi

Flicker

A few moments of flicker
an endless struggle to fight dark
before the final blinker
in the face of a hostile wind
lands you in a battle of sorts
to test the grit of your drooping mind;

before being blown out
you're a half-burnt oil-soaked wick
in the burning oil-filled lamp,
but in poor capillary flow
leading an entire lamp to be in flames
with flutters of excitement
inviting the last minute of end games

bend down, inhale the fresh smoke divine
emerging from the earthen lamp
pray, feel 'nothing truly is mine';
oil, lamp, wick and fire all are thine
and we the illusion of an endless pine.

Saroj K Padhi

Flight

You were a fairy in your teens
With sweet flutter of wings
That gave feathers to my words
For high ecstatic flings;

Together we built a nest in the air
For our roosting hearts to sing,
And the dales of our green youth
With joy of new harvest to ring;

You pruned my wings,
Curbed my flights,
Cropped my soul
Before rising to newer heights of joy,
When another bird took you higher to fly
And I was left wondering with a big, big why.

Saroj K Padhi

Flirting With My Love

One evening while flirting with my Love
I said "Why do you always compare me with Moon?
Do you think I like it? In fact I hate that Moon
that comes in between us so often late or soon
while I'm enjoying love's timeless boon;
like this garland of tuberose on my braid
look, how it blunders on to my face again and again
while you try to taste the plum on my lips,
the naughty wind pouts in taking half of my joy away.
Look how your divine touches are made to drift away
by a conspiratorial Moon and a naughty wind
handling whom so difficult I find
except this Kadamba tree
that truly loves me."
Do you know Govind, when you are not around
Thousand grape - soft hands of yours do my body surround
With flying kisses from his falling leaves
Under whose shower my love breathes,
I smell you in his bark, boughs and his soul in beams
I love you in the whispers of his supple dreams
His liquid soul drips onto my breast in drops of tear
When after a long absence with him I'm there."
At this my eternal lover smiled like my shivering love-tree
And for all this He is perhaps jealous now not to leave me.

Saroj K Padhi

Flood Fury

Abundance of water inundates my feelings
with fears of another fierce flood in the land
demolishing nests of the poor, the hapless
drying up the source of tears to open
floodgates of the self-consuming fire
of remorse in the hollows of their eyes
caught under fall of incessant rain;
calling up the dangers from seasonal sleep
stirring roots of misery from the deep
causing Maoists of liquid terror
to stalk, stab and slay the innocent
with bullets of showers from clouds
of doubts in their muffled brain;
adding to damages from lingering havocs —
series of super cyclones in a chain
digging at the barks of freshly healed
wounds, for flow of gushing pain;
we don't know why killer water
storms into our hearth and home
like a chronic disease again and again!

Saroj K Padhi

Flow

FLOW

The ice of apathy melts like glacier under sun
as desires sparkle in my obstinate eyes at the break of dawn,
million birds of your wishes rise up into the sky of my dreams
to gently glide down after a brief flight in lazy morn,
look how they land down onto the dew-soaked lawn
after Time's destined turn
to chide our love with mild words of displeasure-
and of our short foolish avoidance, make such a huge fun!

you are white petals of jasmine now
harboring the bees of my lust on the terrace of your barn,
I'm the tame white rabbit on your cherry palms
trying to decipher way into store of your treasured corn,
see how we sink into each other's streams like the rivers
as silently they flow under cosmic rays in mirthful quivers.

Saroj K Padhi

Flute

There is a soul inside body's cave
forever blowing the fine, golden flute
that we seldom hear for the great save
as we float on crests of worldly wave;

the enticing trill calls out Gopis of virtues
to swim across Yamuna to court,
but the wistful spirit prefers to rave
of pleasures of body with mushy moat;

the birdie sitting under the leafy boughs
silently chirps on, in tune with the flute
I need to close my eyes and listen to it
and enjoy joys that spring from the root.

Saroj K Padhi

Fog

Your breath smells of burnt mango buds
caught in the heat of a fiery love
with an indulgent sun
under the cover of an impenetrable fog
that melts in an early Spring morn
to drip from tips of unsteady leaves
that wait to be shed from wounded trees,
but still are holding on

and desiring to be licked long
by the rabid sun,
to escape from an insipid Winter freeze
that entrapped all
with little promise of early return;

but alas! Spring's frenzy can't last long
when birds stop their sweet song
to break into pitiable shrieks
as bullets float in out of the blue
digging holes into our mud walls
and terror from the red corridor
throws us out of the door;

and startled
we crouch into caves dark, dingy, unknown
where death threatens us with a stark oblivion!

When will we be free from fear
to woo the lusty Spring?
When will the fog restore us to its blind hug
in its sweet, old, familiar ring?

Saroj K Padhi

Fog Rain

A thick fog from dark wings of night
settles down on boughs of leafy trees
like clouds in vaults of sky, in dense patches
to rain from tips of leaves, before the sun rises
and a bewitched wet earth smells of sweet flora
as the sun, secret caves of her body gently touches;

but the sun is a moon here tossed by roving clouds
like a woman aroused from sleep
when tangles of hair disheveled by Spring wind
on her moony face dances.

O this sweet rain of fog
that every pore of body drenches
with birds singing from under showers of trees
where flowers shake legs in bunches!

I'm an enchanted wanderer
swimming like a leaf in a pond
where buds fallen from overhanging boughs
bounce in ecstasy as its fragrant water blushes!

Saroj K Padhi

Footfalls Of Death

Why is this lovelorn heart now a days seeking? -
Some ecstasy beyond limits of time and space
Wanting to live in the interior's unlimited grace
Not craving for fish or fowl or any other thing
That it craved for, but just wants to be in fling
With a soft ring deep inside that keeps buzzing
About the magnificent void in those yummy looks
Of youth that turned me on aspiring while gasping
In throes of a beautiful madness of pink desires
With blazes of fires at root of this house burning!
Now wings of my body stretch out like four pieces
Of bamboo under wilted leaves still yellow turning!
Why am I these days drawn to such cool dreaming?
Am I mellowing or to tunes of a song, slowly dying!

Saroj K Padhi

Footprints

FOOTPRINTS

At the mouth a river ceases to be the river
as she empties into tides that swiftly take over
thro' false promises made by sea, the sensual lover,
without adequate foreplay her sweet body is won over;

the tryst at the delta is a witness to the pretenses
made under moonlight by the foaming, fretting waters
by the artful flex of masculine muscles
where she is a sheer show of poor reflex,
in the artifice of roaring waves, a forced silence;

'Everything is fair in love', he says before subsuming
her soul under the wide stretch of his vast body
with undying, endless hunger
when she is a poor lust, a semblance of desire;

undressed she walks on the sprawling sands
with a defleshed body, outraged soul

and the poor marks of her footprints

as she wobbles on,

are washed away by a cruel, fuming shore!

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Saroj K Padhi

For New Year Calls

Let's mend our broken smiles, repair our love,
dent the bodies a little, dye and polish looks
after the barks of old wounds have been shed
from eyes of rueful trees into heart of thinning brooks;

never mind the smudges or bruises on time's bleeding face
blasts and mindless slaughters in the name of faith
standoffs at the border or rage of pachyderms in distress
forget deaths from bullets of intimate enemies
smile like the radiant crescent moon
as softly you tread the dividing line in bated breath;
come here, stretch your look into eternity
be not morose or mournful
witness the sun rising from the navel of a bald mountain
to kiss a sweet dark inside million wombs of forests deep
smell the leaves of my musky desire
crushed by cruel convention,
fill your dark spaces with light from my luminous being
so that we can awake to the silent call of stars
awaiting anxiously at all times to take us in!

Saroj K Padhi

Forest Path

Elated by the aroma of leaves
in rain newly born
and of petals by wind gently borne
as I tread the path alone
in a forest unknown,
wilted rain-soaked leaves rustle
at my feet
with pain in shriveled vein
as soiled, they languish in a July morn
but still trying to hold on
steadfast to the lap of the ground
into which slowly they will be bound;

they too have memories of love and fun
before from twigs
getting untagged and torn,
with hour long kisses and cuddles
from blossoms from dusk to dawn,
with latent smell of petals
oozing from crevices of their body
though of beauty, they're fully shorn;

now the petals too lie on grass
away from the twig's embrace
but still oozing old leaves' fragrance
in their secret soul,
pushed by the wind as they roll
cherishing fond memories of youth
dead and gone
as they lie forgotten and forlorn.

Saroj K Padhi

Found

I have found you
In the smile of the toothless,
In the love of the mindless,
in the soft touch
of dappled deer
under a gentle Sun's caress;
in the pollen dust sticking
to the butterfly;
in the morning's dazzling face,
in the kind words of friends
who steal others' distress;
in the sweet satisfaction
lying at the end of
a marathon race;
in the likes of thousand hearts
that my words
so beautifully brace;
in the peace
of an imagined death
at the end of life's race;
and in the serenity
of devotees in a trance
under the bower of divine grace.

Saroj K Padhi

Free Not To Fly

White butterflies fluttering around
Dozing creepers of the afternoon
Turn direction to dart below,
Behind cute yellow ones flitting across
To hide behind bushes soon
Heedless to pursuits of promises made
In the dawn of secret boon,
Of siesta and fun, walk together and run;
Coming to know that it's the colour
That keeps the male folk running
And it's in their lot to be left with
Sheer sighing and swooning.

Sarees swing as they dry in open air
From ropes tied to necks of shrinking trees
On the bank of the river that sinks still deeper
With little charm in the bank's mythical breeze;

Women very close, clip wings of fellow women
Men in garbs of saints act as more humane;

And Love admitted in Casualty ward
Suffers from intense malarial pain in brain
As news of terror- strikes and racial wars grips us
In every lane and bylane.

Saroj K Padhi

Friend

Oft' I find emotions delicate
like buds of July under lashes of rain
drooping too low
to embrace amorphous bodies of dust
that drip like ashes of burnt-out lust,
like endless showers of unrelieved pain,
again to wallow like hopes turned vain
in gaping cracks of dry earth
that reel under pangs of drought
in thunder-hit land of parched vein;

still life marches on
with occasional flashes of rainbow in mind
that impels dull spirits
to overcome the bind,
brighten shades of sadness beneath smile
lighting up the blind alley awhile
for the unfortunate to take heart again,
reconcile souls to agony of absences
in our millennium city's dark lane;

give me your hand dear friend
take me into the sanctum of your heart
before to oblivion we part,
breathe out your sighs into my lungs
for the merger of our pangs
share the cocktail of mixed pain
before for life we start again!

Saroj K Padhi

Fright

O God! who will save us from the tyranny of this Night
that unleashes blinding waves of terror, torment and fright
turning us into hapless, innocent victims of poor sorts
as we totter at the edge of light and sink at bend of twilight
when dark secrets of humanity snake out of life's sham holes
to shock, sting and benumb us with deadly poison of their truth
and leave us dead at heart and in heads imbecile:

a three-year old rape victim struggles for life
on the corridor of a hospital haunted by stray dogs
as the wind scatters the ash from the pyre of a neighborhood girl
who resisted vulgar comments, to be burnt alive at the stake;
and ghosts of Mao move untrammelled in cut-off regions
filling the air with fear of death in the kangaroo court,
on the eve of vote.

We are a timid generation with little values from our past
and into the shallow frame of thoughtless living we are cast.

Saroj K Padhi

Garlands On Graveyard Tree

Those flowers in the garland hanging from a lone tree
that stands like mythical Belalasen, detached and free,
witness the last scene like fallen stars at the graveyard
without any desire to return to dead or receive reward;

bodies that clung to them with the hope of escaping fire
now lie but like obedient children of God on burning pyre,
seeking deep within to burn to full and turn into holy ash
as boughs, against dangling, dry blossoms in wind so dash;

ignored by streaming life in nearby traffic, quietly they burn
in love with smokes from pyre and dust from the busy roads
when some old epitaphs try toraise heads against a rude Sun
as bodies succumb to tongues of flame rising from logs' loads;

the afternoon merges flowers with pyres, and desires with fires
in dance of death, as rites resolve riddles turning ashes into mires.

Saroj K Padhi

Garrulous Flowers

Garrulous about the intent in your half smile
they soon get physical over the naughty wind;
and tired, retreat to a corner of silence within
for some secret bouts of relieving drink to find;

bees besotted with you, taunt them with drones
over those stealthy dark moments they spent
with some adulterous cute butterflies in fling
who flaunt big love for even strong hearts to rent.

Why do you stray near those shameless flowers or
who burn with rapid flow of envy in each vein?
Don't walk near those bees and butterflies too
who scheme to keep me in throes of love's pain!

Saroj K Padhi

Giggling Rain

Whose giggles distract the clouds
of my thoughts
from resting on the mountain tops
where rain like heaven's nectar drops
to flow as a stream
of blessing for the crops?

Stranded under a tree near the road-side park
Is it the pitter-patter on leaves I hear in the dark?
Or voices of girls floating in from the nearby mart
Or some long lost dear one's voice resounding
in the vale of my parched heart?

Whatever be fountain of the giggle,
it brings me to the end of all struggle
to be happy at last in tune with new rain

that shuts the mind from all kinds of pain!

Saroj K Padhi

Give Me

Give me, if you can:
a peg of silence
from the bottle of your unshared agony,
a dose of forgetfulness
from the hazy stream of your longings,
a feel of chill
from the frost of your lone grief,
a handful of Summer
from the dream of your Winter nights,
a bout of loneliness
from the quiet of your solitary soul.
Give me if you can
the center of your darkness
for there only
you, I can truly embrace.

Saroj K Padhi

Give Me Some Space

Give me some space amidst the rubbles-
may be on a common slab or an uncut brick stone
where I would sit down to meditate
on the soundless wings of time
fluttering like speckled butterflies
that repose on thoughts awhile
before vanishing into the hill's cleavage
hiding bushes underneath which
lovers taste eternity at the touch of green foliage;

let me enjoy an opulence of time in chase of those birds
that skim the rippling waters of the river for their prey;
and shed all grievance against the wind that rudely refused
across you to blow, as to the fields it rushed the other way;

give me some space in the vicinity of your cottage
where wild shrubs smack of scented, virile youth
let me lie like a neglected log on nearby wood path
for a taste of the flavor of your love, pure and sooth.

Saroj K Padhi

Glowworm's Delight

The day I stole butterflies from your lips
you stole peace of my mind
inscribed in body's abysmal deeps,
inflaming thoughts of union in the vacuum
breeding lotuses in joints' dried-up creeks,
but you hid your self
at the corner of some dark sanctorum;
strangely I sought
your shadow everywhere
and loved every little thing about you:
the henna on your palms ignited my eyes
and I longed to burn with them to colors new,
with each sunrise
you were the sun
in every drop of desire's dew;
the champak in your youthful breath
many a forbidden desire did brew;
and secretly I thought over the enigma
in your half-bloomed smiles
that hid some drops of tear
while revealing only a few.
The day you stole dream from my sleep
I have been awake all night
to wander like a lone, lost glowworm
in a stranger's bedroom in dim bed-light.

Saroj K Padhi

God's Smile

Dusts from zillion incense sticks of worship rise
Every morn to smear your body with color of sky
where the stars twinkle as your compassionate eye
with the sickle moon dangling as an eternal smile
from blushing cheeks whereto birds of love fly;
breezes of desire toss goddess Tulsi's scented hair
as you grow romantic with consort Lakshmi at dawn
filling the earth and heaven with true bliss of morn
and the waters of Gandaki river play with rippling fun;
the sun of our faith brings you closer in our lives
but the streaming clouds of doubt cover your face
as we sit down to pray under in mist for your grace.

Saroj K Padhi

Grass Flowers

As dawn writes the story of a receding Spring
on pink petals of little grass flowers in dull swing
autumn leaves drape the earth in an ashen hue
and eyes of morning are filled with tears of dew;

I wander like a wind over the valley of silvery dream,
over Nature covered by a thin blanket of moon beam
over star-lets of morning glory cast in a gentle gleam
where rays from a shaded sun in waves of fog doth swim;

I pick moments of loss from shed petals of lost dreams
from shrunken hands of grass terrified by sounds of blasts
to offer to my Lord seemingly deaf to sad human screams
when white wings of mercy alight from sky in multiple casts;

peace continues to flow like running stream and raining flowers
forcing me to sit in supplication, in awe of sweet divine dowers.

Saroj K Padhi

Guilt

Your deadening silence returns
like annual heat waves every Summer
to burn the ground with the same old fever
at my backyard where guilts from past so familiar
lie like dead leaves fallen from the tree of our tryst
with nothing but low noontime flutters to share
as there is no other option for a cheer
like bored housewives at the back door
discussing their chore
when their husbands turn greener under a receding sun
and flowers old spread new tales of love with new burn;
you appear these days like the blue moon
at the distant fringe of a smoke-ravished sky
where stars of love gaze at you with a big why
and mongrels and stray jackals howl in our familiar arena,
across the street, in the dead of the night
as our pillows sweat under the weight of heat
and nightmares cause our hearts to skip beat!

Saroj K Padhi

Gulmohars

You descend onto me like sensations to a mimosa plant
tremors strange seize me as you become my sole want;
you descend into my dreams at every moment of Spring
like gulmohars into bushes where song birds love to sing,
be it frosty morn or hot dawn, snowy eve or warm night
you are there in misty glory forever lurking in my sight;
like fog of old intoxication you hang over my pining heart
your memories hide under barks to swell as rains start,
you're there in drops from new monsoon that so spellbind
in drenching flowers to ooze at touch from a casual wind;
in clouds of summer that weave shades of a sweet peace
in cool sands of desert basking under Moon's balmy bliss,
in swing of every thought that stirs the spirit and flesh
in twists, turn, bruises and burn your love is God's grace.

Saroj K Padhi

Hadagarh

Clouds nestle between crests of hills
like my dense desires touching you deep down
where roots of your lush green skin ooze to the brim
mesmerizing the morning Sun to play the Moon
behind thickets of dark, sensuous thoughts
that incite the red lilies on the surface of your playful body
to break head on morning waves
not being able to kiss beams
lost to the dull dawn of a September day;

Salandi is still half asleep here with million dreams awake
in her half shut eyes kissed by a cold wind
as miles away the mother Sal tree on the broken, source hill
fails to form resin around her drying up barks
and the wild animals cut short visits to the sinking river;

cover me dear Love with the blanket of your old warmth
as sleep failed me during night on the bank of this wailing lake
where deodars are oft' tossed by an impotent wind,
fishes escape nets of hungry fishermen
and the dam ceaselessly bangs head on the rocks
to echo the voices of the aggrieved souls in timeless pain.

Saroj K Padhi

Heartless

Don't give your heart dear
to my keeping,
for my own is lost long since
in reckless giving;
hence mine is always a search
for the lost gem:
in cracks and crevices
of relationships rocked or broken,
of moments of gold robbed or stolen,
inside heaps of midnight ashes,
in storms of sighs
or mountains of huge losses;
now I'm a fire
without desire for burning
a pangless pain
without sweet aching
that keeps my love starving;
hence don't give your heart dear
to my keeping,
for I'm full of empty words now
that hardly give life to living.

Saroj K Padhi

Hérons

These white herons brooding near me
want to say something
as they retract their long bills,
meditate for a while
look up to the cloudy sky
with no desire now to fly
as their feet on green grass
get soaked in rain
the butterflies drunk enough descend
from long lip-locks with flowers
to swirl across their faces for sometime
and not to come back to me again.
These herons with peace in their plumes
surrounded by butterflies of many hues
transport me into joys
that at the heart of Nature lie
offering vision of God
beauty and bliss
for which human hearts always sigh.

Saroj K Padhi

Hesitant Rain

HESITANT RAIN

Rain glistens with a wavering smile on Monsoon's wet cheeks
as streaks of lightning play around clouds' dark parching lips,
after bouts of weak showers have gulped nightmares of nights,
with blooms of baby turfs on damp soil and old garbage heaps;

birds keep open their beaks in expectation of a little more drink
into deeper waters tortoises swim and crocodiles downward sink
as hills shiver with an unknown thrill in their half-soaked spines
and flowers raise heads from crevices of rocks, skyward to wink;

in despair river of my love looks up for more rain as she glides on
with desires to meet the sea stifled, resulting in utter heart-burn,
stripped of promises sadly from under grey clouds the Sun looks on
as louder the priests chant for the Monsoon's untrammelled return;

we're the accursed farmers on dry banks in endless wait for rain
hoping to be redeemed by lavish showers that breath would retain.

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Saroj K Padhi

Hidden Spring

A Spring feeble stutters at the threshold
in the voice of a koel too thirsty to sing,
when wind's song fails to excite the flowers
before to bees, treasure of honey they bring;

everything looks so dull, drab and grey
when like dry twigs, our thoughts waver and sway
and desire to unite under the bowers in rose garden
is subsumed by a suicidal fire in eyes of hay;

the river too doesn't move ahead as it stops to muse
over issues of water across boundaries and border,
when lips dry up as leaves of uprooted trees on banks
and in vacant ecstasy, butterflies of love shudder;

at this hour, some damp ground of love let us explore
in hidden spaces of mind where plants new always prosper.

Saroj K Padhi

Hill Top Rest House

Drenched in the scent of overhanging moist Mahula,
towering Eucalyptus, Teak and Sal trees
with the smell from wild creepers at her armpits
it is my fond loving bear of the night inside whose hugs
I listen to the crickets pouring out their soul
in shrill monsoon symphonies
as moths ponder deeply over the loss of peace
of the virgin woods;
their unsteady feet clambering dim electric bulbs
under continual drizzles—
before a few of them drop dead
to the gravels in the portico like withered petals

flowers look startled by occasional honks from four wheelers
scrambling up the nearby ghat under the night's blind siege-
their mechanical drones drowning the voice of the lean stream
that sulks down like a lost baby in search of home under a calming breeze;

the half moon descends to the distant watch tower
to walk under the weight of semi-dark nostalgic clouds
filled with dusts of aroma from trees' musky bower
as I stumble upon a dream on my bed before darkness enshrouds!

Saroj K Padhi

Hollow Meets

No wonder meetings with you are very rare these days,
and even if we meet in the back of our familiar garden
with our souls caught in a wild maze unable to awaken;
we meet with our minds lost in some twilight thoughts,
we talk but in empty, endless chatters inside unlit slots
with tongues hurling pearls of construed stray metaphors
at the broken doors;
when meanings fall to crawl on some slippery floors
even without the shadow of mythical fire being there
to assuage hearts infected with time inflicted sores!
Where is meaning gone from the word
caught by misery at the core?
Where is love lost in the labyrinth of arguments
that our wits simply bore?
What are we now in this concrete jungle?
Are we specs of meaningless dust on window panes
to be swept by random gusts to end hollow pains?
Are we just tattoos pasted to hands of wind?
Where else should I search for each other to find?

Saroj K Padhi

Humming Heart

The bees hum to me a secret
As the leaves shine and sway
In the morning breeze
Before full break of day.
A secret I can't reveal
In words or gestures
Or in volume's full play.
The hum draws me closer
As I pass by
Filling me with wonder
To stop and stay nearby.
Leaning to the flowers
I listen to their song
Telling about the secret of
Love's journey always long
That leads to union of hearts
When ego is afar flung.
And you are left to suck
The dew of loneliness
When honey from life is gone!

Saroj K Padhi

I Love Dark

I love this dark that caresses
wounds from common hurts
in the silence of my soul
when night after its familiar stings,
to a corner does lightly stroll
and leaves like drops do softly fall
to the grass of my body
to bury the day's tough roll
into the roots of my tree
where I am from all noises of life
completely free;
Come you dear dark nearer into my crevices,
repeat your soft caresses
bind me to your dark tresses
strangle me into your gentle breath
and let me be sighed out
of the nostrils of your jasmines
into simple airy nothings.

Saroj K Padhi

I'm A Half-Burnt Cycas Plant

A silent thunder in my heart
Rumbles across the entwining skeleton
Threatening to blast off the secret cave of the chest
Without a drop of rain expected from the horizon,
As the burnt out bust of the Cycas blankly looks on
With envy at birds and bees
On indolent hunt in bushes and trees
Where your growing image interrogates
Every word of love whispered by the wind
Into the crazed ears of a Christmas tree
In whose arms a strange solace I find.

Impotent metaphors of the present
Quarry the womb of the past
In search of those cyclone-hit plants
That went underground with a plaintive sound
Echoing the pathos of our break -up
Under a whimpering November Sun,
When your lips faltered out the name of real lover
Under my eyes' angry gun
Burning my image into ashes in fire from that Sun.

Memories smack of rotten rat smell in the loft
Of my old crumbling house
Where I turn a temporary guest
In search of a real identity of my own
When I rush to rest awhile
Under the shade of scented creepers of the dawn
Sizzling with fresh hurts as they silently lie across my lawn.

Saroj K Padhi

I'm A Speck Of Dust

Steeped in an emptiness profound
with only one name to resound
inside a perfumed darkness at the core,
thro' the throng unable to steer clear
I crawl to an extreme corner
of the eleventh step (out of the twenty two)
leading to that door
at the rear of which sits my sweet Lord
and I'm waiting here for feet of a devotee to be trod.
Memories of a crazy wind try to blow me back
across familiar spaces and time to the heath
of my birth where my relations seek redemption
in fruits' and flowers' wild elation.
Stones caress but their hugeness threatens me,
stray sands mock me, clamour of crowd frightens me
echoes of whines from beggars at threshold distract me
still I lie patiently in silent prayer,
for I'm aware of the danger of Gundicha's impatience
that left my Lord half formed during initial installation;
but I know not when His sun-lit eyes will fall
to raise me from the abyss
and awaken me to the bliss of His reincarnation!

Saroj K Padhi

I'm Sure You Love Me

I'm the swirl of the song inside
your heaving heart
heavy with
jarring thoughts in twirl
I'm the flood of a muddy river
inside your scared eyes
with wild waters on a wheel
You looked, you laughed
You heaved and paused a while
You smiled and smiled but said so little
I became that long abstract poise
eloquent with desire
at the middle of your look
an unspelt syllable of that beat
caught in the turmoil of a sweet pang's hook
I'm the loudest word
thumping inside the wind of your lungs,
the noisiest chant in the flow of your blood
which for pure love so much always yearns! ! !

Saroj K Padhi

Image

IMAGE

Strange are the things that contrive your image
in the corridors of time past and time present-
dew-drenched champaks and night jasmines bespeak
your subtle presence around, in moist air opulent;

burning gulmohars of the day invite fire-red glow
of your cheeks with fluorescent light of love radiant;
the gushing dark clouds over the chest of the Sky
summon your saree over my face with memory luxuriant;

waves in ocean dance with throb of thoughts of longing
for you in a mind entranced by the Moon of your smile,
chitter of song birds in the forest recreate your voice
at twilights of trysts with past, during self-imposed exile;

images dance like leaves in dark whispering to the wind
about each aspect of your presence latent in this mind!

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Saroj K Padhi

Imperfect

IMPERFECT

'There is a crack in everything, that's how the light gets in.'
-Leonard Cohen

Let me be a fool to revel in thousand imperfections
like the crescent Moon beaming at selfies and stars
tossed by army of clouds whose curves let the light in;
and caress Love's million faces with their vile scars,

let me not mind the flimsy cracks in those relationships
that glue to me like shadows completely my very own;
let me not mind drinking from the strained steaming cups,
and stay happy in midst of unresolved issues overgrown;

let me embrace flaws, walk faultily and sing 'outdated' song
be cozily clad in rough crumpled jeans and childish T-shirt,
pooh-pooh perfection in transient things that scarcely belong
and be a poet with words inadequate to pour out my heart;

let me breathe limitless love in a beautifully imperfect world
where things lying in mess, freedom to calmness do herald!

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Saroj K Padhi

In A Night Boat

The boat is drunk tonight with love
Of ripples tingling her curvy bottom,
Leaves watch and whisper to her ears
Secrets about moon beams
Prying into
The folds of her ragged raw body
Like that of a rustic lady in black;
As she dozes before starting to move
This evening
Beside rows of wild Ketaki
Her knot-like breasts are
Lustily flicked by a gentle wind
In love of boat completely blind;
Herons darting across, before their catch
Sweep their looks over her body on fire
And as she moves gently
The night fills her crevices
With shiny streams of wet desire
To the core of her bones and mire
Inviting one and all including the stars
to actively share
this cosmic love of water with fire.

Saroj K Padhi

In Love With

I'm in love with
the Moon I kissed on your lips
in the honeyed night of our last meet,
I'm in love with
the Sun that blesses
the sweet dark dot on your cheeks,
I'm in love with
the hug that takes me into the blue expanse
of your vast soul
where I merge like a speck
into the distant horizon;
I'm in love with the Spring
that into each cell of your body
treasures of joy doth bring

Saroj K Padhi

In My Muse's Arms

She took me into her scented arms
buried me between her breasts
and filled me to full with a lotus drink
on the lawn at the slender river brink
letting my aching heart silently recede
and into an oblivion slowly sink;
like pieces of arid earth
under unexpected rain
drinking up fast, lost shape to regain,
nectar of life flowed
like a blind jungle brook
thro' my shrunken vein
I woke up to find magic of the wind
playing its flute in the floral bowers
swans singing of pure love
under happy fall of Monsoon showers
my lost love regained
and every spark of soul's joy
in Nature's self retained.

Saroj K Padhi

In The Eyes Of The River

Shadows of trees ask the river of the morning
about stains of tears in her half closed eye
to which calmly and sweetly does she reply,
'Look here a little deeper into my dark floor
wherein sits the image of my lover in prayer
with determination to reach the sea quite far
from here, when I have stumbled into a trickle
with my hesitant flow's continuous tumble!
How can I fulfill his dark image with such love
that the sea can give to a seeker of salvation
when I myself am caught in deprivation?
But as you know he won't go leaving my flow
Into which he has dropped his silent tears,
feelings of rejection and unwarranted fears
his hopes, dreams, pains and cool pleasures.'
'Tell me dear shadows how can I fulfill this guy
when I myself am wandering like a shadow shy
unable to fulfill myself in absence of lover rain,
burning inside this transparent plasma of pain,
how can I stop his obstinate tears' flow into marrows
of my bones with their effects in my eyes' dark hollows? '

Saroj K Padhi

Insecure

INSECURE

Alarmingly insecure in the wooden boat in which
I ride the tides, conscious of many invisible pores
that let the sea water, in small but lethal dozes in
my boatman anchors it at the shore, as up it soars-

to find me searching for the last dregs of the body
still aching to tumble down to arms of a wet shore
to excavate more pleasures from the secret wombs
of sands lying like sluggish snails at love's open door;

when traces of a bewildered Sun sink into the horizon
for the lucent Moon to pop out of heaven's dark gate
suspending all logic but raising tenets of new emotion
sprinkling desires over a dreaming river's silver chest-

from where fishes jump into the boat of a sagging mind
with my small catch without net, myself so secure I find!

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Saroj K Padhi

Inside Baya Bird's Nest

Inside the Baya-bird's sweetest nest
Where I would like to eternally rest!

INSIDE THE BAYA BIRD'S NEST

Entangled willingly though
I dangle from a height I love
from a strong palm frond
overhanging a small pond;
without claustrophobia inside
or any aerophobia outside:

the hanging nest of reeds, twigs and hay
High above the green grass in a gentle sway;
With fragrance from knotted wires of trees
Wafted inside my cool home on wings of breeze,
I share, with Bayas in colonies
that for me so much care,
drinking dew that drop from wings
eating seedlings from their beaks
that feed their cute siblings
with a chit...chit...and wheezy chee...
tuned to my ears on a bed quite breezy! ! !

From here I watch lovers in lip-lock
behind the pink bougainvilliaea in swing
revealing a part of the young love-birds' wing
engaged listlessly in their cool fling;
young reddish- green leaves smiling
green twigs clapping, yellow leaves chuckling
and brown, grey leaves sighing at the scene
but the lovers there hide not wanting to be seen.

From here I had to watch the cruelty
of deflowering of a rustic girl resistant,
against her will, ripped bit by bit
by a gang of riffraff in white heat;
and the blood-red sun tearing
its chest out of anger and agony

and finally jumping to end life
in the blue waters of the sky;
I had nothing to heal that girl
So I stayed for days in hunger
With no food to my bill
I prayed to God for her wound to heal.

I watch toddlers' little feet
being kissed by gentle brown earth
youngsters treading the ground with mirth
and the old dragging on as if for rebirth
bunches of grass trampled, turning into hay
with no words of regret for them to say.

From here I see the orange sun
faltering much at the sky's fringe
hesitating to leave the shivering leaves
shaking with that love which
every flower here quietly breathes.

Let me go to sleep early tonight
in my nest of reed, hay and leaves
on a stable bed of mud and dung
under shimmers of fireflies till dawn
and the night wind playing on
in tune with a sweet bird song.

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Saroj K Padhi

Inside The Baya-Bird's Nest

Entangled willingly though
I dangle from a height I love
from a strong palm frond
overhanging a small pond;
without claustrophobia inside
or any aerophobia outside:

the hanging nest of reeds, twigs and hay
High above the green grass in a gentle sway;
With fragrance from knotted wires of trees
Wafted inside my cool home on wings of breeze,
I share, with Bayas in colonies
that for me so much care,
drinking dew that drop from wings
eating seedlings from their beaks
that feed their cute siblings
with a chit...chit...and wheezy chee...
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and finally jumping to end life
in the blue waters of the sky;
I had nothing to heal that girl
So I stayed for days in hunger
With no food to my bill

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in my nest of reed, hay and leaves
on a stable bed of mud and dung
under shimmers of fireflies till dawn
and the night wind playing on
in tune with a sweet bird song.

Saroj K Padhi

Invincible Spring

Invincible is the spirit of the subtle Spring
that slowly fades after fighting a losing battle
against armors of Summer with its hard sting
who reduces the koel's song to a poor prattle;

the white butterflies dancing in mid-day Sun
on baked grass try hard to preserve its sheen,
as like soldiers lush Leaves on stoic trees burn
in return to retain the tri-color's patriotic green;

flowers like outraged virgins droop from the boughs
with their looks piteously turned to silhouette Moon,
as with wind they confer how to bear without grouse
for they know in life, death is a must later or soon;

a lone bird on electric wire broods over tenuous life
of things beautiful getting lost in turmoil and strife.

Saroj K Padhi

Journey Within

Sated with the surges of flesh
the body falls to an abysm of silence
eliciting the spirit from a bondage
to soar high into the vast blue space
where there is radiance of light
clouds of bliss aloft without pace,
there's a strange stillness
in sanctum sanctorum
no excitement or boredom,
in a mind afloat like light wind,
thoughts are wood dead
emotions like boats on still water
by current nowhere are led,
you sit like a block of rock
at the center of a mountain
an eternal stream of mythical rivers
flow deep inside like a fountain,
you are abuzz awhile
like soft murmur of a brook
soon to turn into a nameless spook,
down into a glimmer you sink
without desire for any brink,
you are the flower in cool flame
ashimmer of light without a name!

Saroj K Padhi

Juvenile

Left in the lurch
at the peak of raw emotions
while seeking the other,

my foot steps floundered
as they failed in the process
to recognize the self-image
lost to the enigma of time
that allowed provisions for many revisions,
also tor simultaneous confusions
before redeeming the past
from muddy streams
and sinful lumps of slime;

past is powerful a presence,
the present is fighting with itself
for a clearer voice to express
those feelings of the prime
when the forebodings of future
overshadow the present clime;

I don't know
how to come out of this juggernaut
of complex emotions
of love, guilt, remorse combine
in this moonless night of dark hate

till that time
when the grace of sun on leaves does shine.

Saroj K Padhi

Kalvaisakhi

Drops of rain sink in,
cells swell
to be quelled
by a cold wind blowing across
soon after a small Kalbaisakhi —
a sudden gush of blood inside
receding to a quick but queer hush;
I know not
why I always think —
you are there in every feel of this wind,
in each little wave of this mind,
in every breath of each green leaf,
in every quiver of this lovelorn lip,
in whispers of soft rain
in every shred of cool pain;
in every particle of this Earth
in my every new birth,
in my dreams and screams
you are the only goal;
you are the music of life
in the silent rhythm of this soul!

Saroj K Padhi

Kash Flowers And The Moon

As monsoon clouds recede to rest awhile
in unseen vaults of an ever changing sky,
Kash flowers look up to the glowing Moon
for pegs of dew-wet beams from the high
like white spires of magic towers raising
heads of glory above ridges of sands dry;
it seems their lips are soggy with kisses
from an Autumn Moon that ignites
white flames of desire
in heart of the Earth for an amorous Sky!

But walking across the dry banks of the river
we miss the rippling smiles of those flowers
cast on blue waters that once drove the Moon crazy
to descend to watery dens for secret bowers;

their sighs merge now into whines of a sad wind
that in cracked hearts of rice fields do resound
whereto stray cattle instead of farmers are bound
for endless grazing of yellowing hay all around!

Saroj K Padhi

Katak, I Love You

O my Katak of multiple bazaars and myriad streets,
Of our many secret affairs with baffling lanes and bylanes,
Of thousand little desires awoken across smelly gutters;
Some fulfilled and many more still lurking
In the alleys of our common suffering life,
Silver city of our many loves
with bee-lines at food joints of dahibara,
chaat and gupchup and bara
catering to our hunger,
you are always there at evening Khaties
to offer your unique pleasure.
We love your
pompous puja celebrations,
gaiety and jublations,
your bands and immersions
drinks, dances and pollutions
along narrow roads in night
without causing an ounce of fright;
We love you Katak despite your noisy living
on mud-mired streets,
your mad love of Gods and Goddesses
making annual go-rounds in fleets;

Saroj K Padhi

Khandadhar Falls

My Love takes a shower under a thin spray from the colossal fall
when rainbow bends to kiss her tender feet
poised on rocks of a mountain that enjoys whispers of clouds
with whom it has its round the year tryst;

dusts of water flung from lofty heights
are wreathed by morning shines in their celestial fun
in forming a spectrum of wild, interesting hues
in the soul of enchanting water that loves endless run;

look how she plucks a handful of hues from the beams
as she rides the bow in her desire to scale greater heights,
when the dusts have drenched her to the rims
wetting her nymph-like plumes on way of habitual flights;

love is awed by wondrous harmony of heights of mounting rocks
in eternal oozes of life in vast spectra from caves of secret blocks!

Saroj K Padhi

Kiss From Rain

As you pause a little to think over
as to how to manoeuver an answer
to my desire for a kiss so queer,
words on your lips dry up quickly
like a flower in dull, dreary Summer
before falling into a sudden stupor
when drops of rain moisten them
at the edge, arousing their hunger.
Who cares for words under rain dear
when it's accompanied by a sweet shower?
Who cares for the nod from eyes under a cloudy sky
or for an invitation from blushing cheeks
when lightning of love pervades like a fire
to silence thunder of lips
under heaven's shadowy bower?

Saroj K Padhi

Kiss The Spring Now

Kiss them now
under the thick veil of morning mist
where dust settles down like clots of blood
on heads of roses in untimely heat,
kiss them now or never
for lips of Spring are running dry
in throes of an unknown fever;
If you want to kiss, kiss them soon
or else you will have to kiss the dead cells
of leaves where fossils of lovers croon
in February wind's periodic, nightly wails;
spread your mat under this leafless tree
gulp down the gruel of rationed one-rupee-rice
with accompanying scent of boiling dal
from neighbour's open kitchen,
wipe your mouth
with the kerchief of a vague satisfaction
after getting done,
and pretend to rest under the bare boughs
tossed by angry strikers' slogan
till you wake up
but to secretly burn -
with fear of mafia stalking you in every corner
till the break of next dawn;
if still you haven't kissed Spring
don't wait for the blossoms to return
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for they are now loitering
in some bank-side garbage
of your own growing city,
as bunches of nameless thorn;
it's really sad to learn
that till now you don't know
where and how to kiss Spring -
in the fort-side garden
or near Cantonment Road juice-center
at Naraj, in Biju park or a roadside bazaar!
Wherever you go
chasing Spring now a days

it seems forever to evade you
like the conjurer's rabbit
vanishing into thin air
when we prefer to hide here
in some remote corner,
in fresh ashes
of an old fire.

Saroj K Padhi

Lapses Of Youth

LAPSES OF YOUTH

Ask that Chikinia park if you want to know
About the lapses of my youth,
Where on the chests of rocks lie engraved
Beautiful words of my pious sin
Sparkling like shiny souls of angels in love with God
In the scribbles of passion on the body of green sod;

Where Spring had run riot into head of a rose
Driving it crazy for a cooling fire
In search of which it multiplied into myriad dancing images
In the nearby lake's waters pierced by a noon Sun in ire-
The rose was pure love and ripples of lake, its singing lyre;
And memories were lost children in the dark of a dead forest
Burning dry leaves of lost love
In strokes of stray Summer fires,
At the touch of my Love's ambling feet
When into smokes of the moon rose the blazing spires.

Ask the dust kissed by her feet at the park
If you care to know about the lapses of my youth-
Its fragrance will tell you about the weaving of wishes
Around the ariel roots hanging from its age old banyan
That turned us into a Naga couple in ecstatic dance of love
To the tune of wind played by an unseen charmer from above.

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Saroj K Padhi

Last Letter

Last letter from Spring was written in tears
of Koel soaked in red oozing from our heart
as we rolled on thorns of inexplicable aches
tuning our ears to broken syllables of lost love,
turning green grass into patches of brown reeds;
lips of flowers trembled in strange fear,
wind stood still, unable the sad sight to bear
leaves shed drops of reddish dew into stormy chest
of a night torn by a desire to be or not to be
as wisps of grey clouds covered face of the moon,
stars glimmered like conflicts in our minds
sighs simmered in fold of arms destined to part,
and the words of the last letter merged into dust
before turning into an echo in silent corner of the heart.

Saroj K Padhi

Last Night Love Came

Last night Love came offering her hand
Wrapped in gossamer beams,
In silent breaths of moist dreams;
As I stood baring the petals of my soul
To a flow of slow dew drips;
She came oozing radiant love
With nectar in her pursed lips.

A river of compassion kept murmuring
In ceaseless ripples of love in her eyes,
Calming the surges of Tsunami
That at the depth of desire lies;
She was nameless every love
For which each creature
In a strange silence inwardly dies.

There was that love glistening in the eyes
That you so oft see in leaves' eyes,
When the delayed Sun
Under the cover of clouds hopelessly sighs.
The long desire of snow for a small spark,
Of wind to be caught in a meaningful flame,
Of something to melt into a sweet nothing
Of Time's yearning for an eternal timeless fling.

Of the desire lurking in eyes of sun to merge
Into an engulfing emptiness under sky's bower
Of Spring's desire to die into the loveliest flower
Under unexpected drops of passion-rain
Blissfully forgetful about all attendant pain.

Saroj K Padhi

Leaning Cloud

As softly she leaned to my sapped monsoon mind
like a dusky, wet cloud toward the mountain crest,
sun rays turned into rainbows in sky's open chest
butterflies stole colors from flowers' surging breast;

jasmines in tresses winked like stars under thin clouds
that lingered listlessly in and out of secret coves of hill,
desire threw nets of kisses at moons beneath the skin
to catch pearls of liquid love in moments of sweet chill;

nights after nights passed idly in her sweet, scented arms
with the breath of pines, scents filling the surrounding air,
as I kept gazing like the bemused mountain of fixed love
when she was the bedecked princess of the night so fair;

every monsoon as clouds are cuddled by mountain
my love as rain, drizzles into life's drying up fountain.

Saroj K Padhi

Let Me Slip Away

Let me slip away silently into all forms of glory
On this earth before being claimed by Death's fury;
Be a fading ripple in the breast of a river
In an early tryst with splendid Nature;
A soft vanishing glow in the forehead of the sky
That into darkness of a scented evening doth slowly die;
A withering smile on the face of my love's sunflower
That reveals the beauty of young lovers' desire;
The last murmur of a tune in my Love's mellow soul
Who loved to muse lines of my songs in an easy roll;
A glistening drop of tear on the cheeks of a lush leaf
That so softly carries in its heart, night's terrible grief;
A moment of bliss in a devotee's meditative prayer
A beat of wild Damru of Lord Shiva in dance's fire

Saroj K Padhi

Let Us

Let us grow strangers to those butterflies
That sprinkled colours into our eyes
Blindfolding emotional hearts to melt
Before breaking into bursts of sighs.
Let us not look at that moon
That crazed the waters of the pond
In whom our shadows met
Before moving away from the bond.
Let us not visit that garden again
Where the Sun enchanted the leaves
Of our fingers to entangle eternity
Into soft touch of wild, excited flowers.
Let us say bye to those stars
That waved their hands as we lay
On bed of dew-soaked grass
With petals of body folded to pray.
Let us move away from rain too
That scratched the inside of our feel
With rainbows of wondrous joy
Before our eyes with true tears of love fill.

Saroj K Padhi

Letter From Bhanjavihar

Tell me dear who here
Is so complete, so full?
Why are we so bound together
in words as well as in empty spaces
even in the absence of a fixed rule?
When each one seems lost in a quest —
Like, like...
the wounds of the Earth in search
of a balm from rain;
hurtled winds in search of an intimate sojourn
between the scented breasts of a sky;
the mad moon in search of the lover Sun
who promised to fulfill dreams with lots of fun;
the river in quest of a warm embrace
at the mouth
from the recently-grown-inattentive sea;
in the womb of the flower, the blinded bee;
and the day light, beneath the dark fragrant
locks of the night
in search of rainbow and long lost heat;
flow of blood and tears
in search of the touch
of the saree soaked in longings;

half-burnt mind in search of the palm
of green leaves where pores
write long histories of lost love;
and storms of the day bury heads
in the lap of jasmines of dewy night
like simple, harmless doves
shrinking deeper into holes of big fright.
You appear tonight in moon beams rushing
thro' hyphens and dashes between leaves
who are busy knotting the locks of the sweet night
with ariel roots from excited boughs
flung to both sides to sway before to a sleep very deep
softly the limbs of this body they fully douse.
Words crack and crumble
as waves of agony rise to merge miles

of poor population camping outside,
caught in the fury of ceaseless rain
and hunger's merciless pain.
Silence these impatient cries dear
with a simple, soft look from the corner of your eyes,
with a small curve at the edge of your lips
as the moon into a yawning, blue abyss slowly dies.

Saroj K Padhi

Lightning

LIGHTNING

While treading sandy, soft, rain-soaked ground
and glimpsing the Sky behind the beechen green
as sparks of lightning pierce the anguished chest
of the lovelorn Sky wailing behind clouds, unseen,

shocked I'm to see flashes of your benign smile
in each streak that set this heart on a sweet fire
when to witness a slice, didn't mind running a mile
with this heart smouldering but refuging to retire;

each time the lightning that burns some poor lives
churns my dark, dense mind with a cool, secret fire
also leads to a discovery of Nature with new vibes
and to reading in new light the nature of my desire;

like a nonchalant bull, I wander in thunder and rain,
love to burn with flashes of such fire and secret pain.

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Saroj K Padhi

'Like You', She Said

With only your images roosting
on every branch of my youth's tree
soaking rain of love from above
my entire body draped in a rainbow
licking the white wings of drenched dove
a drizzle of poems in hands singing
of trickles of tears engulfed by showers
drops from tips of leaves tickling
the strings of a heart in soft tremors
I was at your doors —
a bundle of wild shivers
you said 'I like your rain'
and smiled away
to the far-off horizon where the sky lay
with its wealth of silver coins and gold of May
your body sucked into colors of a mellow sun
and your spirit on a crazy run
in the opposite direction
love for you was such a big fun
look how our shadows
in a hollow ecstasy dance on and on
when into an empty oblivion we are gone! ! !

Saroj K Padhi

Lily Of A Night

Tremors of an unfamiliar kind
travel thro' the body of Water Lily
as the Supermoon walks across the sky
on the chest of water casting her glowing dye,
with her haloed arc growing to touch and feel
an Earth under the sheath of a winter night
that casts a nervous shadow over distant hill
and is ready to hug new light in apparel bright;

but lo! our Earth shivers at heart at this fling
as the moon advances with each growing ring
with an unknown, seething fright
lurking in some dark centers of his disheveled body
in thick, uncombed jungles away from sight
where terror has its tryst with bloody death
and life is steeped in stupid, blind faith;

yet there is always a time for joy
in midst of all sickness, death and tragic ploy
as the Lily feels she is one with the moon and the sky
in moment of bright bliss, far away from the bug of clay
that forces her after a night full of mirth, to fade and die.

Saroj K Padhi

Liquid Wonders

Stars in your eyes drink deep in the river of my soul
awakening strange ripples from bottom to roll,
inviting past images to fall before dissipating
to the bank where I sit as a cool spectator;
the shadow of my body lost into the smiley waters
as I try to watch the miracle of merger and catch it
on my camera that with some cool thought shivers
perhaps at the discovery of life's big secret spelt
as to how hearts are supposed to melt -
by each ripplet nestling inside
the folds of mother ripples
awoken to liquid wonders on river's dimples
that promise a big sea for my union with eternity
now at this moment of my truth and integrity
when I'm with myself in one simple entity
in search of my real identity.

Saroj K Padhi

Listening To Darkness

I listen to whispers from lips of darkness
Speaking in a language replete with alphabets
Of your secret dreams to inhabit forever the terrace of my mind
That smacks of the stolen moments of our togetherness ingrained
In the ooziings from crushed leaves inside your hands
That fidgeted in the forbidden garden of our sinking lands
Waiting to merge soon into sands of oblivion;
One where you dwell with shadows of familiar bodies
Waiting to be buried in the grave of Time's cruel fun;
And the other one to which I think I belong
Living a life in gay abandon, when I decay like a dead fern
In tune with night wind's mournful song;
Darkness wins me back to a peace
That light hardly finds,
Darkness seals me into a box of memories
Making me enjoy its ceaseless loving grinds.

Saroj K Padhi

Loneliness

!

The Moon moves closer to the sentient stars tonight
to rid itself of a strange loneliness lurking at the core
when these little angels peep deep inside her heart
to flush out the chilling dark beneath smiles at the door;

clouds of envy try to drag her out of the halo around
as she still beams in bliss of colors of recent Holi on cheeks,
thunders resound trying to reignite her phobia of sound
and she moves still closer to the stars brooding in sky's deeps;

the Sun sends messages of love from the other side
in the hands of wind that tries to assuage her rueful heart,
birds of night sing sweetly from topmost sphere of earth
to heal her wounds while in womb of night, before day's start;

loneliness is a strange disease in absence of dear ones' love
when hearts pine for a little echo in feelings' vast treasure trove.

Saroj K Padhi

Longings

Longings turn obstinate this night
and like stars refuse to sleep
in their desire to stay bright,
when eyes start aching
after hours of gaze at the moon
baffled as to how
to revive a lost face to sight;
desires erupt
like fishes of silver
jumping over a narrow stream
spreading sparks of fire
into dull body of a moon's beam
in their attempt to complete
a half written script of new love
that seemed to have faded
into the fringe of a rainbow
at the onset of an evening drab and grim;
sleep seems to be a distant shore now
far away from the chirruping of birds
nestling in crimped nests of my bones,
where mad bees oft' stray in
to fling flowers of memories
and scatter the ripped petals of my years
to the blood-stained floor of some ancient stones.

Saroj K Padhi

Look

As you looked at me
meteors trailed across the sky
of my longings
forming rainbow in my eye
I wished you were there
with me till under grass did I lie
kissing the petals of your soft desires
that on the bed of my grave would lie,
desires sparkling in the drops of rain
across the Earth's glistening thigh;
But I do not know what happened and why
you started looking away from me
after the showers had gone dry
stashing all my pains away
into Night's endless sigh! ! !

Saroj K Padhi

Lost

From that moment I was flung
Out of the radius of your moony thoughts
By the frowns of a jealous Time,
When clouds were frittered by a storm
To compose lyrics about love's cruel clime

Am I lost to that night wind
That whispers about my nebulous identity
To the night bird in quest of a dropped wing?

A song shed from lips of a changed mind
To dark ripples in the chest of sunken gorge
Reflecting mountain crests of our trysts
Whereto lonely doves alight, of lost love to sing?

Or the crescent moon with its three fourth
Engulfed by secret chasms of a hungry grey sky
Where rumbles of ancient cloud filled love hardly ring?

Saroj K Padhi

Lotus' Dreams

You are biting your nails
as I gaze at the startled stars of your eyes
that seem to measure the depth of my love
in the hollows of my shallow body —
aching with the miseries of drought and flood
in the land of my roots, in the flow of my famished blood.
You scratch the earth beneath your feet too
with your toes painted in the scarlet pain of my heart
that has been longing for you
since the dawn of the first sun in my life
with the promise of a salvation in your setting streaks
How much I long to be the pink flesh
under your tooth and nail
biting me slowly into an oblivion of sorts
before scratching away the cover of illusion
from my face
with the touch of your feet
on the wet ground of my unconscious self
and sending my soul into a trance
under the spell of your quaint silence!

Saroj K Padhi

Love Blossoms On Boughs Of Dead Lust

Spring has returned to my tangled, tattered boughs
trapped in the flow of a streaming sun-kissed fog
where tiny ferries of golden rays are in a jolly swing
for birds and bees to float in, for their lovely fling,
after suck of nectar to full, as in wild excitement
they flutter and soulfully sing
and my Lord with his consort seated in flowery Bimans
comes out to celebrate Holi in multiple hues
drenched in aroma of love- mild, musky, intense and deep
when crows on the river side bask after the holy dip
and swans swim into deep waters to heights of joy to leap
koels sit on me to usher in new leaves with their song
till dying lust in me into blossoms of new love has sprung.
O how much for a blissful death I long
to be that blush of Spring
on cheek of eternity to which we actually belong!

Saroj K Padhi

Love In July

Why are you kissing the wet Kadamba
of my July love with your red bill
so shamelessly nibbling at my face
and transporting me to an uneasy thrill,
that to, against my will?
Trying to dig at my soaked womb under soft rain
and exciting my leaves to silent cries of sweet pain?
I'm already under a shock of shivers inside
from the wind's excited flick
driving me mad within
seeking a relief quick!
Please don't be so harsh with me, kind love
be tougher in your deal with me within,
break into my spasms, shake me into quakes
thro' tremors from epicenter of your love profound
to which I always am so intimately bound
and look, look how drinking deep at the root
of my orange juice, such a unique peace we have found! ! !

Saroj K Padhi

Love In Monsoon

Why are you kissing the wet Kadamba
of my July love with your red bill?
So shamelessly nibbling at my face
and transporting me to an uneasy thrill,
that to it's all against my will?
Trying to dig at my soaked womb under soft rain
and exciting my leaves to silent cries of sweet pain?
I `m already under a shock of shivers inside
from the wind's excited flick
driving me mad within
as I 'm seeking a relief quick!

Please don't be so harsh with me, kind Love,
be tougher in your deal with me within,
break into my spasms, shake me into quakes
thro' tremors from epicenter of your love profound
to which I always am so intimately bound
and look, look how drinking deep at the root
of my orange juice
a strange peace we have found!

Saroj K Padhi

Love Is Strange

A wild stream across the heartscape
With ripples of compassion
Dancing to the tune of forest birds
Under the mirror of a sun!
An unexpected shiver in the soul
Stirring the wind to sing of Spring
Even in the deadliest of Summer
A kind, pure, passionate fling! !
A long, deep breath challenging death
Weaving magic into moments
Miracles to stray movements
And resulting in a new birth! ! !

Saroj K Padhi

Love Of Dark

Wading thro' darkness
Dripping like gems of pollen dust
From wings of black butterflies,
Driving my way thro' drizzles
Of honey in random drops of rain,
Moist with memory of a sweet past
Eyes annointed with
Dim star-light
Soaked in evening dew,
The rippling river alongside
Drunk with the love of a smiling moon
And I driving across time into a land of blue bliss
Lying at the end of road.

Saroj K Padhi

Love Rational

Now in a terror of love that I'm,
let me close all memories' door
and be away from my past
from Love's living ghost
that my mind does overcast
reviving depressed corpses
of wounded love
from oblivion's ashes,
making them instantly fall,
revealing their ugly faces
on life's frosty floor,
urging me to irrational fear...
words of passion long back I said
get unconsciously repeated
as yester night with a cute girl —
a present clone of the original —
in a hallucination I talked
she recoiled with horror
and I' m in terror
was she Ananda of Lord Budha's new tale
in mortal love turned pale
and I, Prakriti who from grace so sadly fell?

Saroj K Padhi

Lovers' Day

Love is always there in the air
despite stench of burns, bruises or blood-shed
hatred, betrayal and violence everywhere;
the burnt-out sagging moon of the morn
hours after nightly clouds' passionate churn,
from heaven's western vault
with a new light in eyes doth stare,
the squirrels scatter the aroma of nectar
into the vernal breeze,
as along with butterflies and bees

they too drink from the flaming Palash in bloom
and white herons nibble at the young mango buds
that ooze fragrance to fight mist-caused gloom;
drops of dew drip from wounded barks and sheaves
revealing Night's secret tears over sun-burnt leaves,
birds sing to soothe the soul of distressful day
that's how valentine Nature for our wellbeing doth pray.

Saroj K Padhi

Love's Essence

Love is an enchantment you feel
on the glazing face of the morning
not the sizzling hunger in the womb
of night that keeps us so burning
love is body and yet not the body
a bird on flight and so moody
but not desires so common
on waters of needs all muddy
love is a forgetfulness of self
in prayer to God in silence
when all conflicts about possession
melt into nothingness, its essence.

Saroj K Padhi

Love's Hues

As I encounter myself in your insomniac eyes
in the cool silence of the night under star light
a dissatisfied moon squeezes itself to a corner
to think awhile of love's cruelty and then alight
to the salap tree for a drink from its beverage
before going to sleep in the lap of my village hill,
I too collect drops of our helpless orphan tears
inside the flower basket for the petals to feel-

the anguish that into them, the varied colors fill;
love is a painful feel of emotions less understood
creating a cistern of misgivings, heaps of doubts
causing floods of tears to inundate fear's dark woods
sometimes elevating the mind to the land of dreams
but at times pulling the spirits to grey, sullen moods.

Saroj K Padhi

Love's Odour

As I tread the usual lone mile in half light
on grassy bed of a half-lit darkish dawn
moist with sweat of a past sensuous night,
eager to watch green flash of a June Sun;
I stumble upon the aroma of your body
oozing from some unseen, wild flower,
when butterflies on move weave thee
in body of humid air, in wait for shower;
ages have passed, hills grown new crease
since you orphaned the ooze of love true;
for my nose to loot every gust of breeze,
may be for a little taste of a tinge of you;
why is my love so nostalgic about an odour
that turns so surreal an entire atmosphere?

Saroj K Padhi

Love's Thrill

I will be waiting for eons
to smell the musk on your rain-soaked skin,
in the forest of faith
dripping honey of rain;
for the joys of basking
in Spring time fog of your soul,
without sense of time, guilt or sin
and touch the rays of happiness
in your Sun-kissed hair
in tryst with afternoon
as day grows lean and thin;

swim in the river of your heart
when emotions of love like waves overflow,
sing like the birds of your dream
when stars lit by light from your eyes
with desire softly and sweetly get aglow.

Where are you now as I sit
watching the sun going down the hill
and wait for the moon to arrive
with a balm of beams
my cluttered mind to heal
as the ripples of the lake take on your sweet smile
exciting the wind to sing
of love's eternal thrill?

Saroj K Padhi

Loving Death

I have seen death
A fraction of it though
In your cold looks,
In your forgetfulness of the other
In me growing impotent with time,
In your loving absent-mindedness
Filled with moon beams
With utter disregard
To my dry kisses on your rosy cheeks.
I have seen death
In the touch your spittle
In my mouth leading to
A long flow of sweet poison
Along a stream of blind hate
Oozing a foam of a different love.
I see death
In your turning away from my shadow
In the afternoon of our separation
To fulfill an ordinary Sun staring at you
From above with hot shower
Of false promises.
I die every moment
With you, without you,
Without you
With you.

Saroj K Padhi

Loving Someone's Sadness

sadness is a drooping deodar of day
under the shaded beams of moon
with a hope that light of someone's love
will alight from heaven very soon
sadness is what makes you so beautiful
as your branches tremble to speak
leaves shiver under moon's light flick
the breeze becomes your voice audible
you say you are thinking of something
under the cloud of imagination all full
I will not distract you from thoughts
but what about the play of beams
on your body driving the sun to frenzy
on the flip side, though not now visible! !

Saroj K Padhi

Lyrics Of Rain

I listen to the lyrics of lavish rain
that lashes the bared metals of my lone roof
lulling taut nerves to a kind of half sleep,
as the music of the truant monsoon wavers
in sounds of roving dark clouds
inside vaults of the sky too deep:

sometimes like the rustle
of sweet pain in blue vein
as tragic moments from memory's corridor
into the foaming, frothing waters
like seasonal fishes leap;

then a rumble of regret
in heart's secret fen
that grows into a roaring thunder
to echo huge losses again,
in the resounding chest of a deserted lover
into which lightning tries to peep;

the refrain of pain seems endless
as it howls again like a murderous wolf
at the edge of a dying jungle
where fear stalks flocks of poor sheep;

the cacophonous rain
rises to a higher pitch again
echoing the groans of landslides
in Badrinath and Amarnath
as the noble desires flowed as waste down
the melting mountain
in the heat of frequent face-offs
at the borders under strain;

hark, the showers have thinned down
into a light dose of cool drizzle
to soothe the cells of a racked brain!

Mad Magnolia

Whenever I see you crossing my street
I go nuts like a freckled, frenzied butterfly
beating wings in the void in white heat
as ripples wild on lips of pink so multiply;

Furlong away, you look like temple in ruins
with yellowing pigeons' endless croons,
as magnolias of youth dry in groins deep
and i feel spasms in my heart in swoons;

But soon musks of Jasmines take over
overlooking woes of flesh, soon to wither
as earthly beauties from their graves stir,
frangipanis pink, on lips of noon so flower

Saroj K Padhi

Makara Sankranti

Summer winks at the door like a naughty child
with kites flaunting comic faces of politicians
in a cold January wind
under a glad Sun tightening muscles over the hill-
when boats on narrow streaks of river water
keep floating in search of a long lost thrill,
my daughter ferries to the temple-side bank
for a pre-wedding shoot with her fiance'
who is under the magic spell of nearing Gordian knot;

enticed by the over-hanging smell of Makara-rice,
the breeze lands onto the fields
for harvest of Green-gram and Black-gram;
though depressed, boughs swing like dead bodies
at news of felling of 1k trees to raise helipad for VIP copter,
the women of my love burn in a fire of jealousy
to add a new chapter to their endless small-town rumour;

it seems Summer has set in with new concoction of love
to enchant us away from hide-outs of rumourous Winter
filling dark spaces in mind with light of new love
in days after Winter-solstice growing bigger, broader and longer!

Saroj K Padhi

Memory

Memory is mischievous
turning me into a bad boy
inside an old heart
drawing me to the bank
and making me throw pebbles of thoughts
into the secret pond of heart
knowing not how I suffer
from love's fatal blow —
a star-struck lover drenched
in tears of dew
under a half-moon's glimmering glow.
Why do I fall in love again and again
with streaks of rosy hues
that like a subterranean stream flow
inviting my lusty heart to dive and dip,
deep inside into the waters of illusion
sucking in all my raw emotion
draining me of jubilation
to leave my heart wallow pathetically
under strokes of Time's painful castration?

Saroj K Padhi

Mid Monsoon Winter Dawn

A shivering mid-Monsoon winter dawn
alights on wet wings of euphoric birds
lit up by a ruffled, shimmering Sun
to enjoy the beauty of both the worlds:
a lush earth soaked in tears of heaven
now clasps a cool, balmy, breezy Winter-
anguish of yesterdays to unburden,
as wheeling on chariots of wind
drawn by butterflies
it sings of blanket-intimacy to flowers
and bees blow auspicious conchs
on eve of eighth avatar of Lord to be born
out of womb of dark fortnight at midnight
breaking all bars of wrongful confinement,
to journey across overflowing Yamuna
into a flood of light, freedom and celebration
and breaking of yoghurt pots
as mark of nation-wide jubilation.

Gone is the night, it seems
of persecution, chaos and confusion
as chanting of His name fills the dawn
with light of love for the awesome creation!

Saroj K Padhi

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Saroj K Padhi

Moment

It's ages since I kissed
the bud of your early spring
in the blissful dawn of our youth,
when time stood still like the nearby hill
under patches of floating clouds,
with glosses from a crimson sun on their lips;
and the breeze of your breath blew
like a refreshing storm

in the landscape of my haloed mind
planting seeds of a wild love
in my dazed being;
I've stopped growing since then
though my years like pebbles keep rolling
on the unseen floor of a sea
of love lost always singing
and your voice oft' ringing
in the tides of memory returning
behind which your image keeps surfing;
since the river of our desire
jumped to death in the mouth of the sea
there have been waves surging
to match our passion and the furore
in its constant roar
the joy of union recreating!

Saroj K Padhi

Monologue Of An Unhappy Woman

You chase me like a pariah dog

during walk in the morning garden
where I pursue
the specter of dreams lost to the late moon;
you suck from me like a leech during sleep
when the night is hardly aware of what you are doing,
till the sun awakes me to thousand pains
in breasts, bones and loins;
you call me by names of pets
that hardly love you;
our kids wear desolate looks
like thatched houses burnt in recent lightning
longing desperately for repair;

When will you get into my thoughts?
When will you free me from shackles of 'donts' and 'nots'?
When will you catch pearls from my words
and release fetters from caged birds?
When will you rise to catch those butterflies of my dreams?
When, when will you listen to my silent screams?

I'm just waiting for that moment of recognition
when love will find its true ignition!

Saroj K Padhi

Monsoon

Your body smells of scented sea weeds
with a mix of rain-thrashed Keoda flowers on rivers
and soul, of faint petrichor in soft wind,
clouds, your disheveled hair and lightning your looks
thunders, the applause from heaven
and your giggles echo in mountain brooks;
you carry imagination too far
like dreams of early morning birds sailing on wet wings-
in search of rainbow after rain during the day
and glow of the moon shrouded in the night;
you embalm the wounded hearts like a devoted nurse,
excite like an aphrodisiac
and appease like the last peg of wine,
therefore for you we so madly pine;
but at times you get so erratically overemotional
storming us into shocks, stacks of debris and ruin
flooding, burning and killing with a strange madness
turning things grave and grim;
you ecstatic, erotic and femme fatale combine
though at times injurious, you are our love's deep wine.

Saroj K Padhi

Monsoon Love

Monsoon has come at last with big lightning and thunder
changing the hues of the sky, sprinkling a soft shower
as our burnt-out desires fly as ash in snaky streets
of 'Fani' ravished hamlets, raising sparks from a smolder;

as we rot here in dark hamlets without food and water
the hot wind from a darkish-brown Sky is followed soon
by dark clouds of cheer, blowing open our weakened door
to the touch of crazy shower that douses the burning fire;

the outpour smears the face and fills the fiery eyes
of the Earth with dreams of green love here and there,
as I think of the lighting in your eyes that once
blazed a dead Moon under clouds heading for thunder!

Let me sleep tonight lending ears to the music of rain,
dream of the joy the wind finds in the dark den of the sky
as it plays its lute of love on the balding head of the mountain
in tune with the gurgles of a softly drinking lean fountain!

Saroj K Padhi

Monsoon Memories-I

Memories of monsoon lie littered in mind
like obstinate cattle on traffics of Katak city
callous to all sorts of horn and hoots,
when shadows from tall deodars try to swallow
a hot sun leaping up to lick festering wounds
in the crevices of a thousand year jaded body
and gutters smack of excessive rain waters
that washed off last letters of Summer to Spring;
trees on sides of both ring roads
droop like scandal=smitten Babas fallen from grace
when trickles of hope scramble thro'
heaps of sands in desiccated rivers
to dig their own grave ahead of a decimated future;

at this crisis-ridden hour
sadly I hold on to the moments of recognition
in the murmurs of tears in your eyes
that sparkled like rain on shiny green leaves-
as I read out lines from my old diary
about the beautiful lie of love
in the feigned face of a lone forenoon
that held two lovers captive
under the cloak of guilty love!

Saroj K Padhi

Monsoon Memories-II

The vines over arching college gate that chanced
to touch your inflamed skin with a few drops shed
from greedy lips of curly leaves, as we talked on,
have grown luxuriant and wilder over grieving years
but to droop unsatiated over bars and singe in sun;
strands of their tresses plaited with scented flowers
ooze aroma of rain that seeped to the deepest roots
as like cool cormorants we lay in puddles of waters
when the earth was burning with fire from gun shots
of fiery fanatics who shed blood over a blind religion
and repressed, sex showed many faces of perversion
in acts, art, artifices, thoughts and a corrupt pattern;

you lie over my mind like the morning mist over jungle
as my soul flashes like pole star so fondly you dabble.

Saroj K Padhi

Monsoon Memories-Iii

Gliding in, she stood over me like a cloud
heavily hung over a wounded hill's face
filled with deep, dark drops of stresses
as she rained into my mouth and thirsty soul
sating a cool fire in some secret crevices,
till grass under our feet had turned lush green
and petals strewn had been washed all clean
for the Moon on it, to silently walk in
tracing steps on tiny beads of shiny dew
flanked by a bunch of stars of bright hue;

when I saw her lying by my side in a pool
of blood gushing from Time's old wounds,
as petals of innocence lay crushed on all sides
with scars of rape, molestation, brute forces
rain had dried up into clots of blood in crannies
forboding droughts in hearts beyond reaches!

Saroj K Padhi

Mood

Stars in your eyes baffle every image of sun
Razing the rust of male ego to simple dust
Whipping the wallowing beams of desire to rise
And clamber up the ladder of petty shades
Of differences under the boughs,
To blend beautifully with the mist of night's tired lust
When the young jasmines of night burst out
With new vigour in their burgeoning bust;

Every ray in your look burns the bark
Grown over the trunk of ageing trees
Every word in your husky voice
Lets in a Spring with its murmuring breeze;

Let me pass unnoticed across the night woods
When your eyes dabble with the moon
With a desire to change her sulking moods.

Saroj K Padhi

Moon Knocks At 3 A.M.

At three a.m. Moon knocked my heart's door
like a wisp of cool wind flicking green leaves
drunk with dew to the core;
their nude, wet bodies basking under beams
with light flashing in each pore,
with her scarred heart embossed on her face
and her mind, dripping scented darkness
but her words were so very few:
'Make me yours,
with you-I want to be you'.

Gently she wrapped me with her crazy beams
caressed my ever-expanding soul,
afloat like a bright image on clear streams
it seemed we had enough of each other
after such a long union, for hours together;
suddenly I awoke back to myself
as if from the magic spell of an elf
to see her fading into a glorious dawn
with her saree cast with tinge of crimson.

Saroj K Padhi

Moon Madness

The tree in front of my home
suffers from a moon-madness too —
in the silence of the night
it shivers as the moon starts bleeding
from the corner of the sky;
goes mum for a few hours
before leaping to catch a few stars of joy:
soon the tree is found heaving
with sighs of lost love and pining for new
under beams of delight
and happy tears of dew.
It, like me, loves to revel in darkness
before its leaves fall in love
with rays of delight
coming from above.

T

Saroj K Padhi

Morning Miracle

Everyday I meet you first
On the glassy cheeks of my window pane
Where I sense your presence
As you lurk there in your light white dress
Delivering messages of love from
New night flowers
Blooming in our garden
For a new Sun to bless;
I meet you
In the twitters of birds
In the boughs
Nestling softly against my window
In their excited flurry
And songs of glory —
About fruits and flowers
About petals' ceaseless scented showers
On my roofs of asbestos;
I meet you
In the haloed look of a smiley moon
Dangling from the cheeks of dawn's sky
Suffused with soft colours of an about-to-rise sun
As leaves shiver in excitement
Over day's sweet snacks
In tune with the breeze that awakes
Sleeping souls daily to new miracles.

Saroj K Padhi

Morning Moon

Morning Moon says, "It's not my beams
dear mortals that brighten your face;
rather it's all due to my soulmate Sun's grace
who, thro' a wild love affair in the night
has left my feminine self in dire distress;

enervated, emaciated by his pious pranks
now on the western fringe of sky, I lie glowless-
without any desire to wake up for rituals
rather willing to sink into a sweet, drowsy numbness
and forget for ever
that I lived only to burn under the fierce
all consuming desire of my spouse, so limitless;

it's only last night's hangover
that keeps me awake this wee hour
before I fade into a mild nothingness
behind gossamer clouds
that draw curtains over my existence!

Saroj K Padhi

Morning Tryst

How lovely is my morning tryst
as I walk with you on the wet grass
of our soft dewy memories
filled with tears of past sadness and present joy
when our breezy feet move lightly as plastic toy
on heads of tiny, smiley flowers —
on a sprawling bed of dapple green
as if containing springs of steel thin —
an enchanting mix of white, pink and purple
that on our way to happiness so proudly dazzle.
Swimming across morning's glorious face
in an ocean of sparkling mages —
of a romancing Sky's new dress
under a pink Sun's balmy grace;
and here we listen to those birds' address
that heal hearts of broken plants
and lovers' pangs easily redress;
in twitters of a true love
Nature's woes they resolve
when we humans reside
under masks of painted hide
before in secret doses of lust
our false love do we confide.
Come out of your skin, Love
kiss the petals of cosmic soul
drink deep in morning dew
before into a drowsiness we roll.

Saroj K Padhi

Muddy River

The river has turned muddy
like the turbulent heart of a lover
under torrents of tears in constant showers
from eyes of trees
in hearts of wounded forests and gorges
that turn soil into silt in passion's pure surges
in the sheer desire to grow
along the banks of desire
in sweet forms of grains, fragrant flowers
fresh fish and fowl
and give to life, dreams' true colours;

threatened by checks
and distressed by chequered progress
she sighs and sobs for long hours
like a deserted lover
crying behind wild hedges
fanning a strange but sweet scent
of pain in bouts of gentle breezes!

Unable to decipher
even the outlines of her own true image
she flees like a wild elephant
across the plains,
in quest of a clear moon in heart's sky,
to the false point in the mouth of the bay
where she negotiates with devouring waves
for a peaceful stay!

Saroj K Padhi

Musky Morn

Loving you relieves all fetishes and fetters
of fish, fowl, flesh, faeces, filth and fevers
awaking me from life of an empty dream
as a disillusioned I rises, from sleep to sweet chitters;

winged angels sing from misty boughs
of trees of joy that in Winter shed dry leaves,
onto soft dew drenched beds of grass,
in whose lungs wind like a bride softly heaves;

the jungle path strewn with wilted petals and leaves
faintly smacks of Parijata in a corner happily abloom
as Winter's foggy hands pluck from God's garden
and an overcast Sun tries to break free from gloom;

dew falls like sparse rain drops to the thirsty ground
as faint footsteps of Spring in the subconscious resound!

Saroj K Padhi

My Aching Petals

My aching petals fold in, anxious to pray
To shake off the layer of dust over my body
In a desire to shine in pure formless form,
When you whiz past me like an April night wind-
Reviving like a legend from the heart of past:
My lips fumble and mumble before they utter the name of my Lord
Like restive wind in the arms of empty clouds,
When the smell from burnt-out evening wick
At feet of my Goddess in courtyard, my thin consciousness shrouds;
Enthralling me to heights of divine ecstasy
When the air turns heavy with promise of downpour,
Sweetening our meets at the brink of twilight
And the Earth pressing up herself against our feet
Hungers for touches of our souls still more and more.
Now that we are at the shore of our enlightened souls-
Let us drop our praying petals before we leave for the land of scented
dust
Let us believe in our temporary fall, if our rise is a must.

Saroj K Padhi

My Poem Doesn't Let Me Sleep

My poem does not let me sleep
as words in the caverns of a purgatory
from darkness to light, try to leap;

in the greyish light pink dots
of the subconscious sky of my mind
a curious Sun
into a luminous world doth peep
in mad love to caress the unseen breath
of a secret wind
that informs from an unconscious deep;

golden boughs dance in delight
under some intimation
from dew-drunk buds in exhilaration
that slowly open arms to hug a smiling Sun;

the moon in the western sky
alights into the jungle
to pick some memories of the night
inside the pergola of the park
where plants held us in their lap
in swings of a perfumed dark
and stars from the terrace of the sky
leaned down
to wink at us in surprise
and our intimate whispers did they hark;

my poem does not let me sleep
as the night slips
thro' the fingers of a new dawn
that awakens us to live our dreams
and blossoms blush everywhere
in their cheeks and twitching eye
to infuse meaning into effulgent beams.

Saroj K Padhi

Myth And Woman

Tall trees whisper the secret syllables
of your enchanting name
in the archives of collective memory
in caves of words echoing love and fury
bound to a flexible frame of time;
as the wind swims across
changing the contours of your face
across history, the rules of our relation
and the laws about love's game change
with lines about victory or defeat
turning hazy in the sands of clime;
and myriad butterflies flit across
on their usual hurry and rush
to chats with bees and trysts with trees
daily changing the rules of the ploy
with women tough or girls all coy
while sucking honey
from the brimming youth
in their burning prime;
And startled at the haste
with which myths turn and twist their heads
I shrink back to my impotent silence
to be lulled back to my fragile self
on the shifting sands of time.

Saroj K Padhi

Naraj Hills

Music in the air murmurs your name
in the wakeful ears of the rocks
when the hedges in the vale join hands to float
the scent of your body in the breeze,
and crazed in the arms of a September evening
into a sort of stupor I slowly freeze;

with the faint memory of the last ray
from a sinking Sun
cuddling a rising Moon at the fringe,
when an invisible cricket sang out with ease
from behind the bush of darkening hills
and the trees shivered in tune
with the joy of its unending thrills;

flashes of our love adorn the banks now
in the glimmer of the tireless glow-worms
weaving stories of love on sleeves of trees,
with the scent of fresh drizzles
overpowering the flow of the breeze,
when I hold on to the hills
heaving heavy sighs under the gloomy trees
and the shrinking Mahanadi sheds tears
over huge losses of water under a lonely bridge.

Saroj K Padhi

Narcissist Rain

You say it was untimely narcissist, nefarious rain
that ravaged the face of earth, toppling trees
and walls, with acts of killing people so inhumane

but I say where were you when chimneys choked
the sky and acts vicious punched holes in sun's eye
no wonder now we lie by terror of rain so crushed

failing to see how earth's million hungers are muted
by ceaseless lashes of seemingly roughshod rains
that filled her subliminal desires by man so thwarted!

Saroj K Padhi

Night Showers

Rain goes on writing
endless lyrics of love on the body of an aroused Earth
when tears in the eyes of leaves flow
to drop on, with desire for a cherished union,
and the wind repeats the sad refrain of separation
between your rainbow presence and a set Sun;

dots of dark plunge you but into night's honeycomb
where you seem to have overcome loneliness
that threatens me every moment
with thoughts of oblivion,
jasmynes give out their last bout of smell
before nodding off into a colorful dream of the dawn,
when the moon emerges like a wounded soldier
from behind the black clouds
to fight its last battle for self-expression!

Saroj K Padhi

Nirvaya Rape

Enough is enough
It's high time justice is done to the raped spirit
Pacing restlessly over the corridors of the court
When every new morning you plan a ploy
For your joyride on loose strings of law, punishment to avert.

You can't try the patience of the country
And succeed with your foul play
For the noose hangs there, you to drag in
Before turning you into fate's poor toy.

You never had time to think when you filled
Her womb with bitter darkness and tore her into pieces
On saws of hate and rods of macho-revenge;
How strange! Now you seek the country's patience!

Each act of outrage done for hate or revenge
We hope our law will slowly but surely avenge.

Saroj K Padhi

No Blame Game Please

Am I to blame if love was born?
If some remote resemblance
to the primeval face
such love did occasion?
You looked at me
and I, at you
beats skipped heart,
petals soaked dew
your eyes drenched
my dancing soul
with wild aroma
in every fold;
wilted leaves of desire
turned green
in ecstasy's
tight hold!
Am I to blame
If love did flow
from your heart's
secret glow
lifting all veils of body
from over the mind
wafting scented moon
to love's new find?

Saroj K Padhi

No More I Love

Now no more I love
your face my dear Love
without light of reflection
coming from above
for whenever I saw
an inkling of your image
on mortal faces
I fell for you in a craze
without thinking
I might burn in such love's
fiery, temporary blaze.
I watch you returning
into your watery grave
inside the lake of tears
where your image I save
as a pearl from a dead shell
that from the boat of desire fell
while trying to kiss the image of moon
on the shivering waters under a mad spell.

Saroj K Padhi

Non Issues

I have no issues with birds
that didn't pause to say a hi
as they swooped up
a little over my head
like breath of the morning sky;

I have no issues with the Ashoka flowers
that drenched the earth with tears
thro' the night for the vanished stars
when I was dreaming
of those musky hug of theirs;

I have no issues with the moon
that merged into the black waves of your mane
tumbling down to mock the silver beams
cast on the earth, when in love I liked to stay insane;

I have no issues with the Spring
that slips thro' my fingers
to the hot hug of a sun in amorous noon,
to the trap of fraudulent whispers
from a mad wind that's going to die soon.

Saroj K Padhi

Nothing Truly Lasts

Nothing truly does last
except a poor specter of things
dead in the past;
even now is lost to the next kin moment
in itself though it stays so live and potent,
today can't stare beyond midnight
yesterdays are pushed out of sight;
childhood is lost under layers of dust
and stacks of memories that gather only rust;
adolescence slips thro' fingers of fantasy
after few false promises of bodily ecstasy;
youth is gone with a light blow from time
after a brief encounter with desire sublime;
middle age clammers thro' heaps of ambition
on every side, with little space for real fruition;
old age blankly stares at the rainbow sky
without enough stamina in the wings to fly;
but images of dolls, pencils and hearts broken
blurred though, despite tides of time, still hold on.

Saroj K Padhi

O God

O GOD! GIVE US

It seems we all are dry, dead wood of a dying world
with no love for the fair grass we proudly tread on
a mass of unthinking automatons in hands of cruel time,
with no concern for innocent buds in garden bleeding on!

We inhabit ghettos where ghosts of baby girls
violated, croak like trampled toads in deep dark
and toddle like shadows along deserted banks
under a boiling, burning Sun vengeful and stark;

victims bleed like wounded soldiers under a red moon
in search of a little pity from blindfolded eyes
as democracy gets hijacked by goons, guns and conmen
and life of all kinds turns into a series of piteous sighs;

we are the bleeding buffer zones
when bombs demand servility to nations inhuman
as unloved plants and animals grow extinct

and for a drop to drink we crawl, a species subhuman;

panthers bereft of room stray into our bedroom

and jumbos seeking freedom lie slain on railway tracks

like million human emotions massacred in the days of doom

when birds swoon over vain searches for nest in dead barks.

O God give us a little light in this dark, dying world

and wind with space enough to silently breathe;

love enough to escape traps of artificial intelligence

as life in folds of gross matter doth helplessly seethe!

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Saroj K Padhi

O My Katak, I Love You

O my Katak of multiple bazaars and myriad streets,
Of our many secret affairs with baffling lanes and bylanes,
Of thousand little desires awoken across smelly gutters;
Some fulfilled and many more still lurking
In the alleys of our common suffering life,
Silver city of our many loves
with bee-lines at food joints of dahibara,
chaat and gupchup and bara
catering to our hunger,
you are always there at evening Khaties
to offer your unique pleasure.
We love your
pompous puja celebrations,
gaiety and jublations,
your bands and immersions
drinks, dances and pollutions
along narrow roads in night
without causing an ounce of fright;
We love you Katak despite your noisy living
on mud-mired streets,
your mad love of Gods and Goddesses
making annual go-rounds in fleets; your cool, intoxicating breath
in Autumn evenings along your long lying banks
with wild Kashatandi flowers sweeping
river Kathajodi and Mahanadi's flanks —
abloom under an azure sky
you add rainbows to our eye
and send shivers to lovers' hearts
teaching them how for beauty to die.
As we move closer
to the fragrance of these flowers,
the blessings of Goddess Durga
from heaven's lofty bowers
come drizzling in soft showers.

Saroj K Padhi

O My Lord

I want to kiss You, hug You my lord
as you descend from the royal throne
down to holy dust of the Grand Road;

let there be none between me and you
as I would merge into your rotund eyes
like the sky dipping into the Bay's blue;

let my grief and thousand grievances melt
at the touch of your body smelling of flora
and to hot cadences of your breath, I lilt;

may You curse and kill, but cuddle to heal
me of the big lust for bucks, busts and bars
with the final touch of love and the last thrill!

Saroj K Padhi

On Flight

The butterfly just off its cocoon
is on a joyous ride into the blue spaces of happiness
after a bout of pre-natal turmoil
inside a dark womb,
when an earnest Sun comes out
to kiss her newly freckled wings
born inside the bosom of dense fog
as we look on
silently like cyclone-ravaged bare trees
at the magic of transformation
in the wide open eyes of a charmed time!

Landing on the island of wonders
you pick corals of joy on the white sands
when like snails we raise our heads from under slime,
roam like invertebrates on the barren lands
with packs of dreams in heads burning under hot clime;

we too wait to take wings on the brink of dead rivers
when dreamy dragon-flies swirl around
for a healing touch from Monsoon showers!

Saroj K Padhi

On Loving A Stone

Lying on the morning grass of your dew-soaked body
as I tell 'I love you', you shrink back with a big 'why'
into the soft shivers of a dozing mimosa mumbling
in dreams about revels of last night under starry sky;
inadvertently you push me onto a stone where I lie in a pull
of blood that flows revealing colors of my injured love
I fall on the cruel crags of many a stony heart and bleed
with clots of true love blackening on the body of wounded dove.
What is truth? What is morality? And what is real love?
Perhaps suffering is truth in words appropriating feelings
that die into yellow body of drying grass where I lay
in expectation of a healing wind to blow across my wounds...

Saroj K Padhi

Once A Daughter Always A Mother

At birth she gifted me the stars
lying locked inside her fists
that perhaps decided my future;
as a baby girl she wiped away
all my frustrations in love in my youth
with her palms weaving magic in my eyes.
I knew not how she slowly grew up
to be still more sterner
with her soft frowning looks
at my bad habits;
her dictates to do this and not do that
her rectifying words
while stealing pain
from my aching temple
with balm in her delicate hands —
a tough girl friend indeed!
And now in my fifties she punishes me:
'twenty sit-ups' for talking in unacceptable
words to mom
her knowledge of law
sharpening her decisions
in the family court.

Saroj K Padhi

Only You

When dew dries up on the lips of thirsty flowers
thoughts about you moisten them with unseen showers,
when leaves wither smitten by dense Winter fog
thoughts about you help new twigs come out of dead log,
when Summer burns houses, fields, jungles and trees
thoughts about you from nowhere fetch a whiff of breeze,
when rain ruins everything and lightning spews fire
thoughts about you invite clouds to ferment fresh desire,
when shadows of lost love loom over a cloudless sky
only you brighten the firmament with hue of love so high.

Saroj K Padhi

Passion Pure

At last I have reached you it seems —
the white petals of passion;
At the end of a long journey
through miles of bleeding cracks
in the overly emotional heart,
after meandering thro' baffling mazes of mind
to rest on beguiling beauty of blossoms
that became dearer to some strange God
leaving me burning into sweet white flames
inside the warm and cosy home of green sod;
happy with my little world of white flowers
kissing butterflies and bees under bowers,
I count and read the beads of night's bliss
and rejoice at the sacrificial death of Sun
dying every night a lover — sincere and true
to invoke the lovely moon for limitless fun;
each of my breath melts into the mild petals
opening out into soft smiles at the magic look
from the face of a swift and clear cracking dawn
I bow to you God, my lover of day and night
hold me light
just as you hold this universe, your pawn.

Saroj K Padhi

Peace

Give me a few words dear God,
to write about peace that eludes us here
at a time when tears dry up in mythical dove's eye
in shade of its dark lashes as it's unable to fly,
and smokes rise-
from corrugated chimneys of fake progress
blurring the destiny of mankind in distress-
to join the vague clouds of an accursed sky
for a few bouts of acid rain,
when fanatics freely engage in homicide
as if in a bid to strip life of intolerable pain;
destroying common conscience in broad day light
in the clamour of daily fight,
breaking the blocks of our big dream
into million miserable pieces,
making a cruel mockery of our little wishes—
to love, live and die happily as birds-
and of our desire at death-
of sorrow to leave no traces!

Give me those words that can transform us
into the mosaic floor of a togetherness;
in a world torn by poverty, disease and squalor,
just an easy breathing space
without the mad pursuit of so-called success.

Saroj K Padhi

Peace Pagoda

A wingless white dove of peace cut in stone
seated atop Dhauli hill, toward the dead river Daya looks on
repeating every syllable of change in heart of king Ashoka
in the voice of a tired wind that blows on
across the forest cover to the ripples to rest on
and constantly repeats those words of love and peace
writ on the rocks that echo chemistry of transformation
that took place long ago in heart of a blood thirsty imperialist
at the behest of a Buddhist monk,
after formidable Mouryan chariots had crushed Kalinga
and spilled rivers of blood with their violent swords;

the river flows on to its dead end
without the ancient hug from lake Chilka
pointing to the futility of movement,
false vanity of victory in war
and the sad elegies of an unchanging Time
caught in the vortex of violence without and within
as landmines go off at borders
killing the innocents and fires from enemy don't cease
despite pacts of peace signed by history
and rocks with edicts
are constantly mocked by bullets
that pierce the heart of human civilization!

When will we realize the sad lessons of life
as we live on
as motes of dust in sun-beam,
constantly chased by smokes and shadows?
Who will save us from fervent hatred and false love?
Who will save us, from ourselves?

Saroj K Padhi

Pensive Lover

Even now he loves to take out that last letter-
smudged by the saddest fag-end oozings
from the bosom of a late penitent Monsoon-
lying crumpled in his age-old jeans pocket,
for secret reads and re-reads at the lonely bank
where long ago like a small chunk of tear-wet sand
his heart had crumbled into a river, stark blank;
every night he fondly struggles hard
with those half-legible, lightly visible letters
at the study table, on roof-top or under moon light
to glean more knowledge about mysterious human heart
so as to persuade his tears, his eyes no more to smart;
and when his heart grows darker
than the semi-lit bank,
night birds skim the river at the bend in half dark
he listens to her last words of remorse
echoing in the flutter of gliding wings,
paints her image in the sky with clouds
feels her musky breath in the returning breeze
till slumber, his lone spirit doth siege.

Saroj K Padhi

Pensive Poet

Even now he waits at the old bus-stop
like a mad man waiting for Moon at noon
for the music from her silver anklets
down the steps
to excite those unique beats
in the crazy corner of a youthful heart
for the lazy, secret, solitary croon;
the walks along the college garden
when startled, the frescoed butterflies
flew away from the dahlias and roses
to the petals of her cheeks in red blush
when Time was drunk with the musky breath
oozing from clammy cells
in youth's frenzied bloom;
the first Study-Center smile
that gave many sleepless nights,
those walks along college street
as she confided the next day's secret tryst
mindless about the staring public
and blinking lights;

those nights of wait on wild grass
for the Sun to rise from her hostel window
and that moment under the peepal at bus-stand
when she came as a wind
blindfolding his eyes from behind, with musky hand
as he composed his first sonnet under its shade
with scarlet words that for her inside so madly bled.

Saroj K Padhi

Pink Promises

Where are your promises gone?
Those pink promises made in the twilight
Of our tryst under a half moon
Under the Peepal in front of your hostel
When the Ayah shrilled out your name
And you rolled back like a timid tide recoiling
Into the depths of a sea in the dark;
But your words have
Kept ringing throughout
In the hollows of my being
Like old obsolete coins
Propelling me oft' to sadly sing
Of that moon, that tree and Ayah's words
And those moments of merciless, moony fling.

Saroj K Padhi

Plastic Flowers

Slowly Night drags her tired feet back
from our sleeping alleys drowned by dense fog,
to wash her face with black waters
from great river Yamuna
on whose express-ways
cars with dimly burning headlights
clash under dark crimson sunlight
and accident victims howl
like sacrificial animals in fright-
of guillotine under shadow of dark death
when the capital city
is struggling tooth and nail for normal breath!

Smokes from vast acres of burning stubbles
from distant accursed crop fields rush in
choking all life down the throat
as pestsgloat over their voracious feed
and unlucky farmers brood over some dire deed!

Angel Priyas however come floating in
like morning fairies with plastic flowers
tucked in their scented braids under shower of fog,
smelling of crushed womb of earth and wet log,
to appease customers without schedule for the day
who madly crave for their long awaited lusty hug.

Saroj K Padhi

Playing The Blue Whale

A 'Blue Whale' dwells in the deep web-sea
that loves to drink blood of the stupid teens
like spider sucking from foolish, webbed bee;

glued to tabs, laptops, addicted to the mobile
these rootless youth, in search of excitement
without poetry of home life and lessons sterile,

fall victim to the Whale in off-guard moments
to wallow in self-inflicted pains, cuts and wounds
not letting anyone know night's awful intents;

crestfallen, lonely like leaves caught in whirlwind
sadly they are drawn to suicide by a sadist admin
alas consequences of indulgence without a mind!

Are those days of joyful games on sweating ground
gone forever when we played with applause around?

Saroj K Padhi

Pleasure

Some unfulfilled pleasures peep from the corners
Of a yellowing mind with their uneasy stirs;
As the night wind kisses the insomniac moon
Arousing her to hug dark clouds of nocturnal love
And drop a few pearls of rain to the hungry Earth
Promising many a new birth,
Feeding your image with nectar of hunger
Drops in my eyes draped in rainbow of your desire
Also fall;
To create that symphony of union
Of memory with mire
Of love with desire
Of rain with pain
of sound with silence
of twitters with flutters
of dives with buoyancy
and my desiring love with your ever widening fancy.

Saroj K Padhi

Ploughman

I'm a poor ploughman with my blunt-headed wooden plough
trying to dig deep into the womb of hard pubescent earth,
a black beetle inside a warm oozing flower at a dark noon
blind with wine of love flowing in waves of overflowing firth;

a butterfly in quest of colors that once bedecked the wings
when crows struck by hard Sun lose the power of speech,
dust-colored leaves swing in the empty hot hugs of dry winds,
ground water sinks still deeper out of poor humans' reach;

the dying lust of an ocean desirous to flood dry river's estuary
a wingless bird's hollow hops to scale heights of tall Himalayas
broken prayer of a flute, lost utterances of an impious rosary
when well-intended actions stray away from the stream of ideas;

I'm a speechless poem inside the honey cove of your imagination
a sad song of blind bees in wilderness of hives awaiting the union.

Saroj K Padhi

Plundered Petals

Why did you go away,
when I ran dry?
in ooziings of nectar
in my sweet womb?
In flow of youth
In my honeycomb?
Sucking me to the full
at the root of my virgin spring
making me speechless
like a dumb human being!
Thrust into the whirlpool
of a constant turmoil now
I ponder and lament
In my long days of dry wait
And in my nights
of dreams soft and wet;
my conscious is flooded now
with a black beetle's blind love
that flicked my body
like droplets of dew
from the bosom of night above.

I'm in the clasp
of your unseen hug now
unable to fight,
you hold me now
like my petals of youth
nestling too tight.
'I'm done now',
I sometimes do feel
but painful thoughts of you
in my head do reel.
You are my day,
you are night,
you are my soul's desire
my love's sweet fire
and my dreams,
all so bright!

Plundered Petals!

PLUNDERED PETALS!

Why did you go away,
when I ran dry?

In oozings of nectar
in my sweet womb?
in flow of youth
in my honeycomb?

Sucking me to the full
at the root of my virgin spring
making me speechless
like a dumb human being!

Thrust into the whirlpool
of a constant turmoil now
I ponder and lament
in my long days of dry wait
and in my nights
of dreams soft and wet;

my conscious is flooded now
by a black beetle's blind love
that flicked my body
like droplets of dew
from bosom of night above.

I'm in the clasp
of your unseen hug now
unable to fight,
you hold me now
like my petals of youth
nestling too tight.

'I'm done now',
I sometimes do feel
but painful thoughts of you
in my head do reel.

You are my day,
you are night,
you are my soul's desire
my new love's sweet fire
and my dreams, all bright!

Saroj K Padhi

Poetry

Is the pathetic hum of a blinded bee
inside the dark womb of an oozing flower;
the silent sigh of sparrow on the edge extinction,
the last drop of hope on the brows of a soldier
caught inside a trench surrounded by burning mortar;
the hunger at the beak of a noon bird
skimming the poor trickle of a dying river;
the expectations glowing on the lips of a morning sky
when the Sun buoys up to the surface of sea water;
the drops of tear in the eyes of an agonized lover;
the cry of a foetus destroyed by her mother;
on lips of a self-realized monk, a silent peace-prayer;
the drizzle of dew from Nature's bowers
that lovingly moistens every leaf and flower;
the loneliness sitting on the lids of a widow
whose young son got martyred in a recent war;
poetry is the voice of truth in the dungeon of lies,
invincible instinct for life under shadow of pervasive death
a cry against injustice, a sentient breath, a relentless prayer...

Pre-Monsoon Rain

Tickled by the touch of the pre-Monsoon rain
As I awake in the lousy evening
to the glimmer of fading stars;
and try to catch some past magic moments-
wafted on the hasty wings of Time,
my doors tremble at the threatening sounds of thunder
reenacting the tragic scenes of the recent cyclone
as I tremble in the remote corner of a Foni-ravaged town,
when my God-inhabitated land languishes
like a living skeleton under sands
ravished by an angry Indra's frown...

the wildly-tossed boughs
whisper some dark secrets about life here-
stark and bare, bereft of cheer
like Foni- devastated trees under thunder
shedding silent drops of tear
without leaves, flowers, in wait for a shower,

roads are clumsy
drives without direction
life without jest or rest,
without much rhyme or reason
living in this city of no season;
we are Nature's victim for our own treason!

Saroj K Padhi

Pretence

I pretend so successfully
to be without you
wherever I go
when actually the buds of your smiles
burst silently into blossoms
in the bower of my heart;
so invisible to the world
spreading the aroma
over miles of misty hearts
lost in spells of birds chanting
about beauty deceiving love.
You are so kind dear to have
flung your priceless baby smile
into a catch in the woods of my heart
lending curves of bliss to star-flowers
in conference with flirty breezes
ambling from wet corners of night;
wherever I go
it's only you that comes to my sight!

Saroj K Padhi

Rag Pickers

Driven by hunger
they scamper in the city's underbelly,
like rodents in search of scraps and carcasses,
for polythene bags, e-waste and paper
that would give them a living
and the fuel to dream big
despite outbreak of deadly fever;
nobody feels thankful to them for cleansing
the vast city from disease and squalor;
their dreams seem to have taken wings
from depth of desires buried long ago
under heaps of garbage
where stray seeds sprout too
for old walls to tightly clamber
and try to reach out to the sun
from chinks, holes and burrows,
for each of them is a dreamer
for their children to scale
topless towers of success,
tread power corridors,
and inherit a city
that is greener and cleaner.

Saroj K Padhi

Rain Bath

Motionless I stood
as drops' clammy fingers
down the spine
moistened my mood,
sank in beneath the skin
into marrows and bones deep,
when the wind played flute
for the heart in joy to leap;

you were so close to me
in your silent whisper,
beneath the shower,
hard to decipher,
my soul to cheer
like a dripping leaf's shiver;

the moist wind spirit did thrill
as you rushed like a gush of joy
the sluices of the sad soul to fill,
a whiff of wind in desert dry
a ripple of throbs thro my flesh
a spectra of beams from the sky;

quenching the thirst of many ages
scattering bliss from ancient sages
turning water from rain into nectar
strumming strings of soul of a lover.

Saroj K Padhi

Rain In Containment Zone

Monsoon has brought some relief from pain
with its soulful touch
assuaging the agony of self-isolation
with tiny drops of rain,
reaching out to corners of cramped cells
that piteously yell for oxygen;

days of confinement in the containment zone
have turned us into cockroaches in crevices
scrambling up lofts, rafters, cracks and secret spaces,
cupboards filled with stale memory and food grain;

lathies chase us on streets, viruses hunt us everywhere
beneath all masks, spreading their deadly scare
as we search for means our breath to sustain,
and hold on to a life with hate as the only refrain;

life is hollow, love a day dream
setting the stage for dance of death to reign
as in corridors of apathy, the Covid patients scream
for a little attention, sulking in death's cruel grin;

we have no plans these days, no moves during night
but to lie like turtles on mud floor with dull brain
and before being washed away by the Corona floods
on chest of time, perhaps a few lines of epitaph to pen!

Saroj K Padhi

Rain Ruined

Half-ruined we stand under clouds of distress
raining into our roofless huts of melting, mud walls
where fragrance of flowers is lost to the stench
of decaying desires and filth around,
each home is an island with its own tale of tragedy
yet in face of crises, together we face the misery-
Jagu's expecting wife we carried in a bamboo stretcher
to the hospital before reaching which
she had an awful delivery;
a few died under the debris of houses that fell
as their kin languish
not knowing how and where to have the funeral;
water-snakes terrorize us like foes at border
fishes leap out of our gaunt hands and torn nets
as we boil under a harsh sun with rising pangs of hunger,
the moon of beauty has gone out of our lives it seems
plunging us into a deep dark of unrelieved fear;
and now that a few drops are shaken off the dark clouds
we know not where to go for the night's shelter
when the old owl hoots from the grove to console us
in this dreadful night of death-in-life under liquid terror.

Saroj K Padhi

Rain Wrath

Ravished by rain the city yells in its gutters
like a breathless mass-rape-victim, after thegruesome act,
flung into the muddy, stinking waters;
vehicles grope their way thro' the flooded roads
like ships lost in a stormy sea;
huddled like animals in our dingy houses,
saddled on weird stench on banks of near dry river
we pine forfresh air
trapped by
garbage, rotten bodies and stale memories;

farmers look up from sockets of their weather-beaten eyes
to a sky-ful of clouds to trace the picture of dream harvest
after the swallow of the fresh tragedies
on the paddy fields caused by killer lightning;

you stand beside me at this hour like a mild whiff
from the land of a distant Spring
to redeem my plugged hours in a lone cabin
and assuage the sobbing child inside, as to you I lean.

Saroj K Padhi

Rainbow

Evening's first breath
merges into miracles
of magic on wings of white petals
transforming pains
into a silent bow to bliss infinite
meltdowns of the day melt
into thin folds of a shimmering darkness
uncovering the mask
from the face of mystery
shrouding happiness;

breezes of changing nuances
titillate the shrunken soul
back to an easy flow into the blue spaces
chanting the eternal words of love;

while sitting on back of a rainbow
I inhale the aroma and the mist
of your enchanting formless body spread
across the sky
of my enthralled imagination!

Saroj K Padhi

Rainbow In Fallow Land

She smiled from the corner of her cloud kohled eyes
Like a moist pink lotus parting soft lips
Under a a tender Sun emerging from blue deeps
Her half smile lurked like a rainbow-tinted dream
Bracing a wet sky
When birds with sunlit wings heavenward did fly
And drops from heaven drizzled like nectar
Quenching thirst of the fields lying dull and dry;

Rain has been sparse this year
Limiting the showers from your heart
As I lie like the fallow lands of my land
And bewildered farmers don't know
How planting to start
I'm a sheer dreamer now
In the harsh desert of hot sands
Forgetful of my ploughs and oxen
And art of cultivating the barren lands.

Saroj K Padhi

Rain-Drenched

Come here underneath the rain-drenched tree
where I stand with my feet in muddy flood waters
but head in the clouds, as leaves keep dripping
in rhyme, to fill sapless souls with the music of rain,
and birds with wet plumes, from invisible nests
send out throatful songs to relieve some ancient pain;
clouds roving in the sky form pictures of fulfillment
as they rush like ambulances to save dying patients
in distant parched valleys of disgust and discontent
where it aches to unleash for life, hope's new torrents;
come, enjoy blue slices of bliss amidst the grey clouds
and white swans waddling across heaven's dark shrouds;
there are thousand miseries for us marooned in floods
yet a couple of stars to bless life pining in the muds!

Saroj K Padhi

Rain-Ruined

Half-ruined we stand under clouds of distress
raining into our roofless huts of melting, mud walls
where fragrance of flowers is lost to the stench
of decaying desires and filth around,
each home is an island with its own tale of tragedy
yet in face of crises, together we face the misery-
Jagu's expecting wife we carried in a bamboo stretcher
to the hospital before reaching which
she had an awful delivery;
a few died under the debris of houses that fell
as their kin languish
not knowing how and where to have the funeral;
water-snakes terrorize us like foes at border
fishes leap out of our gaunt hands and torn nets
as we boil under a harsh sun with rising pangs of hunger,
the moon of beauty has gone out of our lives it seems
plunging us into a deep dark of unrelieved fear;
and now that a few drops are shaken off the dark clouds
we know not where to go for the night's shelter
when the old owl hoots from the grove to console us
in this dreadful night of death-in-life under liquid terror.

Saroj K Padhi

Rape Of A Small School Girl

In this country of largest democracy
in the sacred temple of school
there prowl a few human predators
on a rampage to a bloody rule
rummaging juvenile bodies
in the garb of so called instructors
when they should have engaged
little minds in sweet early flutters
these inhuman persons
who have no qualms in
appeasing animal hungers
by pouncing on baby flesh
tearing it into pathetic shreds
in the jungle of savage passion
without any compassion of any shades! ! !

Saroj K Padhi

Rathyatra

Here there is:
an inescapable attraction,
an inexplicable emotion
and an irrepressible desire
to be drawn to the Badadanda
where dusts sing of the Great lord's glory
where each spec speaks a past story
and His immense hands stretch out into infinity
wet with a desire to touch million hearts
perhaps at a still point
in their beats' relentless hurry!
Here beggars are masters
Pricing love over money;
and masters are beggars
in spite of all their honey;
each of them striving endlessly
for a place at the heart of the great lord
and for peace after reaching the door of God.
Come let us fold ourselves into a big bunch
with innocence at the center of a bouquet
in sprinkles of our tears thoroughly wet
for an offer after Yatra in an hour quiet.

Saroj K Padhi

Red Moon

Saroj K Padhi

2 mins ·

RED MOON

The lone red moon of a secret
hidden behind the brambles of your dark eyes
haunts my nights as the river in sleep
nestles in faint images of hills lying in the deep
till her quivers are silenced by thirsty water
and a deafening bird cry in mid sky
breaks the poise, ending the romance and the fever;
at such a critical juncture
life asks me questions I fail to answer,
'Why this living, this longing, grieving and dreaming
when you know to what finally you are heading
in midst of squalor, disease, death and terror? '

A few gray leaves dozing in dark bushes
on bank of the sad river
flutter in the wind, agog to answer-
in moments quiet
the moon to us does whisper
about the battles and bruises
breaks and betrayals
that tear us asunder
and in grief how it turns red
in dire distress all alone to wander,
but keeping faith in fluorescent nights
in the offing that would reveal its wonder.

Saroj K Padhi

Reminiscence

A flash of flamboyant dream in overcast July sky
fostered by lightning in dawn's sleepy eye
reveals the rain-soaked petals of your marigold body
dripping honey into mouths of bees, at night gone dry;

I lie in bits on green grass scattered like broken limbs
of your childhood toy that gave you temporary joy,
when chased by fear of virus in air, humans hog shadows
just to keep alive; every hour, life adopts a new ploy;

I know you aren't real; show of life too unreal
the stage gone, acts forgotten and roles they spurn
costumes rot in stores, actors busy in household chores
held in hostage by terror, to lonesome death we turn;

yet oft' sparks of joy with your rainbow image do return
reminiscing the intense moments of trance and soft burn.

Saroj K Padhi

Remnants Of Rain

Remains of last night's scanty rain
on wilting arum leaves, under a pointless sun
neither have the energy to burn
nor the power to drip
to the ground that quakes
under threats of hunger and invasion,
when butterflies swoop down from nowhere
with hues of their rainbow wings,
a sullenly silent Nature to adorn;
but birds after bouts of petty squabbles
over issues of nesting and roosting
in search of feeds still go on,
as black ants scour
layers of spurious anthills
that shrinking barks of bare trees mount on;
desperate, fazed frogs jump off the shrubs
looking for hideouts for an early hibernation;
and bedimmed early kash flowers look on
with longings for deep drinks of night dew
under the shadows of a benighted, morning sun.

Saroj K Padhi

Ressurrection

RESURRECTION

As you hold out your hand to touch me
In tune with your breath that my name doth quietly spell
In whispers of a calming rain-soaked breeze
That swirls
Inside honeyed youth's brimming clammy cell,
My bones clank like impatient Baisakhi blown temple bells
In eagerness quite a new story to tell;

Your looks surround me like a python
Around a supple body at the high-tech health spa
Where the streaming blood sings of a new Spring,
Your words in my soul
Always like a sacred hymn do ring;

You are the taste of a monsoon-soaked secret breath
That stirs seeds from long Summer death
You are my burns, my bruises
My hymn and my silent noises, my salvation and my faith.

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Saroj K Padhi

Restless

What restlessness is this?
Time and again trying not to think of you
pressing the call button and foiling,
deleting your number,
and then retrieving it
not to call again;
trying not to smile
and again smiling to self in secrecy
recollecting the dying words
that dropped from the draped petals
of your dry lips
when the wind played
a baffling symphony
to tune my disarrayed thoughts.
Is it love imagined
or sheer pull of lust?
Is it a fake feeling
or true trust?
Why this restlessness
in your absence?

Saroj K Padhi

Retreat

Wait, for tired, my Love has gone into a brief sleep
in arms of illusions of a hoary night under a fading moon
when clouds threaten with sounds hollow but sharp and steep,
without rain enough in shrunken breasts to quench pied cuckoos
as lightning yawns like a tired soldier on edges of parapets in rip,
and a pack of deadly wolves jump out of the wounded jungle
to sneak in and spread terror with ghastly killings of poor sheep;
tuberose sweat under a canopy of groping, grey clouds
unable to emit aroma before vanishing into the dark pit for sleep;
my Lord has happily returned to His throne in the sanctum
after the annual round in the chariot and the fond hue and cry
when moments of sad introspection dawn with tears too deep
arousing pity for tragic fellow pilgrims' debacles in the journey
before into the fold of a daily hectic life, mechanically we leap!

Saroj K Padhi

Revival

My city limps back to soft caresses of a new dawn
whose bleeding fingers paint the sleepy eastern sky
with hues of agony caused by the lashes of last rain
and birds fan the wounds, as up into the air they fly;

an humble breeze implores wilted flowers of the morn
to breathe fragrance into its soul before doing round,
as birds begin to sing and butterflies renew their fun
hurt human hearts with nectar of new love to abound;

cattle lazing on the sands on river bed seem unmoved
by the apathy of muddy waters swirling noisily nearby
with hidden flood threat hidden in each move and mood
as green woods dotting the banks, with a relief do sigh;

we're waiting for the seeds sown to sprout in our farms,
for corn fields to go green and sway into our loving arms.

Saroj K Padhi

Ripples

Ripples in river's heart
in a love so expectant
are now repentant
about the downstream boat
that they couldn't touch
in an ecstasy of their frenzied flow
in tune with dance in the wind
and dazzles of purple glow;
on vast jugging waters that they move
writing refreshingly new lines about love
with the pen of breeze propelling
the ink of water to softly flow;
white birds of love alight
to read verses of penitent love
shimmering and again vanishing
into undercurrents of death
from underneath tugging
ripples of evanescent love
so lovingly dying into waters
with their sadness melting into
merciful smiles of trees on the banks
and benediction of shadows from hills
sending cool wisps of thanks
now the ripples clap with joy
sadness of guilt to the peace

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of blue sky doth fly
and paints of divine love
rotate on heaven's bright floor
to the penitent heart giving a merciful reply! ! !

Saroj K Padhi

Rise

My city limps back to soft caresses of a new dawn
whose bleeding fingers paint the sleepy eastern sky
with hues of agony caused by the lashes of last rain
and birds fan ancient wounds, as up into air they fly;

the breeze implores the drooping flowers of the morn
to cleanse the air with their balmy touches all around,
seeds sown do fight on, though powerless to be born
as smokes from relief camp over earth do still abound;

ruffled bodies long for rest and embattled minds roost
in shelter homes, for a dream to take wings from dust,
drizzles douse burning hearts ere life they can boost
to rev up love of life that has gathered a mass of rust;

like phoenix we rise from ashes of dreams to fly again
and hover high in sky of rainbows like eagles over rain.

Saroj K Padhi

Rising Dust

Listening silently
to the breezy rise of dust
from earth's front door
choking her discontent
vermilion heart,
breaking her morning sleep
with rocks rolling down
from hills, rumbling and
wreaking vengeance;
and handfuls of sands
flung into her slovenly eyes;
drowning her consciousness
into the deeps;
darkening her desire
to rise back from
trauma caused
by the quake's
blow to her
loins and midriff;
let her sleep a little more
under the sky azure
to snore a little more
before to action
her spirit can soar....

Saroj K Padhi

Rising From Ruins

Days' and nights' of fall have puffed
your body with fill of stale rain
letting moisture of anxiety
explode in the air like some bio-bomb
scaring people of some imminent collapses —
of walls or old roofs or of relationships
built on the base of selfish enjoyments.
Skeletons drop from the community's cupboard
when girl children are treated as witches in womb;
words scripted in male hands
whip women into a strange silence;
and we, the timid folks squirm
into a corner of our old houses in fresh ruins
smelling of damp love where we huddle
under leaking polythene roof,
not knowing in our tiredness
when love was thrust upon us
under the cruel gaze of some ominous stars
until the blood-red moon revealed some pathetic wounds
between our stained thighs
and a ghastly horror in our estranged eyes.
Failing to hold my fragile breath
in the midst of noises from the street
mocking my painful retreat,
I turn into a hibernating toad under the ruins
that think of my better days in the offing
therefore, of hope do I so firmly sing.

Saroj K Padhi

River

The river gaunt, gnarled and grim
looks at me like a mythical famine victim
with tears of loss, regret and damnation
in eyes' hollowed sockets and matter at the rim,
as if a poor species of pachyderm scared of extinction
stands shocked and still at the edge of a jungle
in the middle of a wood path- bare, specter thin;

shadows of a rich past chase her like an empty dream
clouds sterile lash her banks filled with filth
and desire to join other rivers as a part of nation's plan
remains just an unheard, wild, hollow scream;

the river looks at me like a helpless octogenarian
in the confines of an old-age shelter home
where it seems rich to die than rot like stale water
in the heart of a dying stream.

Saroj K Padhi

River At Sundown

Then the turbulent streams had gone
leaving the waters in relative peace
where there rippled
cherry smiles on her golden cheeks;
as aches in my vein had sunk
into her mysterious depths
and the mud of mad rush
onto the bottom had settled down,
for a crazed crimson sun's serene dip
before glorious sun-down;
she looked at me from depth of the eyes
when lightning had lit fire on honeyed lips
and my heart suddenly jumped
into her golden deeps,
and like sand from ridges
into current caving in,
seated on fishes' blazing fin,
it slowly sank in
to swim at some unknown depths
beyond life and my thousand deaths.

Saroj K Padhi

River In Spate

Impregnated with rain, the river is emotional enough
to overflow the banks with a surfeit of muddy water
laced with weed and plankton from the deepest woods
where animals rendered homeless search for shelter,

heaving sighs like a deserted lover, foaming she leaps
to catch up with the tides that would swallow her self
and release her from mundane bonds inside the deeps
like black clouds redeeming Moon when a homeless waif,

wet drops from an aroused sky titillate a wayward wind
that loves to roam on the wings of ruffled nestless birds,
I release my mind into fold of youthful ripples gone wild
for a temporary relief from turmoils in soul's sad innards;

as I tread along the verdurous gloom of a corroded bank
my hope traverses like tremulous beam on a floating plank.

Saroj K Padhi

River Love

The sweet ever-forgiving river of your heart
Filled with love divine soaks me into
The depth of the blue bliss at its floor
With light of moon shining on the beaming door.
As my eyes rest on your vast vibrant bosom
The music of murmuring ripples
Passes into my pining soul
soaked in the neon love of reflected lights
from electric bulbs far above her chest
hanging from the bridge's body at the crest;
its pillars dreaming
under the canopy of dark clouds
with the river breathing silent love
into the hearts of glowing stars
dancing on the surface of waters;
our hearts lusted to relish the release
after sweet relief of an end to flood scare
we gather here on the bank to gossip and stare
at the vast stretches of water kissing moon beams
and our hearts slowly walking into a land of happy dreams.

Saroj K Padhi

River Out Of Harmony

The river of Love is drying up
in our embattled, endangered swim upstream
when metals are more precious than mortals
and chaffs, more glamorous than the cream;
virtue sits in some dark corner
as roots of vice strike the center;
sands raise storms of disquiet and disgust
in absence of hearts' clear streams
that once fed the soul of the river
now are caught in heat of fake daydreams;
a few surviving trickles try to cool
her bare ribs burning
under the wrath of a noon Sun
like the aerial roots desperately striving
to touch the ground of certainty and certitude;
we wait in the deserted thorny banks
haunted by ghosts of merciful scavengers
with love of carcass over our heads hovering
with little hope of escape from imminent death
as life is lost in the hollow buzz of senseless living
like an eclipsed Moon in dark night
caught in the throes of rebirth
as she sulks behind the hills
and for light is found softly crying;
now the river is no more anxious
to reach out to the sea,
in her desire herself to be;
silently I can listen to her
burrowing the soil beneath der sandy bed
for finding a place for rest eternal
in the midst of commotions, fights on the banks
for Justice to descend on my land
grown unsafe for my daughter
who lives in terror of Kunduli criminals
under the shadow of fading roses!

Saroj K Padhi

River Romance

Am I in love with
the river that slowly swallows her banks,
as the embankments of my resistance give in
letting her glamorous flow
dissolve the tumbling rocks of my ego,
destroy the cliffs of my bold refusals,
disarray the nuances of desires,
dismantle the idea of existence
by pushing the pebbles of fond old thoughts
out into the abyss of a dark sea
where waves await to melt the stony body
in the depth of sunless waters,
surmounting the dull spirit
to take over the soul in her love's blind rage
like juices of flowers devoured by the honey bee?

Let me lie down like a leaf on her face
kissing the stars in her sky-blue eyes,
enjoy the ecstasy of her ripples rising
into the arms of an amorous wind
and sip the nectar in her winy looks
before being wafted by her bewitching breath
into the ocean's devouring sleep so luminous and kind!

Saroj K Padhi

Riverside

Here the heaths incessantly hum your name,
reeds sing of the white blossoms in your dark braid
catching moon light in their palms unfolded
in a trance with eyes blindfolded,
knotting the mad night to the aroma
from your armpits soaked in the sweat of a soft, dying drizzle;
buds in half-lit bushes bloom into big desires
flaming stars to beam with strange fires;
muddy waters in the marshes smear your growing image
across the vast moist moor merging into a jungle
where farmers collect spiny gourds from creepers
dangling from boughs of big trees
as snakes hiding there jump and play
scaring fledglings to an uncanny silence
in their nests of reeds, mud and hay;
and I move like a wisp of cloud
across your wet body in a desire to kiss
your dark brows still holding on
to the streaks of a rainbow gone.

Saroj K Padhi

Rocking Rainbow

Evening's first breath
merges into miracles
of magic on wings of white petals
transforming pains
into a silent bow to bliss infinite
meltdowns of the day melt
into thin folds of a shimmering darkness
uncovering the mask
from the face of mystery
shrouding happiness;
breezes of changing nuances
titillate the shrunken soul
back to an easy flow into the blue spaces
chanting the eternal words of love;
while sitting on back of a rainbow
I inhale the aroma and the mist
of your enchanting formless body spread
across the sky of my enthralled imagination!

Saroj K Padhi

Scar On Moon's Face

Night after night clouds scrubbed her face
to erase an etched scar causing a strange grimace
of pitiable pain inflicted by a fierce macho Sun
that her insides in fury of vengeful rays tried to burn
as if in a resolve to turn her into a spray of ashes
on the face of the sky without strength to return,
when stars came to her rescue with a suggestion
'Why don't you that letter of love to the Sun not return? '

The Moon smiled and said 'What shall I return
when its words of entreat have been defaced by my tears
shed in lonely nights of my estranged love
and by drops oozing from wounds of deep hurts? '

She has learnt to live with the scar that shows her love
with memories of sweet moments dangling
like bats from boughs in earth's treasure trove;
but the mad clouds believe
one day she will be without the blemish of tainted love
and she will dazzle as the bright white dove!

Saroj K Padhi

Scars

Why do you get scared of these scars on my heart?
These silent marks of past courage
that fought high tides of emotions
storming the sea of life under love's rage?
These black battle lines from past wounds,
remnants of ancient volcanoes that
many moments of happiness did damage
burning fibers with molten lava of hate
puncturing arteries with poisonous gases
and leaving the crater to gasp for breath
and forming these dots of anguish
that survive loves' untimely death!
Do not be afraid of the mutilated face of this heart
recreating scenes of recent horror killings of Gaza
now that there is ceasefire here and no damage
let me pray to love Divine; and to seekers of true love
and peace, pay my heart's deeply felt homage!

Saroj K Padhi

Search

Each one seems to be searching
for someone or something lost to time
for which hearts silently sulk or croon;
A bewildered Moon searches
for the lost traces of eclipsing kisses
from dotting Earth on her wet tresses
during last night's short honeymoon;
the wings of home bound night birds
excitedly search for the wind
that incited them,
of their brief unions to sing,
into the ears of heaven at midnight
when lilies were in fullest bloom;
stars search for the moments of sheen
lost to the engulfing clouds
of a moody, gloomy Monsoon;
night gropes the faces of sad rivers
for the smiles lost
to the quagmire of regress;
roses search for pink blushes
on their wet faces
as butterflies under rain's lashes
piteously sigh and swoon;
my Love searches for the moments
that slipped thro' her fingers
into the lap of fragrant bushes
during Spring's wildest bloom.

Saroj K Padhi

Sea's Call

Let me go back into the sea again for waves call
for a journey new into its mysterious dark depths
where sighs of night can't fathom inner recesses,
planktons weave dream-homes for golden fishes,
nymphs love to fulfill all human hopes and wishes;
and float back again like a snail onto the wet shore
where a moon loses herself in the expanse of sands
as stars return into sky's vaults after daily errands;
to trail the wind like wings of a night bird in flight
that sings at highest pitch without desiring to alight;
light up the lantern hanging at your door
and let me in to your cosy cottage
where I would like to perch like a glow-worm in a bush
in a storm-ravaged night
for I'm a lost ship without a harbor to go
a loser in the battle of life
tired of endless fight!

Saroj K Padhi

Seize The Day

Seize this night in your arms, O Moon
without missing chance
and breathe the peace of your jasmine soul
into our sagging minds bereft of substance-

to deliver us from the pain of joyless living,
from the boredom of this discordant dance;
for we lie here at the edge of the day
like stray dogs on the soulless street
without time or grit for any romance!

Tired of endless marches and bundhs,
strikes, gheraos and fights for rights
we prefer to lie huddled up in our nests
without stamina to switch on the lights;

we grope here like the evening wind
searching for pores
to hide in scented flowers
when the rich try to break ice
in some posh bars;

seize the night, dear Moon
engulf us into your arms
to silence our simmering screams
before you merge into Sun beams.

Saroj K Padhi

Separation

What I asked for was a few drops of rain
from the sky of your dark eyes
soaked a little in the pink pain
of my bleeding heart
smacking of the nutmeg
of our union.

And what you gave is
a curve of common rainbow
for a dream ride
on which I glide,
but to slide back
to a bottomless pit
where a mountain of memory
my head does hit
and again I bleed thereon.

Is our love not worthy of this
as we part now
like two cursed comets
in opposite directions
to escape from some
mythic emotions
of lost love
in the clouded sky
of our separation?

Saroj K Padhi

Shattered To Sing

Shattered by the ceaseless showers
From an insistent cloudy sky,
Battered by a rough wind,
Bitten by bees and beetles
And by each passing butterfly;

I bleed, I fall as thousand shreds of petals
On leaves and grass beneath my feet
Soaked in by the Sun all dry
And know not how to hold on
In the face of ravages
Wrought by my own cunning lovers
Who called me softly by my million names
Before kissing me away to their formal 'bye'
As I shrank like a bride new and shy.

Now look how they still continue to suck
From my nameless wombs
The nectar from honeycombs
As they plod on my body with their fling
And their ruthless sting
I quiver, I shiver before
I recollect those words of love spoken then
I compose songs of my broken wing
Before to you all I sadly but sweetly sing.

Saroj K Padhi

Shattered To Sing!

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Saroj K Padhi

She

Serene like the look of a Morning Glory
of the dawn newly born,
her beauty breathes peace into the morn,
before for the day's battle
like soldiers we're sworn,
and into the designs of her cobweb love,
like befooled bees we move on;
with each letter on heart's keyboard
craving for the feather-touch of her concern,

but alas see how each drop hid
behind every lid
dries up in throes of shallow expectation!

Yet life without her is a shadow,
love an empty whisper,
dreams hollow
and deeds bereft of imagination!

She is tied up to every breath
whether pleasant or unpleasant
like sunlight to air
in thought, sleep, dream and action!

Saroj K Padhi

Shoddy Path

Is this the beauty of our society
where 'love' is a dirty word
meaning mostly the body
under a mind so shoddy
sex, an accursed being
in affairs oft' shady!
Are we the children of God
to rot like faded flowers
under thoughts so muddy?
Here relationships are either good or inimical
No in-between tolerance zone
Between differences mutual
in the path of our journey
to a place all weird and dark
in company of the bloody

Saroj K Padhi

Sickle Moon

My Love smiles from lips of the sickle moon tonight,
faintly shrouded by a layer of darkish clouds
that are unveiled by a few evening stars in bloom;
when tired of long flights, dragon flies in quest of rain,
in corner of the dense garden, prefer softly to croon-
over murmuring backwaters of the river in floods
whose banks gave us secret shades for meets at noon;
the amorous lightning tries to reach her tresses
so as to unfurl locks of wet hair dangling over her face
when wind lifts our spirits to bear with nightly distress
in ghettos of our living where we fight against stress
each moment of our living, marooned by muddy waters
and occasionally though, our desires under dark, catch fire
before to glum beds, with dreams lurking in eyes, we retire.

Saroj K Padhi

Sighing River

SIGHING RIVER

As the tint of the Sun's last glow is erased
by the warm sighs of a lean Summer river,
the last legion of diurnal birds on their return
take last suck from her chest in soft quiver;

the tired breeze tries to soften its husky voice
in the clefts of ripples aching for a little rest,
in the folds of sands at the desolate banks
where inside dozing flowers, bees enjoy arrest;

sporadic sparks from smouldering heart of hills
reveal but lines of half-hidden trickles of tears
in cloudy corners of the weighty Sky's wet eyes
when to the wind, the river whispers all her fears;

we lie as dreaming snails on her ever sinking floor
when trickles from sentient clouds fill sands' pore.

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Saroj K Padhi

Sikkim

As I watch the trickles of tears flowing
From the corners of these mountains' eyes
On my drive up the steep road to Nathula pass
I'm drawn nearer to streams from your eyes
Whose memory melts me again and again
Into murmurs of wind
That sweeps across miles of mute desire
Along stretches of vast green land
Swaying inside mind;
Your silence killed me then
Now it heals
With a cold moist breeze
Sprinkling vapours on dreaming faces
That float like clouds on hills' lovely tresses;
Now I make this journey up the hard joints
Of your body across time
To your icy head skirting my country
Where love is under high alert
Life is a tough knot
And every breath, difficult
Turning me into a drop in the trickle
Down your body Sikkim
Where I would love to perish
As I vanish into this afternoon rainbow in your eye.

Saroj K Padhi

Sinking Stars

Brimming with promises in glitter of starry silver
With a translucent heart in sweet quiver
when cloud-tossed moon, to your being sent her cold shiver
you sat beside me peeping into the stream
as if plucking images of immortality, saddled at its sinuous rim,
as the cold wind kept spraying dusts of foamy water over us
like scented bits of blossoms from a priest's holy hand,
twined were we like two twigs in sway under a breeze
in a bush of an enchanted land;

softly the wind caressed the stars in our palms awoken
to catch pearls from rain of faint beams
that glided from our body into the mouth of million streams
stars beamed on your forehead creating a new sky
like a galaxy in your twinkling eyes,
like night jasmines in scented thoughts and dreams
with drops from drizzles drenching all petals in happy gleams
when we caught glimpses of rainbows
in shimmers of shoals in their random swims

when momentarily there fell the pall from a dark demon
from the web of a dark, thundering prejudiced cloud
in yells terrible and loud
drowning the stars everywhere- on land, hand and air
and in trees' wet, matted, musky hair
into the waters splashing piteously in wails sharp and loud
when we realized with a thud that
we had become two warm evanescent drops
under the fringe of a dark cloud.

Saroj K Padhi

Sinner

A sinner, not a saint
a silent lover of all that in words I paint
toiling hard to find out in quiet
how I connect to my universe
as the singing, sighing, soaring, suffering poet,
as you laze on in the Winter sun
or on a balmy starlit roof, loiter on
like a cat weaving gossamer dreams
in the lustrous streets of endless desires
and waiting for the opportunity
to jump over jinxed fence of wires
before putting out the simmering fires,
when I wander like a glowworm
in the fragrant alley of my past love
in search of a little dark
in the midst of garish lights
away from shadows' mortal fights
before I settle down for the night
in some secret hideout I'm trying to sight!

Saroj K Padhi

Skywalk

AT THE SKYWALK

At the skywalk that soars over the city traffic,
as we float with stars
inside the blue immensities of a low-lying sky
to pause and rest awhile
on the lap of soft rain
glistening on sprouts of grass
and shed the skin of life's grim realities,
we listen to exotic flowers
humming back to the wandering bees
in whispers of a moist breeze
under a fanciful umbrella
on the palms of an expansive bridge;

my hands catch the Bangkok Moon
nestling in the boughs of painted trees,
clouds unlock her luminous, scented braid
as past us in clusters they whiz;
swans of cool love swim in her eyes
like pet whales swirling in the pool
arousing waves of happiness to rise to the full,
I repose on the aroma of orchids
wafted by the wind
and listen to the songs of invisible bees
all around, as over sleepless flowers they drool.

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Saroj K Padhi

Sleep

My secret concubine, my second nature-
Creeping in between conscious acts, a wish clandestine
A drug induced dream that captures images of happiness
From cleavages of hills, lousy river banks and forest alpine;

I have no words to praise you dear friend divine
For the bliss you bring, for joys cast by your spell
The beauty of the world born out of your closing eyes
Where imagination like zillion rainbows does swell;

Life waits for a meaningful silence at the end of day
Where thoughts of everyday world die for a while
A rebirth for life and for acts and thoughts, a replay
Readying body and mind with zest to tread new mile;

Beauty of life at rest like wet cloud set on mountain breast
Without you we're a bundle of unrest, a pile of big waste!

Saroj K Padhi

Sleepless Roses

Roses shed tears of different shades this night
of agony and ecstasy, of repentance and reunion
of endless impotent waiting and pathetic retreat,
of break-ups, betrayals, bliss and consummation;

baby buds terrified by enormous smokes from mortars
close eyes and hastily shed wishes for gossamer dresses
as their souls beneath glossy skin lie in deep bunkers
they recoil at the unholy stares at their vulnerable faces;

the bird in bush hungers for rose in hands of those lovers
who tirelessly whisper silence into the ears of eternity
under bower of moon-struck, joyful tree in silent shivers
rejoicing in the music of flute from singing birds in bounty;

o how varied are the streams of tears from roses in fire
for whom blinded bees in love their love so openly do blare!

Saroj K Padhi

Smog

Slowly Night drags her tired feet back
from our sleeping alleys drowned by dense fog,
to wash her face with black waters
from great river Yamuna
on whose express-ways
cars with dimly burning headlights
clash under dark crimson sunlight
and accident victims howl
like sacrificial animals in fright-
of guillotine under shadow of dark death
when the capital city
is struggling tooth and nail for normal breath!

Smokes from vast acres of burning stubbles
from distant accursed crop fields rush in
choking all life down the throat
as pests gloat over their voracious feed
and unlucky farmers brood over some dire deed!

Angel Priyas however come floating in
like morning fairies with plastic flowers
tucked in their scented braids under shower of fog,
smelling of crushed womb of earth and wet log,
to appease customers without schedule for the day
who madly crave for their long awaited lusty hug.

Saroj K Padhi

Smooth Sail

My search for you is endless in circuitous time-
draped in the jasmine body of youth
my enchanted spirit moves in forests of half-conscious thoughts
thro' the vale of foggy days and nights covered with flowers,
as the wild feet tread thro' pathless woods
with streaming petals and leaves, nodding boughs in the breeze
where I love to lose the self under shower
of honeyed dew from mists of illusion,
love to chase mirages of water on hot beds of sands
that would carry me into the fold of sweet oblivion
inundating the jaded soul to merge into
the magic of an eternal flow,
in an ever widening hope
to regain the lost charm and glow.

Is it all in vain
when bubbles of a green faith
boom into balloons of uncertainty
before bursting to merge into grey clouds,
thunders of solid threat rip the body and mind
promising a release from this unwanted bind!

Am I still waiting for some old waves to retire
to the edge of the windy shore of a lonely sea
where a barge left me long back
with a promise to return with old glee
and to the blue space behind the sky
lovingly carry me!

Saroj K Padhi

So Close Yet So Far

Words at times stare and stammer
under duress of too much love
but also oft' during lone moments
when beats are betrayed
By your absence
and your shadow haunts
like an old adamant ache;
I'm unable
to clearly utter your name
as my lips like timid leaves shake.
Words fumble and shiver
when you quiver in my heart
under night's warm cover,
pining for old love
without any qualms
during desire's hot fever.
I want to write your name
in words all new
but feelings old, deep though few;
hence come dear love
to kiss the dew
of my sweet love
in these moments of life
when there is hardly any space
between me and you.

Saroj K Padhi

Soldier

Standing on the line of fire, near blasted trench
my tattered gum boots stuck in ice, as I stretch
eyes out into dim-lit, dark blank between borders
from where air fetches decaying carrions' stench;

miles away from a camp, in hostile fangs of cold
with unfaded dream of eternal tricolor and honor
guard my country, by enemy's bullets made bolder
bound by love to land, I'm a tired, hungry soldier;

hurt by stone-pelters, harassed by storms and rain
I tread valor's sturdy path without caring for pain,
always ready to walk into the mouth of blind cannon
to come back to bereaved family, wrapped in coffin;

the poor Moon of my desires melts here under clouds
as a sheet of snow my luck, love and life, enshrouds.

Saroj K Padhi

Soldiering

Oft' as I sit down on a piece of nameless sweating stone
back from the icy LOC on way to my lone bunker
I think for whom I'm fighting such terrible battles
when enemies multiply not only outside but inside the border-
the soil beneath my foot that quakes in danger of invasion
is being stained with heinous lynching, pelting and murder,
putting the very fabric of our democracy into disorder,
people and polity into shame and right to life in danger!
May I ask you, "Where are values of great books gone?
Where the heritage truths buried and tradition forgotten?"
Let the whole country awake and come here to the border
and breathe for a few seconds to feel the pulse of true life,
let there be growth of the knowledge of what is real strife
for true love can perhaps grow in terror of losing one's life!

Saroj K Padhi

Solitude

Deep inside my chest a solitary bird sings
of the bliss of solitude
and see how the song in the banks rings
as it reminisces moments savored in quietude;
when ripples in thirsty soul of the river roll on
rollicking in rhyme with mild wind
in an attempt to forget everything
before they merge and mingle into ultimate beatitude;
the bird sings of the ease
with which ripples try simmering sands to appease
with their smiles born out of repeated failure to rise
into waves of greater magnitude;
where in a communion of a strange kind
sighs wobbling in hot human hearts
get cooled under shadows of shimmering waters
under shades of burning trees
and fire in surrounding flowers is slowly subsumed
under smokes rising from the river's parching heart;
the bird has stopped singing now
as it is listening to the sounds of a sad silence in souls
of humans sleeping on the sprawling thorny banks
and to the benumbed song of the river
resounding in the body of the soaring sands!

Saroj K Padhi

Song Of Falling Leaves

Behind every fall there is a silent song
of love sweetly sung, but to wither in the long run,
creating ripples in some hearts sometimes
but not letting out the hard facts of hurts and burn;

for there's a kind of secret joy in falling
which is known only to the falling body in shambles,
there's a hidden story of love behind every fall
not unfolding the tragedy before to dust it tumbles;

there's exchange of wills, emotions, matter and mind
fun, frolic, fasts, feasting, silly laughing and soulful crying
as the journey tides over the Sun, snow, rain and storm
to stop at length letting one fall, to leave young ones wailing;

wizened, wistful leaves fall like fussy molehills in storm crumbling
as Spring delights in birth of new leaves, with joy of life bursting!

Saroj K Padhi

Song Of River

I asked the river 'Why this muddy water? '
She smiled and said 'This is not just 'muddy water,
It's my melted heart in its million quiver
mixed with the slime of agony
from the walls of my sick lever'
With tears of soft dew in her eyes
she hummed ahead to sing of moon beams —
in the heat of a rain-soaked Sky's
passionate kiss
on the face of a vast
layer of madly murky waters,
overtaken by heart's thousand desires,
sounding their suppressed aches
in the womb of night in endless murmurs.
I'm a wonder in the eyes of innocence
picking pearls of happiness
from the drying, drooping petals of life;
on her thorny bank,
in the jungle of a cloudy night,
caught in ceaseless battle for new life
every moment of my sturdy strife.
The river goes on singing
my timorous life song
to the heart of the night
seeking consent to each syllable
of the story told by sand and pebble
about love's poor and pitiable plight.

Saroj K Padhi

Spring

Spring sneaked into my city garden last afternoon
like an anxious extra-marital lover,
in search of an opportune moment for the stolen kiss,
knocked the jammed door of my thoughts
with the bold, musky hands of its enchanting wind,
draping the lips of white bougainvillea in crimson Sun glow,
sprinkling the fragrance of mango buds on silken grass,
exciting birds to fly past humans with delightful songs-
as flowers swang in the arms of a lazy Sun
when birds and bees drank from their clammy breast,
herons flew to tree-tops like white fairies in search of beams
in the heart of the darkening forest;

rays of the setting Sun slowly released themselves
from the clasp of swaying drunken boughs
like coy girls, from the arms of aroused, outrageous lovers
in their manoeuvre for the poignant, parting kiss,

tears trickle now from the eve's sorrowing eyes
as the bright corset of the Spring is temporarily
obscured by the dusk's dark, dew-soaked sighs!

Saroj K Padhi

Spring Fever

As a feverish Sun rises to hug a beige sky,
from under thin blankets of amorous clouds,
with a melange of dreams running in his foggy eye
not knowing when in wild revelry
his long arms are flung around tall fruit-laden trees
in whose lush leaves,
there's sensation of a strange joy
as the perverse wind tickles their secret pores at ease
when nectar spills out of the womb of joyous flowers
and hungry bees pecking beaks do tease to fly away;

there honeycombs overflow, songs like streams sweetly flow
chirps resound in the forest and ring, leaves in ecstasy do swing
fever is slowly subsumed under warmth of love in every act
and the Sun comes round the petty illness, a new day to start.

Saroj K Padhi

Spring Has To Stay Here

Spring has come to stay here for a time quite long
Till the dawn on your cheeks, away to dusk under brow flies,
Till you have not banished those stars from sky of your eyes
Where they weave dreams for greedy minds, in many hues
Of roses whose tremulous looks incite birds to hysteric cries,
As long as my breath in your heart for silent fruition of love
In endless lyrics of undying tears and sighs,
Draped in wet smokes from our blood continuously tries.
Spring has to stay here till the expiry of our secret deal
In that glorious morning when you gave me drinks of wine
From lips of your wild flowers that hold me in eternal thrill
Planting myriad moons in mind's sky with their honey beams,
Till the aroma from the jasmines of your secret hugs
Raises ripples of silent, demure screams
In my heart's murmuring timeless streams.
Spring is an undying season in the garden of green hearts, dear
With its wine of honey, its beams and breeze and its exciting love;
You just keep that dawn alive on the ripples of your young cheeks
For agony of seething nights to melt into smiles' meandering creeks

Saroj K Padhi

Spring Hues

As the orioles drape lips of swaying jasmines, Zinnias
yellow marigolds and red Dahlias in the Spring garden,
butterflies paint some freckled faces of petals and leaves,
cuckoos love in golden songs our heavy hearts to lighten,
mynahs and parrots hop on the 'flames of the forest'
bees and beetles swarm the beaming boughs in unrest,

petals drizzle like fog from corners of Sky's soaked eyes
to the soft bed of grass wet with withering mango buds
who had been striving all night to fight sigh of tragedies,
when we roamed as poor dots of pilgrims in hands of Gods,
seeking to heal souls' wounds with a rub from His holy hues
as the leaves of our lives are weighed down by morning dews!

Saroj K Padhi

Spring Is Back

Spring has come knocking the doors and flinging open
stiff windows of my isolation with an intoxicating wind
that shakes dusty, crumpled leaves of my grey present
to rustle like green grass in love of Spring grown blind;

specks of pink get sprinkled on chest of clouds sparse
on a January sky where a crimson Sun newly born fights
dark smokes rising from burning hay in fields of distance,
perfumes of zillion flowers swim in fog as dawn alights;

Onrush of what fluid is this from the old pituitary glands?
What flutters I hear on lips of a darkish crazy Spring dawn
as songs rise from honeycombs dangling from tall boughs
and wings flap with pitter patter of dew from face of morn;

look how unseen hands gently rub camphor of fog on lids
as the herons sit on grass like monks reading rosary beads!

Saroj K Padhi

Spring Magic II

Spring has kidnapped my poor soul
into a garden of love where mad is the wind
serenading songs into ears of flowers
with kisses and hugs from close behind;

Where trees touch you with hands unseen
to clean the smudges from your tainted soul
in shivers of wind fanned by wings of birds
that sweep across with corn in beaks to goal;

where in wee hours birds rub each other's beaks
as they perch on tops of tall, towering trees
when the scent of earth like clouds of cotton
wafts in, wetting wings of a cool light breeze;

where love walks on soft grass of memory
like a snow white bird treading land of dream
eluding awhile, then inviting in words flowery
to bedeck her hair with blossoms that gleam;

everyone enjoys a date with time that heals
charged is the air with such feel that thrills.

Saroj K Padhi

Spring Magic-I

Petals drop like scented dusts of color
to dew-wet earth's lush green cheeks
where grasses ripple like blushes
on a new wed's throbbing, shy, red lips;

nectar divine oozes like bubbles of wine
at the touch of enchanted beaks-
of birds in flight under flash of sun shine,
mad in joy after pegs of hearty drinks;

where trees melt like lovers during night
under a hot, heaving, honeyed moon
to bask the drenched bodies under sun light
and from face to erase the smudges soon;

where breeze from basil leaves
sweeps the floor of mind's sanctorum,
for lotuses pink and white
silently to bloom ad infinitum;

where beams glow like white blossoms
of sweet-smelling souls in ample bloom
and a smiley moon showers magic of love
thro' windows into hearts' lighted room;

where leaves green dance round the clock
the eternal joy of life to sing
and dried-up leaves flap and flutter
like anklets of wind in constant ring.

Saroj K Padhi

Spring Revelry

Spring is here in half-wakeful hours of dreaming flowers
when seeds gently swell in the ovaries, eager to assume name;
in happy swings of bursting buds filled with wild desires
when a tender Sun swims in dense fog without fire in its flame;

when caterpillars open chests of the cocoons to fly into freedom
and bees buzz around oozing blossoms, without rest to tiny wings,
leaves sprout from Winter's boughs, to enthrall Nature's kingdom
and birds blare out mating calls as wind million songs of soul sings;

moments of ecstasy with giggling grass revive on earth's soft bed,
breeze ruffles the leaves of memories lying in heaps hither, thither
as a cool Moon wanders in heaven stirring desires long since dead
and her beams scratch itching hearts in love, drawing them still closer;

Spring holds all bound to its brief spell like a magic show in Nature
blessed are the beings who steal from it moments of golden rapture.

Saroj K Padhi

Still Point

STILL POINT

Time halts quite for some time
as I sip morning tea on a rain-soaked roof
where the breeze is a wand of magic,
memories seep into the naked body
of a wet house in trap of phantom music,
the road in the front seems clear
and the sun emerges with its redeeming spear,
sipping honey from rain,
smoking out sweat of bodily pain,
steering out of the dark clouds
with its illumined heart so clear,
as the flurry of birds hovering over the horizon
put on an endless cheer,

no remorse lurks there to pull you down
no enemy to accost, affront or frown,
you are free to yawn, gaze, brood
or into a deep meditation quietly drown
without any back pack of guilt
trampling you down,
you are free into cool air to lightly soar
and fly too close to the heaven's door
like wings of an invisible bird
with ears tuned to a music unheard,

O how much do I love to be in unmoving time's grip!
And dwell in heart of a still point at center of a blue deep!

Saroj K Padhi

Suffering

O how beautiful is this suffering
with its pain acute but haloed ring
when life is driven to the fringe
without seeming anchor in the offing!
But when balmy clouds of dear ones' love
across aching temple, silently float in
with an amazing sun in the inner ring
under love's magic showers to bask in!
Lucky is the man who enjoys such pain
in the solitude of soul, without chaos
of encircling, foolish folk breaking in
when mists of His grace divine float in!

Saroj K Padhi

Summer

Summer has barged in like a bully
elbowing out the flimsy, fumbling Spring,
drying up all sources of water
for many making drinking water a dream,
plumping fruits and nuts in vines and trees
but stealing hues from flowers that look dim
like brides after first few nights of union,
to suffer boredom and chores' severe sting;

Summer has set in with foggy mornings
deserted noons, sultry afternoons,
windy evenings and nightmarish nights,
with dehydrated, sighing rivers
and steaming oceans in seasonal swoons;

with miles of unguarded forests on fire,
with its heat stifling all bodily desire,
with a mad Sun scorching helpless leaves
and farmers' long hours at binding sheaves;

with songs strained up in koels' thirsty throat
inside borrowed nests by heat overwrought,
burnt-up wings of butterflies plummeting to earth
to avoid further burn,
petals sweating under a glaring Sun
and downward taking their sad turn;

like a wilted leaf on greying grass I sit on
to my dream of pink Palash, still clinging on
despite every act of cruelty on this earth,
to the fading petals of peace still holding on!

Saroj K Padhi

Sunday

Sunday yawns like a tired farmer
half-asleep in shade of an uprooted tree
on river side, as the racking shadow
of thoughts about unpaid farm-loans
shortens under a near noon sun
and hazily the farm yields smile at him
to lighten his mood, before to work he can return;
wild Palash flowers turn juicier in his day dreams
as the paddy seeds ripen under a mellow sun
and Summer at the threshold does beckon
this time with promise of its quicker return;
the winnowing wind closes the eye-lids of flowers
in gardens as they contemplate as seeds to be born,
birds wash their plumes in shallow river water
through periodic dips and enjoy their flutter,
bees enjoy some sweet nonsense with buds
as around the plants they wander,
butterflies and dragonflies take Sunday flights
to places that are colorful and warmer
as winter cloths of picnickers basking on hedges
about some sweet secrets prefer to twitter.

Saroj K Padhi

Supermoon And The Sea

I'm a Despo crying at the height
For the brightest super moon of the night
The chimes of my heart keep ringing
To blow of the breeze constantly flicking.
Trees spouting wind of impatient love
Into ears of buds and blossoms half-sleeping
Where do I go this bright night
When the Tsunami of passion ravages the shores?
Save holding on to the anchor of your destructive love
Breaking each of my bone in its mad sweep
Lying across the sands of your inflamed desire
Sprawling on the beach, soaked with foam and filth
To the core?
Enjoying the pain of being thoroughly ruined
By the mad bursts of your white glow
Blinding me to a dazed look at your flow
Of love so mysterious but true
That's why I'm in love with you!

Saroj K Padhi

Surfing Across Guilt

How long will I have to be patient and persistent
before I grow mature enough to understand myself
my foolish fancies, my weaknesses, my angularities
my predilection to fall into lows of an abyss
while barging into fits of passion and emotion
affecting the moon with burden of mythical stains
shocking flowers out of dreams in sleep
into moments of undeserved guilt?
How long will I take to build my cool
in the midst of my uneasy emotions
that propel me to stumble into
lusty dreams of the dawn for the night? ?
Am I a cursed star in the sky of love
looking at splinters of self-image
in the bosom of a broken moon? ? ?
Emotions my own blackmail me
under the blanket of the night
in this house of old doubts
with new fear and new fright.

Saroj K Padhi

Survival

In battle for survival,
compassion is the casualty,
driven by blind hunger
man munches bones of innocence
in dark hours of self-indulgence
spreading the virulent virus of cruelty;
animals groan in despair
without home to repair,
in the dead of night
plants shed star-crossed love's silent tear
insects run wild from forests to field in fear;
covid warriors crave for rest
as the dance of death seizes the hospital corridor.

Economy slumps to an all time low
taking livelihood out of the hands of the poor
progress takes the back seat
as life loses the ordinary cheer.

Yet all is not lost in this embattled earth
with the shadow of war planes
looming large over the border,
life trundles on
like the ancient cart on a muddy village road
raising dust from hooves of cattle
cursed to rot in fetter
trying hard to kiss the crimson glow
in the cheeks of a low-lying sky
as trees stretch out their desperate hands
from hilltops in prayer,
rain-thrashed roses lose color
yet Tuberoses with their feeble fragrance
tickle the tense chords of a ransacked heart
some lilting tunes to mutter
and Crape Jasmines with their glimmer
beam with conviction to bloom on
reposing faith in little joys of life
that in the midst of mayhem make life so dear!

Take Me Kindly Light

Take me kindly light
not to lit up shrines where flood light
speaks of salvation thro' chartered flight,
but to the pathless woods
where darkness allows only hazy sight-
of a moody, meandering rivulet
lulling a disturbed Night
under kind, dim star light;
not to the haloed sanctums
with false vows of liberation
but to a lonely shore
to hear
waves in many forms chanting
about way to Love's sacred door;
not to hymns of humans
with sugar-coated words about freedom
but to songs of birds
showering charms
with every new dusk and dawn;
not to hug of blind faith
with promise of speedy redemption
but to the stream of reason
for clear view my true reflection!

Saroj K Padhi

Tears

TEARS

We were two bleeding hot streams of heavy hearts
when the river offered us her cool evening bank
with silent, copious flow to wet Moon-blached sands
when the ridge on which we sat, melted and sank;

today oft' as those moments of agony gently murmur
thro' infinite ripples repeating symphony of separation,
my stupid heart with pain of bleeding so silently fills
as dallying birds in ruts of sands enjoy their happy union;

the river is always greedy about those drops of water,
harvested by an alchemy of bleeding lonesome hearts,
that seep through lovers' dark eyes to enrich her floor
as startled at sight of tears, heart of the Moon smarts;

drained out, as I fall back on my own shadows on water
clouds rush past hiding the Moon with promise of shower!

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Saroj K Padhi

Teary Moon

TEARY MOON

As tears twinkle this late moony night
in a lonely corner of my inebriated eyes
at the thought of an imminent farewell
you hold me close to your clammy cells
brimming with honey in deep wells
arranging my breathless hair
with your mimosa like soft hands
when your dew drunk lips
write an elegy of consolation
on my paper white cheeks
swollen with silent sobs
in heart's measureless deeps
arousing the spring in your
bosom to sing a lullaby
to lull a heavily hung head
lying like a corpse in your lap
to be softly played
by wind's gentle, assuaging tap;
your face becomes the moon
and my sorrow, the dark dapple
and together, we're the silent sky before dawn.

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Saroj K Padhi

Tension

As I wait for the new moon in the dark
on the rooftop, under shower of secret dew
the wind sings but another sound I hark
of plants drinking water, sprouting leaves new;
nearer I go to lean to the scented flowers
to find out how they feel in the dark hours,
these heaving bosoms of the earth softly say
'we wait for the sun, for love's ample showers
and in dark under tension as we mostly sway
we love light sprinkled from heaven's bowers',
I too listen to drunk bees enmeshed inside petals
mumbling about wild sucks and love's sweet fires;
dark has its creative tension and throughout night
they get wet with longings before satiating desires.

Saroj K Padhi

Thailand

THAILAND

The morning sea smacks of the aroma of lemongrass
hemming her thin satin lavender swimsuit
as she pops out of emerald waves like a mermaid in dream
to float like an Orchid petal over the bare chest of Poseidon,
I inspect the demure Sun thro' her green sun-glasses
that hide tides of unrest beneath dimming sleepless eyes
albeit dripping honey for air-lifted life to flow on;

beneath the waves in heart of the turbulent Andaman sea
I listen to cacophony of tourists at bars
rummaging vulnerable glossy Thai skin,
to healing laughter of bodies in lousy massage parlors,
to silly giggles at beer-bars,
to shrieks of speed boats tearing the womb of an outraged sea,
to thunderous cabaret at Alkazar lifting dull spirits,
to beats of dancing flesh in Pattaya's 'Walking Streets',
to endless noise of bargains in floating markets,
to vociferous tunes of Spanish number 'Despacito' on river cruises;

beneath her soaked tresses
I smell the fragrant 'Frangipani' blooming to its best
to ooze honey
like the Bangkok Moon streaming beam-soaked clouds
into the topless towers of hotel 'Royal Cliff';

her sea-soaked body lies like an emptied beer bottle now
on the sands of Coral island sizzling under a robust Sun
smelling of pork sausage
and giant 'Rafflesia' in jungle, under terrible soul-burn!

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Saroj K Padhi

That Afternoon

That glorious winter afternoon
that held us like two entwined leaves on a twig
swaying, shivering at caresses of an amorous wind,
when lightly hopping birds chirped around
in their boiling desire to reach a crescendo
and the sun peeped
like a sincere security guard from behind;

the oriole in you took dips in an unseen river of desire
before basking in the crimson western glow
marigolds in the backyard oozed the last aroma
before dawn of the jasmine night
and the cat in the rafter danced at its new catch;

that afternoon when your desires jumped
like cockroaches in the semi-dark kitchen
and new feminine feelings gushed out
like water from new cracks in rocks of mountain brooks
to sing of a strange freedom,
I smelt the sea in you and you smelt the river in me.

Saroj K Padhi

That Black Bird

That black bird trembling in morning cold
gaunt, grave, dry and old
behind leaves, dappled brown and green
under rain of profuse dew
as its tail it lightly does preen,
tries hard a few words to speak
as it moves its long, sharp beak,
but ends up staring at me with a look quite blank
as the trunk with tears of morn, grows quite dank;
dropping pearls of sacred dust
from under its feet, soaked in life's lust
to the forehead of the brown earth
bathing in mist of divine mirth
to instantly create images of God on anthill
for the lovers' lit-up minds to fill
as drops falling from shivering branches
echo the music that sweetly my soul fully drenches
to catch the rainbow from the wings of butterflies
and from colored plumes of the feathered friend
as high up it suddenly soars and heavenward it flies.

Saroj K Padhi

The Cutest Butterfly

The little butterfly in my life's garden
flutters excitedly for a flight
into the blue spaces of the rainbow-tinged Sky
as the gardener in me has to fight
alternately with truant rain and the soil gone dry;

gone are the moments of spasm at birthing
as the caterpillar has left the cocoon
in its dreamt-of-desire to fly
to an all time high
before scripting lines of eternity on the blue spaces-
as I water the plants for blooms to beam
and entreat the seeker of freedom
to fly back sometimes to the garden of my dream
where love gives new wings to every new flyer
without any regret or any secret sigh
to enjoy the nuances of the beautiful flight
under the starry eyes of the Moon
or beneath the splendid Sun's roving eye.

Saroj K Padhi

The Last Word

A big claim about 'love' they made-
that the last word about it
had already been said,
when you bumped into a dawn
like a new glow on the face of morn
that seeks to reclaim and redeem life,
after Night's endless dark sojourn;
you came like the shiver of Spring
in body of a youthful sprig
when under a mid-Winter Sun,
by a wind it's ever so gently blown
to smack of the wildest flowers
in crevices of hills and vales newly born;
like a mad rainbow descending
to the crest of rising tides
that hunger for milk from udders of clouds
near to the sea, swiftly borne;

they said the last word
about love had been said
when with crack of another dawn
my heart too burst like a balloon
with air of emotions overblown
and softly in silence, to new light to turn
after consuming the dark in isolation
and then initiate the epic of a new born
to the rhythm of eternal symphony in wind
albeit occasional refrains of heart burn
and witness in new light the glory of creation
as orioles draped in nascent yellow of marigold
sang out their soul in jubilation
and hosts of birds
along with koels rested not while singing
of the beauty of Love's supreme creation!

Saroj K Padhi

The Ripple Gone

Here I vanish like a dying ripple
From the river of your heart
Without a murmur of request
Disturbing your quiet siesta
In the lap of dreams' shore
With wishes for the best
Writ on the waters' lighted floor.
Look how the pebbles
of my knotted thoughts
Lie inside the body of sands
For rest in the sweet grave of peace
Away from the bustle of clamouring hearts
I `m just a rock's silent piece
Looking up to heaven for rain of death's bliss.

Saroj K Padhi

The River Calls Now

Frightened by thunder and lightning
that tear into the sagging breast of a heavy sky,
the bewildered river calls from the wilds
in voice of birds' piercing, piteous cry
to sit close to her throbbing heart
and pluck stars of secret happiness
from her tremulous, zooming eye
and savor life on earth
as a real and beautiful lie;

without a pause she whispers on
in strains of the strings of the wind
as her murmurs merge
into clatter of rain drops;
she lays bare all her honey coves
for the sky to dip into depths of her troves
and catch pearls of intimate moments
from the sanctum
where oysters roll on sands of ecstasy
to sing of rain-thrashed flowers' sweet love-sigh!

Saroj K Padhi

The Unspeakable

Lips parted, tremble, eager to speak
but words fumble, faint, twist and tweak
consonants stumble under stress
and vowels long, tumble in panic-
as beats skip heart
silencing the mind freak
to dip into an abyss
before into oblivion they sink;

the Sunleaps from the mouth of dawn
filling the dark void inside the word with light
bees hum around the freckled petals
after a few pegs of floral wine to their delight;

but your silence stiffens like December dew into ice
as I try to tame the volcano inside,
desires weld into fire like fireflies at fireside
when I burn as a lone secret in your heart, deep inside;

open the lips dear and allow the wind to spill out
the beans and spell out the alphabets of old love,
allow ripples of river to sprinkle light on your face
and at the core of being, let our music loudly throb.

Saroj K Padhi

Thorny Rose

Now you have learnt to blush
with an unusual hush
when your half smile,
under a light crush
of the upper jaw
puts me at a loss
for awhile.

I am closer to your thorns
under the spell
of your hot pink eyes
my heart, held
like crumpled foliage
inside your glossy palms
in a desire to sing,
so willingly it burns.

Now my soul
with sunlight fills,
sprays of rising love
from behind green leaves,
my body moves into the thorns
my spirit in you coolly sojourns.

Saroj K Padhi

Those Birds

Those birds at the tree top under moon light
that sang so sweetly from dewy dusk to dawn,
from balmy breathing boughs of solitary night,
in tune with humming hearts, seem to have gone-
in search of you who made them in choir sing
as your gilded voice in each twitter did so ring
like enchanting echo of frenzied calls of mates
in throes of wild love, in wet hug of mad Spring-

but now the bedewed branches do gently trill
as unsuckled hives overbrim to softly fall and fill
mouths of wandering ants that on grass do leap
as they enjoy Nature's bounty with long hours of sip;
O how much does this dale in light wintry Spring
long for the feathery touch of your luminous being!

Saroj K Padhi

Times Now

Times are tough like craggy mountain top
as thro' high-tech progress we are prodding
when urges are going wild in the forest of faith
and moral standards of life are falling,
where evil instincts, in guise of divinity, are prowling
to outrage innocence, to the point of death, bleeding;
sex and money maniacs are round the corner
with wrong confidence, forever bagging and bulging!
Ways to happiness are lost in the maze of living
voices of justice are choked by the mafia
and old pillars of democracy, to an abyss, are falling!
Earth is caught in whirlpool of tsunamies and quakes
forever in cosmic fear, like a dead leaf in wind, trembling
and we, like voices of dead on Lethe, are sadly ringing!

Saroj K Padhi

To The Fallen Flower

TO THE FALLEN FLOWER

Did you ever have a name?
Now looking at your faceless beauty
I wonder how you fell into ignominy and shame!

Soiled, shabby and soulless
your body lies on the cold asphalt body
of our civilization like a neglected corpse
without a sympathetic look from wayfarers
as silently you groan on
under thousand feet and wheels
as you rotate and shift from gravel to gravel
driven by wind's harsh swirls.

How did you drop this morning
to this hellish grave
away from the living stalk
severed from pristine Nature's balm?
Did you fall from some cruel plucker's hand,
or from the loose end of the braid of a damsel
strolling on the dry, winged bridge-side sand?

Or from the excited wings of a new wed's garnished car
speeding on the bridge in the dark of dawn
to reach the bride's long cherished dream land?

Wheels and thousand feet tread you down-
as you lie in undiminished glory like fallen blondes of the town
who are solicited in secret by our moral men
behind the curtain of lame virtue and masculine frown!

I don't have the courage to pick you from your siesta
though I bleed this morning with you on the soulless bridge
to be overtaken soon by day's artificial pleasures and fiesta!

Saroj K Padhi

Today's Love

Today's love is a glow worm
in the concrete jungle of the night,
in its body there is no heat
only a flickering little light
causing less of pull
and more of deterring fright;
we are shadows at fun play
behind the screen
of life's live stage
bereft of real beauty and brain
a spent force without might!
Our efforts to effect change
are caught in a dilemma
draining us of the will to
choose the path that is right! !
we fumble, we stumble
in this dark jungle,
in wait for a little love and care
in the midst of all battle scare
for a little warmth of heart
when love is just a painful cry
in this dark jungle of the night! ! !

Saroj K Padhi

Touch

At your touch
bones turn into flowers,
burning minds, into bowers
sweating clouds, into showers;
desires lose all heat
as they take on redemptive fires
and silent smokeless prayers;
breaths bend into cool shivers
of the flame of surrender-
into the great bonfire of merger;
body of mires transforms each cell
into the fountainhead of springs
that converge into the ocean of Love
overflowing the dark sanctum
of every heart longing for light;
let this life be the joyous game
in your hands, my supreme lover
as back into elements, we alight!

Saroj K Padhi

Touching You

I will touch your soul
every time you draw me
near your burns
that under beauty so starkly stare
I will not touch your body
but heal it with
the brush of some wishes
and a balm of my prayer.
I will for sure make you
an addict to my soul's love
as an aroma in sweet air
that will always elude you
like trails of shadows
chasing bodies all so very bare.
Then at last when to a futility you're cast
you will be the first to haunt my dreams
in the shadow of the scented kadamba tree
near my grave, with none to listen to or lament
over the wild welter of your growing screams.
There I will touch the old wounds of your body
and the black burns of your heart
under the shadow of a clouded moon
fulfilling all pending desires
to end all dark sighs and weak, hopeless swoon.

Saroj K Padhi

Traces Of Moon

Traces of moon everywhere
even when she is not there:
her silhouette sighing in the day
laments loss of nocturnal love
and paints my woman in the sky
like a flower after suck,
turned pale and gray;
even when she is not there
million moons dazzle in eyes of stars
that fail to sleep in absence of her;
she is always there
somewhere
far or near
shadow or real, half or crescent
front or rear;
any heavenly body presenting
an illusion of moon
awakens images of the woman lost
in the abyss of the mind;
semblance of dots on her face
painted on the sky
like pimples on loved woman's cheek
excites beams of passion in onlookers' eye;
flowers resembling the moon
madden the honey bees to suck on
and women moon-like in soul hang on.

Saroj K Padhi

Traces Of Rain

For an hour or so rain scribbled a few naughty lines
on my damp skin, with the ink of your old emotions
in the pen of your strong mood, draped in clouds of fancy
to scratch tips of ripe pimples of my past longings
and open them up to heavens for cleansing;
drops sit on leaves of my body, on petal of my face
for the sun to kiss the reflection of its own glory on water;

slowly my blood smacks of Summer rivers and brooks,
the taste of sea in my sweat startles the bees,
butterflies of your touch swarm around
with their wet wings
bogged to the earth of my body,
birds that sang from the boughs of our desires
dip their sharp beaks into the sea of happy spirits,
ruffled, ripped, ravished by rain
I bloom into beautiful words for your moody pen!

Saroj K Padhi

Tremors In The River

Why do you always murmur
like a talkative girl
about each and every tremor
in the remotest corner
of my heart's secret chamber?
I hear your magic voice everywhere —
In your ripples lapping the bank;
in voice of the wind kneeling
onto your surface from the flank;
in the whisper of leaves into your ears
in fall of each of the kash flowers' tears;
in the flap of their enchanted wings
as herons and crows descend to drink
before they retire to their swings;
in the constant twitter of birds
that love to tear your heart
in the mornings and evenings
of your quiet flow across time
into long cherished divine flings;
My heart listens to itself this evening
in million songs sung by you
as fairies descend in dark
to swim into your depth
where the moon and stars
land from distant heaven
before to a serene life they awaken.

Saroj K Padhi

Turbulence

Thirsty, the night sips pegs of beams
under canopy of dense boughs,
Dogs bark louder
as men turn into apparitions inside tattered tents,
My girl-friend's inners bask in moonlight
as wars coolly blast neighbouring countries during insidious nights
When we plan menu for our proposed picnic on the romantic eco-retreat;

College girls shrink under the shadows of fear prowling too near
Students plan strikes on flimsy ground
Leaders calculate black money
And babus drink night honey
When your name dissipates like a streak of smoke into ordinary clouds;

How do you expect me to fasten stars to the bun of your dark hair
When there is total eclipse of the Moon, Pearls sink deeper into the sea
Jackals howl on blind streets
And air of envy sweeps across
Silencing love's sincere entreats

Saroj K Padhi

Turmoil

There I stand speechless
unable to express
how much I long
to die into the contours
of this earth, the hill nearby
the music of the stream
and above, the vast sky.
In moments like this
again something holds me back —
Is it some unknown fear
or excessive self love,
anxiety
or incapacity —
why this inner turmoil? ?
Why do I recoil
to remember in silence
and adore in secrecy
your magnificence? ?
Tell me why
I want to die again and again
into the earth, hill, stream and the sky
that so beautifully in you lie.

Saroj K Padhi

Unreachable

Is there anyone who can take me
away from the trap of garish fruits
to the balmy shade of those deep lying roots
where aroma emanates from tryst with earth,
as saplings shiver this cold December morning
soon after their nascent, joyful birth,
and seeds burst with joy of germinating
like birds about a secret Spring squawking-
in such delight that lifts million spirits
making the thorny grove a paradise
wherefrom He enchants us with magic of a flute
that drips like honeyed dew from lips of blossoms
in love with dream of a life after death, so absolute!

Saroj K Padhi

Untimely Rain

Baffled by the untimely mid-winter torrents
the farmers of my land helplessly look on
as rain lashes acres of golden paddy grains
adding more gloom to their old desperation-
like voyeurs stripping innocent girls on street
who are forced to swallow bitter humiliation;
mongrels shift home to half-built houses
languishing under some overgrown wild plants
after a legal suit, smacking of stale semen
damp soil, fake medicine and unfulfilled wants;
bulls hurt by reckless bikers limp onroad
in search of shelter and food for the night,
a chill wind blows past swaying the boughs
to relax the trees and set the leaves right;
crows loiter in lower sky ere going to snooze
as workers wade thro' clogged waters for booze;
the woman of my dreams arranges her chunni
ruffled by rain as she plucks jasmines for me
thoughts swim reverse the river of memory
as idle hours love to drink in fountain of honey.

Saroj K Padhi

Void

Looking into the void within
when I think what I could have been-
stars dimmed by the tides of time
rise to wink from the brink of memory
in dark, naked as babes and stare pitifully at me
telling me how I could have perhaps been
a simple noiseless wave
in the shore of your heart that laps a pink sky
in the dawn of excited morns
under a soft sun's eye
without any desire to touch the earth beneath
into we mortals sink, finally as corals to lie;
I could have been that ripple in the pool
of your mind that catches fire
from moon beams in heat of dreams-
then in some corner as simple water to lie;
I could have been that silent koel
singing from the core of your bosoms
about shower of roses on a snow-capped mountain
in whose caves immortal spirits pray
without desire for pricks from thorns to die.

Saroj K Padhi

Waiting For Spring

I'm waiting for you Spring
in the solitary garden of my wounded heart
ravaged by dew and untimely rain, fog and love's sweet pain
with strong memory of words of promises
that dropped from petals of your lips like a blissful rain.
' I'll be eternally a part of you, ...why worry then? '
I smiled an unconscious smile like an idiotic kid
not knowing how suddenly the sky changed its color
to find me with myself heading toward a hard Summer!

Winter had slipped away like a furtive, sly lover
to escape the trials and true tests of being together,
You stare from a long distance like a virtual face-book friend
clicking frequent likes and love to my story of misery
which in a way I too like and enjoy
though at times I grow helpless and angry!

I'll be waiting all my life dear
to feel back the beauty of your beats in my vein,
with dreams of frenzied butterflies rolling in eyes
as we keep listening to the sounds of birthing lilacs
roses and marigolds in the dizzy lap of bright dawn,
I'll be still waiting for you even if you come in your new garb
for the feel of that warmth we relished in the first touch
and in the first kiss which in every new kiss I miss
for the musk of our souls to permeate into each other
like jasmynes of full-moon night readying to blush and flower.

C. R: @Saroj K. Padhi

Saroj K Padhi

Walk With Moon

As I walk with the Moon
Late or soon

songs of new love in my heart do croon
wind tingles her anklets inside bushes
lilies sway like hoods of pink desires,
stars pop up to feast on lovers in blushes;

Nature's breath pauses before she resumes
her million mudras of dance on heath and hill
images of union on water smile ere they swirl
clouds kiss ridges, birds sing from hedges to fill;

When I walk with the Moon, night stops to look
at sudden turns in cosmic world in wonder,
flowers bite their tongues as they gaze on
at moments of bliss afloat on air, wind and water.

Saroj K Padhi

Walls

The walls around me
desire me myself to be
without letting my volatile secrets
leak through their porous bodies,
as I lean to them during tough moments
trying hard to hold on -
when the whole house reels
under thunders of ecstasy or agony;
they guard cries, sighs, sobs and love-cries,
laughters, tears, inadvertent words and lies
from infecting a world that so close to us lies;
they are my faithful, bosom friends
opening the windows to a loved world
of shines, beams, drizzles, wind and breeze.

Saroj K Padhi

Wanton Dark

In the darkening eye of the evening
images of the world turn quite hazy
as cattle raise dust from their retreating feet
in my village under Covid scare, gone crazy,
flora and fauna retract to a sleepy mode,
angry bulls dig sand piles with wounded horn,
gnats shriek out from cracks of mud walls,
moths search for some proverbial fire to burn,
the wind stops at the bamboo barricade
before taking a sad backward turn,
moron stars meekly peep from an overcast sky
the moon yawns over the paddy fields gone dry,
beggars and pariah dogs share bed
in tattered cyclone centers,
bereft of jobs young men mourn at the riverside
deserted by their erstwhile lovers
hopeless, hungry farmers crave for rain
as migrants think of some pastime in quarantine centers.

Where shall I go this evening with my mask
Under the cover of such wanton dark?

Let me ask the glowworm to lend light to my nest,
the musky jasmines to fan my eyes to rest,
let me, let me ask my love to bury me in her breast
before I open the leaden eyes for life's new test.

Saroj K Padhi

Watery Grave

Can't you see these drops in my eyes
Stashed here from birth perhaps
From the house of rain
Or some secret Spring of pain
Forming two dream-pools for your swim
Two rivers of love for your stay
Two seas of wild ecstasy for your play
Here I' m a casualty
For not knowing the depths
Of the water here I have jumped in
And I'm flowing
Not at all knowing
That I have fallen into a watery grave
With none to save
Love to die a quiet death here
That's all so very brave!

Saroj K Padhi

Waves

Waves know it all.
Then they chased us like naughty kids
fond of fun, frolic and run,
closing in their salty arms around our necks,
wiping our tears with kerchief of stars,
surrounding our dreams
like nude pebbles around moon-blached sands
till their wet body soaked in our souls
into the perfume of their foams
filling magic love in all the wet strands;

though initially you shuddered
like a fish caught in net,
slowly you shed all your coyness
like a new wed, after crossing tough test!

But strangely now you walk along the waves
like an old friend walking the talk
as I chase both of you romancing with wind,
pushed by a strong memory of past waves
I too am hurled into
the whirlpool of a youthful mind!

Saroj K Padhi

We Know

WE KNOW

I know one day you will come back following
The lines engraved on the pages of my books,
To feel the pulse of my love, blush for a while
And return to the mirror to check out your looks;

Feel the intense hours that would have gone
Into the making of the lines about your absence
That defined the mood of my moments so lone
And then meet the old, exiled lifer, my patience;

That impregnated body of my thoughts with your
Specter looming in each corner of my existence,
And the hours of my living, loving and slowly dying
Permeated by the breath of your perfumed essence;

You know you loved me then, and love me now too
Love outlasts age, in the bodiless longings of we two.

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Saroj K Padhi

Wet Sands

Don't know why I'm so strongly drawn
to the wet sands every eve and morn
where the grey-tailed tattlers hop in delight
before flying into mid-sky, for song and sojourn,
where little cormorants dive into unknown depths
for their routine catches,
dippers rise from troughs to go hopping on ridges,
swallows send musical notes from sand-bars and scrapes
and sand-pipers sing from the bridge's secret spaces;
water fowls shuffle and waddle like war-heroes
and grey herons come flying from far-off shores
for meditation beside shallows filled with eels and fishes;
sands under continual monsoon drizzles write
stories of love with every drop that river's heart touches,
and today as I tread a few miles along with the breeze
sand grains stick to feet reminding me of love's old oozes.

Saroj K Padhi

What A Rain Again

WHAT A RAIN AGAIN!

Drops from unseen clouds in dark
at the window and on the roof top
whisper stories timeless to the breeze
about secret sighs
from the pining summer seas
that eyes of heaven did sop
with invisible tears
for clouds to seep drop by drop
before bowing under weight of humility
to embrace flowers and fields
forests, dales and hills,
with direction from lightning
to fulfill all-
folks, pied cuckoos and peacocks
that keep waiting
in their rainbow dreams of new love
about bliss of showers from above;

but before she can complete her story
a shadow from somewhere falls
to nip the glory;
she rolls in thunders of pain
at the heaven's gate
as helpful clouds move in a flurry
to fletch a stretcher
for her awful delivery;
faint drops drizzle from such birth
as we sit with fingers crossed
for the return of a rich past glory.

Saroj K Padhi

When I Met My Muse

In the dead of the night she came
and stood before me
like a thin stream of Moon beams
rustling thro' thick foliage of a tree
with a feather-like pen
in her hand and whispered 'DId you call me? '
I was in jitters with thumping beats
and eyes smeared with blood from heart's fresh wounds
she leaned to me like a half Moon
resting on the heaving chest of an overflowing river,
I took her hand but she took over.

She moved her pen thro' my fingers
she breathed like the soft wind
to bemuse my heart's broken reeds
jotted down the story of my skipped beats,
my soul aches, lost sleep and sad retreats;

I didn't know when I was in love with her;
she wiped my tears and assuaged
me with the stories of the sad wide world,
I lost traces of my own grief in the ocean
of our love with its changing waves, blue and emerald.

Saroj K Padhi

Where Are The Bees Gone?

Where did the bees vanish yester night
when I was lost in drizzle of moonlight
without any hint about their sudden flight
putting me into this awkward silence
that has been simmering in me since midnight?
Look how my petals droop, fade and fall
my eyes in a big, wild blank lazily roll
inviting the wind to write
an elegy on these graying leaves
drawing drops of ink from depth of my soul!
The pink grass flowers blare out news
about these bees from their funnels
that flash in all corners of the garden
by agents of birds in all the channels!
But who will give me meaning this morning
under the light of the new Sun?
In the absence of my soul's companion
who will bring me some real fun?
Let me burn in this fever of quiet longing
till the bees from the unknown haunt return,
touch me not dear lovers of flowers
in my present plight of painful sojourn.

Saroj K Padhi

Where Buds Refuse To Bloom

WHERE BUDS REFUSE TO BLOOM

How to get across this stifling human weather
where asphyxiated, buds forever refuse to bloom
and where in heart of light, lurks a fear of dark
and unripe flowers shower seeds of insidious gloom?

Baby birds return to nests before onset of dusk
but baby girls are plucked to be ripped into shreds
before their feet can toddle back to mothers' nest,
by the senseless claws of sex-maniacs in dirty sheds;

hyenas stalk flocks to pull out vital limbs of lambs
demonic gurus grope innocuous skins of Ashramites,
as bullets from red barrels target bridges and dams
and countless heads keep rolling in man-animal fights!

rivers dry failing to bear the brunt of new civilization,
jungles die as seeds are foiled by new age fulmination!

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Saroj K Padhi

Where Grass Flowers Sing

As dawn writes the story of a receding Spring
on pink petals of little grass flowers in dull swing
autumn leaves drape the earth in an ashen hue
and eyes of morning are filled with tears of dew;

I wander like a wind over the valley of silvery dream,
over Nature covered by a thin blanket of moon beam
over star-lets of morning glory cast in a gentle gleam
where rays from a shaded sun in waves of fog doth swim;

I pick moments of loss from shed petals of lost dreams
from shrunken hands of grass terrified by sounds of blasts
to offer to my Lord seemingly deaf to sad human screams
when white wings of mercy alight from sky in multiple casts;

peace continues to flow like running stream and raining flowers
forcing me to sit in supplication, in awe of sweet divine dowers.

Saroj K Padhi

Whimper

WHIMPER

A note of dissent in you
Is sufficient to shift the Spring
to some cactus infested shores
where dead shells sigh in pitiable scatters;
a single shadow of anger on your face
sends me to thousand whimpers
in a solitude where I sob like a child
and ask myself why I caused this little anger in you
as you turn away like the evening shadow
to a corner sulking like a lonely sickle moon
in a cloudless sky;
failing to understand subtle emotions of love
and frequent mood swings
I keep on wondering as to why
You are so moody
And still moodier this poor lover I! ! !

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Saroj K Padhi

White Herons

These white herons brooding near me
want to say something
as they retract their long bills,
meditate for a while
look up to the cloudy sky
with no desire now to fly
as their feet on green grass
get soaked in rain
the butterflies drunk enough descend
from long lip-locks with flowers
to swirl across their faces for sometime
and not to come back to me again.

These herons with peace in their plumes
surrounded by butterflies of many hues
transport me into joys
that at the heart of Nature lie
offering vision of God
beauty and bliss
for which human hearts always sigh!

Saroj K Padhi

Why Love?

I love the stars
as your sea-green eyes
with onset of dark
start twinkling in them;
I love the moon
as your face glows there
before landing to my poem;
I love the clouds plain
as they whisper your love for me
into the wind now and then

as mood dictates them;
I love the jasmine buds
twinkling in moon-light
on both sides of your narrow lane
exuding the aroma of your presence;
I love the ether of my consciousness
drenched in the fragrant fog of a divine essence.

Saroj K Padhi

Wind And Rain

Day and night wind from the bay whispers
those unvoiced words that rippled on her lips
like rain drops swirling into heart of a placid pool
without any sound, flowing down into the deeps;

words unuttered are always sweeter it seems
driving one crazy to decipher meaning in own favor
thro' hours wakeful, in dreams and during sleeps
without loss sounding even wee bit bitter or sour;

wind and rain have been playing it all, over the years
creating, recreating, keeping the image and sound alive
the illusion of being with her thro' all smiles and tears
echo of words unsaid keeps the spirit in perfect drive.

Saroj K Padhi

Wind Of Change

There is a strong wind
Of a great change
Blowing across this country
With excitement running quite high
In every nook and cranny
In celebration of the victory
Of people's desire
For better governance and end of oligarchy
Against corruption and rule of dynasty,
Against titular leadership
And rule by black sheep.
Curls of dreams rising
Across this biggest democracy
In expectations
Of better agricultural yields,
Lower fuel, food prices
And a rising sense;
Stability and certainty
Broader, safer roads
More productive lands
Of secular schools
Affordable healthier hospitals;
Tighter borders
And tougher soldiers
Against the red army;

Saroj K Padhi

Winter On Fire

Winter creeps into my sleeves
like a pickpocket's stealthy hand
groping the dark insides
of my insipid skin
to steal moments of warmth
long lost to the tyranny of an ever eluding Spring,
but to return as a colder wind to the poor hamlets
to douse the wrath of farmers
who burn acres of drought-hit crops in protest
against apathy of the officers;

warm clothes rot inside wardrobes
vegetables crave for drugs to fight pests
and romance is at an all time low
marking loss of zest for seasonal fests.

Where shall I go this Winter
with my desires wilting like greying leaves
inside diaries of old lovers
and without the joy of cold-caused shivers?

I lie here on bed of burnt stubbles
waiting for dew enough to feed my nightly love
under a lone half Moon fighting dark in starless sky
with pain of elusive menarche in womb in constant sob.

Saroj K Padhi

Winter Romance

As a layer of mist hangs over sulking sands
creating an illusion of water
in the dry river lying in endless wait
for the old romantic gush from the aged dam,
drops of dew sit on flowers in mild flutter
whispering each to each about dregs of Winter,
the breeze hijacks you on a bumpy ride
to the hill top where dark kisses lips of dawn
under shadow of towering rocks
that glisten under a sickle Moon's dying glimmer,
morning gets born from womb of a smoke-tortured sky
to bask in Sun's soft saffron flicker,
Palash flowers drooping like dawn-time fading dream
wake up with their heavy heads from fog's heavy shocker;
and my pilgrim soul's longing for love
down the hill glows further refusing to wither!

Saroj K Padhi

With You

As you snuggle into my arms
seasons change names —
Spring in full bloom in the garden
of our eyes moves to a frantic corner
bowing in earnest to a soft shower,
assuring again and again
of love's sweet rain,
a promise of sure release
from wait's futile pain;
the Sun of my desire melts
into colours of your rainbow love
filling the contours of Summer's body
with drops of dew from above;
the winter of your fears
fades like Autumn's yellow leaves
into the lawn of my pining heart,
the midnight blues of my mind
vanish into hues of petals
on your lips always dyeing new art.
Rain or Summer
Autumn or Winter
Ice or fire
Sun or water —
we are always there
doing something new
to Love
changing formal weather.

Saroj K Padhi

Woman

Woman

You are almost me
in your body, mind and spirit
though today you speak of your female body
with affectation
and sometimes soaked in poison
no wonder that such words
are at times not in equilibrium
i m almost you
in my body, mind and spirit
though I have spoken too much of my male body
in the corpus of law, language and religion
no wonder such words now sink into oblivion
it is time
i and you became the one we
to shine like stars
of a clear blue sky
defining each in the other
in every weather
all that we need is
to understand that though our roots
that sprung from the soil same
may not be exactly the same

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but we are to spread out
into body of the sky
not as body but as breath
not as spirits but simple faith
not as man or woman
but simply human.

Saroj K Padhi

Woman Extraordinaire

The Sun of her kind looks
lights up the obstinate dark in our soul;
the rainbow in her wet eyes
sets man's vision in a fine frenzy to roll;
the beauty of her thoughts
colors the leaves of our daily lives
the music of her benign soul
lightens the burden of our strifes;
the slice of sky at her waist-line,
curves and contours-fill us with desire
the moon on face and stars on tresses
set our minds on sweet, sensuous fire;
love of the progeny and others turns
her life into a poor, checkered flow
when we grow like words on her body
and she, a loving silence with its glow;
her love perennial blooms on like flowers
she's Nature's bliss and life's gentle bowers.

Saroj K Padhi

Womb

WOMB

Journeying across life
from the comfort of a warm womb
to the leisure of a cold grave,
as I look back to see -
it was nothing but a hurdle race till death
in quest of a quiet breath-
a lonely marathon along deserted shores
dotted with carcasses and vultures dead
where one had to jump over stray bones
to glimpse real water beneath the waves;

sands of mortal love sticking to one's body
dropped at the wind's passionate touches;
and sitting down to rest was to switch on
a tough turbulence out of thoughts' reaches.

Earth's womb is a better place to incubate
over tyranny of life, after death to postulate!

Saroj K Padhi

Wonder

As a sleepy dawn wakes out of the blanket of satin clouds
to lazily peep out from under the mother Sky's dreamy lap,
the Sun with his magic wand, cracks open mystery of the dark,
the Moon murmurs a prayer, ere into oblivion she does embark;
what a good luck it is indeed to discover ourselves being alive
to sounds and smells emerging from every nook, cranny and crack,
to the fiesta of colors flaunted by panoramic sky and waterscapes
to pulsating beams of life in trees, nests and stones on landscapes;
wondrous web of hues on freckled wings of birds, bees and flies
as they move in quest of nectar in sieves, with shiny hope in eyes;
to tantalizing beauty of flowers shying away from amorous breeze
to smell of rain from dancing grass and musk of dew on wet trees;
to joy of waves rising from the depth of love's million honey coves
to sprouts of ecstasy from roots of grave, with life's zillion loves!

Saroj K Padhi

Wonder Spring

Spring sneaked into my city garden last afternoon
like an anxious extra-marital lover,
in search of an opportune moment for the stolen kiss,
knocked the jammed door of my thoughts
with the bold, musky hands of its enchanting wind,
draping the lips of white bougainvillea in crimson Sun glow,
sprinkling the fragrance of mango buds on silken grass,
exciting birds to fly past humans with delightful songs-
as flowers swang in the arms of a lazy Sun
when birds and bees drank from their clammy breast,
herons flew to tree-tops like white fairies in search of beams
in the heart of the darkening forest;

rays of the setting Sun slowly released themselves
from the clasp of swaying drunken boughs
like coy girls, from the arms of aroused, outrageous lovers
in their manoeuvre for the poignant, parting kiss,

tears trickle now from the eve's sorrowing eyes
as the bright corset of the Spring is temporarily
obscured by the dusk's dark, dew-soaked sighs!

Saroj K Padhi

Woods

The woods under a wind gentle but deep
from their million lush green eyes do peep
at waters at the dam that downward leap
hoping to quench parching land with a sip;

as the cattle keep grazing wild grass around
with smiles on face, unaware of a calamity,
herons fly in like pieces of dreamy white cloud
to wallow like fallen angels away from eternity;

my bamboo home lies in shreds in need of repair
as for the night's challenges I meekly prepare
when afar elephants hungry trumpet in anger
and frogs croak loudly for rain from each corner;

I don't know where to take guard this very night
as my lambs crouching in cottage shrink in fright
in fear of an unknown killer in the lean outskirt
when stars pop up in the sky but with hazy light.

Saroj K Padhi

Wounded Alasi

Caught in wind and rain, in throes of pain,
the terror-stricken Alasies hang from stem
like faded dreams, from broken boughs
without much honey or poetry inside them-
to make Dhangdas or Dhangdies dance
to tune of bees under a Sun's meek flame;

river Muran sings of a dying faith
of folk rotting in dread of suspicious Naxals
who prowl like blood hungry pachyderms
in the thinning jungles of Ambaguda
over which a tremulous moon loiters
like an orphan in a starless sky,
in search of her long dead parents
whose shadows lull the tired lilies
to sleep on muddy ripples that sigh
in the bosom of a night
on draughts of salap quite high!

N.B: -yellow flowers found abundantly in hilly regions of Koraput n other tribal
dists of Odisha

2. Salap: a local inebriating drink made from Salap trees

Saroj K Padhi

Wounded Civilization

In this wounded world of social relation
where identity needs constant modification,
looking beyond today is a far-fetched dream
and spirituality is lost in ghettos of religion;

where illusory is all affection
love seeks fulfillment between rickety legs
of a hollowed civilization
flesh and bones are sucked to the dregs
and lust seeks vicarious satisfaction;

where wind has lost direction, rain its content
fire its head, earth its fertility and space its dimension
we have lost names to assume numbers
alas! We the members of a lost generation!

Tell me the way to salvation dear in this human desert
where for pain, there is little compassion
success screams like a wounded dove in concrete jungle
and hope tries to rise from ashes of an oblivion!

Saroj K Padhi

Wounded Dove

WOUNDED DOVE

A wounded dove alights away from far-off war-torn land
en route dripping dark death over face of shrunken earth
smacking of toxic chlorine, burnt flesh, decimated limbs,
after hours of restless, panicked flight in one long breath-

to hover over the chest of surging breast of a sea awhile
but failing to compose spirit in consonance with wild waves
rushes into threshold of a sinuous river with smiling eddies
where shadows of zillion Budhas cogitate in watery graves-

over the burden of life of millions nabbed in vicious cobweb
of desires, fighting fires, but subsumed by unseen currents
who lie like mass of mute grains of sands on barren banks,
to be looted by sex-hungry godmen thro' religious torrents;

thank God the amazed dove is healed by whiffs of cool breeze
and trailed by smiles of the sage, to freedom it flies with ease!

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Saroj K Padhi

You Are Mine

All wounded hearts are mine
With wild gush of aching blood
Red as flowing wine,
All crying eyes are mine
With tears of hurt or loss
Pure as the ones of mine,
All torments of soul are mine
With desire for redemption
Ripening in suffering's vine,
All smiles are also mine
Flashing images of God
For which hungry spirits pine.

Saroj K Padhi

You, Me And The Bare Tree

I know you are there
alone smiling to self
as I write here
about the birds
that come to sit
on that bare tree
of our afternoon love
to invite new leaves to it
and unleash your spirit
from the hurts
of direct sun and shower
and bloom for you anew
millions of songs and flower
and as I gaze in amazement
at the tree and you from here
your silence kills me
with my growing hunger
to be the leaf of your desire
and soak enough rain
forming a sweet bower
for the birds to sit with you
and smell the flower of our love
in full bloom inside hearts
under heaven's perfumed shower! ! !

Saroj K Padhi

Youth

As the moon of sweet fire trails her veil
of glowing desire
along the heart of an ever hungry sky
before temporarily sinking into horizons of night,
I long for those languorous, idle hours
on lap of lilies floating to the tune of a soft murmur
that rose from core of a honey hive in your chest;
I want the bruised roses of my heart
to be caressed by the healing breeze of your breath
under the bower of the old gulmohar trees;
to watch the baffled butterflies of beauty brooding
on the blossoms of your mehendi-colored palms;
to float in the clouds of dreams
in the panoramic shades of dancing eye-lashes;
to fly into bouts of imagination
at the gait of your astral body on an illumined earth;
to consecrate this mind at the altar of ageless youth
enshrined in every aspect of Nature
that harbors sweet-sad memories of love's glorious birth.

Saroj K Padhi

Youth's Hunger

As the moon of sweet fire trails her veil
of glowing desire
along the heart of an ever hungry sky
before temporarily sinking into horizons of night,
I long for those languorous, idle hours
on lap of lilies floating to the tune of a soft murmur
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