

Poetry Series

**Aarushi Chatterjee**  
**- poems -**

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# Aarushi Chatterjee()

# A Life In A Plant

We started our lives as a little seed.  
Encased as an infant with love and care:  
Sprouting slowly into a kid,  
And hey presto! There's a sapling there.  
At three the roots dug slowly in.  
The shoot peeped fearfully out;  
And the next moment at the age of five,  
The kid was busy capering about.  
Soon came the leaves, and out erupted branches.  
Into a sturdy child of nine or ten;  
With tender buds creeping out slow,  
And no more hiding in its den.  
Growing and growing, all the time  
Getting fresher and stronger each day.  
Ever ready, ever strong,  
To face every trouble that comes the way.

Aarushi Chatterjee

# A Little Bird Rhyme

The cuckoo is calling.  
The doves are drawling.  
The sparrows are chirping.  
The chaffinches are twerping.  
The peacocks are dancing.  
The peahens are prancing.  
The crows are crying.  
The partridges are lying.  
The ducks are quacking.  
And I-? Just- listening.

Aarushi Chatterjee

# Alone

He looked around behind him, there was no one there  
He was alone in the darkness, alone in despair.  
His enemies had fled, having set out to snare  
Leaving in their wake destruction past compare.

His wife lay at his feet, how gentle she had been!  
A faultless, blameless life was hers; her conscience pure and clean.  
He remembered how she'd sought him, calling- 'Help me! Oh, my Bill! '  
But when he reached her she was gone, the brutes having done their kill.

Tears sprang to his eyes as he stood upon the quay  
Staring at the half-baked earth where hundreds of bodies lay.  
His daughter had been long slain; how beautiful, how bold!  
He bent down to hold her; her hands were ice-cold.

His son lay as if sleeping; a dull ache arose  
Fate had overtaken him, lent him its hard blows.  
Perhaps it was waiting, for him death was close  
He sat in the murky sand; dejected, morose.

A cool autumn breeze fanned the millions dead  
Cooling the hot blood that the martyrs had shed.  
He stood helpless near the family which he had once known  
The surroundings were wistful, and he was all alone.

Aarushi Chatterjee

# Artemis

O bloodthirsty centaur with cloven hooves  
A sharp-man's torso, heavy-jowled face  
Cast aside your spear, and come forth  
Bow at my feet with your horsy grace!

For I am Artemis, goddess of the wild  
Take me not, through my looks, as a mere child  
These stubby fingers can wield a bow  
Sharper, and finer, than the Radiant Apollo

These stiff-necked arrows that can shoot down deer  
With the supple ease of who stands here  
Before you, hail her, Goddess of the Hunt  
Beware, her spear lies by her side, not blunt!

And yet, this Goddess whom fierce lions fear  
Can give life to slain fledglings and make vines grow  
Forests bloom as her form walks  
Through the evergreen stalks, emitting a silvery glow.

So cast aside your ego, she can smash it all  
Her able Hunters lie back in thrall  
A movement awry and you shall sprawl  
Biting the dust, in a blood red shawl!

Aarushi Chatterjee

# Autumn

After the rainy season long,  
It breaks into an autumn song  
The faint falling of the leaves,  
The sight of the dried, bare trees  
The cool winds blowing east and west,  
Time by time taking a rest.  
The falling leaves ever time,  
Lie in a pile along with a rhyme;  
"We'll grow again, come back to life,  
After the autumn and winter strife.  
Till then, we'll lie on the snow- covered bed, "  
Chant the leaves, Brown, Yellow and Red.  
Then, finally, winter comes,  
The songs stop, and so do the hums;  
And then winter lies down her snowy spread,  
And everyone goes to bed.

Aarushi Chatterjee

# Blind

She looked out and heard  
The street kids revel in the rain  
She longed to go join them  
Rattled the window bars in vain  
She hoped they would hear her  
Include her as a friend  
Bring light into the dark  
Dreary days she had to spend  
Even on sunny days  
She saw no wondrous light  
Though she heard their raucous laughter  
Their screams of delight  
She looked out with glazed eyes  
Trying her hardest to see  
Her spirit fluttered wildly  
Her lonely heart ached to be  
The lovely sun, the dark blue sky  
She longed to behold  
The birds that flew in summer and  
Then vanished in the cold  
Sometimes her mother wheeled her out  
To have the morning air  
But the helplessness of those faded eyes  
Drew her deeper into despair  
She struggled hard to fling off  
The melancholy knocking at her door  
But sunk into spiritlessness  
Day by day, more and more  
She was their age and everything  
Only they didn't think she was of their kind  
Because the girl was  
Blind.

Aarushi Chatterjee



# How The Bear Got His Tail-Stump

Listen, all ye folks  
The tale I have to tell  
Is all about the merry days when  
Brer Rabbit lived in the dell  
A perfect little scamp was he  
His bobtail wagged about  
As long and hard as his tongue did  
Uncountable rules did he flout  
Tricks thousands of them he played  
On every creature under the sun  
Brer Fox, Brer Wolf, Brer Bear and all  
Of them, every single one!

So one sunny day, when our tale begins  
Brer Rabbit needed some fun  
His lawns were clipped, his bobtail flipped  
His gardening was done  
So off he goes, on a merry trot  
To Brer Terrapin's, his best friend  
Oh! All those pranks they played and planned up  
Their skiving tricks just had no end  
Brer Terrapin, Brer Rabbit found  
Lazed not on his usual lazing ground  
Not in his shell, nor in the dell!  
'Maybe, ' thought Brer Rabbit, 'he's out catching mackerel.'  
So off he scampered, his bobtail swishing up and down  
Sure enough, by the pond he found  
Brer Terrapin going- splish! Splash!  
Darting up and down a stone, like a flash  
Sliding down the slippery rock  
Hitting the water with a merry -thock!  
'Howdy, Brer Terrapin, ' Brer Rabbit called.  
'Oh, howdy, Brer Rabbit, ' the turtle bawled.  
'Come and have a try, ' and back down he went  
Then scrambled onto the bank, his energy spent.  
It's a nice game indeed, ' Brer Rabbit said  
'But I'd rather just sit and watch you instead! '  
'It's lovely, ' said Terrapin, and again he went  
Sliding down the rock, and like a vent

The water came frothing up, with a splash  
As Brer Terrapin made a merry dash.  
'Wonderful, ' cried Brer Rabbit, clapping his hands.  
'Do it once more, ' but then, squinting through the sands  
'Hey, it's Brer Bear! Now, how do you do?  
Would you like to play at our game too? '  
'Humph! ' snorted Brer Bear, his long tail knocking down a passing wren  
(You mustn't forget, Bears had long tails then!)  
'That's a mighty good game, now, to be sure! '  
'You can join in if you like. We don't mind more! '  
Said Brer Rabbit, as polite as could be  
Though his naughty brain buzzed like a bumblebee.  
'Humph! ' snorted Brer Bear again  
'What are you doing then? You're not playing the game.'  
'Oh, Brer Bear! I've had my share,  
'If I did it all, it wouldn't be fair,  
I'm sitting out here for my clothes to dry,  
Meanwhile, why don't you have a try? '&quot;  
'Join in? ' Brer Bear stocattoed.  
'Why, yes, you must! ' Brer Terrapin echoed.  
Brer Bear he looked at the water frothing below  
Then heaved himself up on the rock, mighty slow  
But he wasn't very sure if he wanted to go  
But Brer Rabbit, old rascal, a mighty tease  
He howled, 'Brer Bear's afraid of the water -bees,  
'He's afraid his fur will get wet, what a shame! '  
'Yes sir! ' echoed Terrapin, 'he won't play the game.'  
'Of COURSE I'm not scared, ' growled Brer Bear  
Bristling all over his bristly hair.  
'Off I go now, ' and down he went  
Brer Rabbit laughed till his tears all spent  
First the going was slow, Brer Bear grinned like he should  
Brer Rabbit and Brer Terrapin, they cheered, 'Mighty good! '  
Then he went a little faster, his grin faded a bit  
But the two rascals shouted, 'Terrific! A splendid hit! '  
Then he slid down mighty fast, for he'd come to the slippery part  
He groaned, went green, felt for his heart  
And then- with a mighty-plunk! Plunk! Plunk!  
He splashed into the water, sprayed and sunk.  
'Enjoyed, Brer Bear? ' said Brer Rabbit as Brer Bear scrambled out.  
'You know, I did give you the benefit of doubt.  
You look rather green. Are you sick and pale?

'Ahoy! Come and look! At Brer Bear's tail! '  
Brer Bear, he saw everyone looking at him mighty queer  
He felt around for his tail- heavens! His poor  
Long, long tail had fallen off clean  
The moment he had gone off-splash! -into the stream  
Poor Brer Bear. He gave a mighty sob  
For where his tail used to be, there was only a DOB.  
And so, my friends, from that day in the dell  
Where began the story I had to tell  
Bears have had no tails, only little stumps  
Of fur, that stick like bristly bumps  
To their backsides. And Brer Rabbit? He lived, and stayed  
In the woody green dell, where mighty fine tricks he played!

Aarushi Chatterjee

# It's Still A Beautiful Day

When I peeped through the window at play  
I saw it's just another rainy day;  
People passed me covered with Macs  
Boots hitting the soddy ground with cracks  
The earth was full of damp puddles  
The sky was a dark ditch-grey.  
And still I saw, through the cloudy mist-  
The cloud with the silver lining.  
Because-you know-I'm sure I saw  
The sun-the beautiful sun- was still shining.

I saw the old aunties-white haired women pass by  
Grumbling at their muddy shoes  
I saw the gentlemen stride past; their faces grave  
Still suffering from office blues  
I saw the middle aged mothers come by, displeased  
Thinking about the washing line-  
The clothes all flying loose.  
And still I saw-through the drippy wires  
The delighted children at play, all smiling,  
Because-you know-I'm sure I saw  
The sun-the beautiful sun- was still shining.

And though I knew- it had just rained a bit too much  
And tempers were on edge  
And heard the screams of mothers wild  
As the soaked clothes lay- windswept  
On the hedge.  
And the Earth was all soddy-  
Soddy mud  
The sky was a dark-ditch grey  
And yet I knew  
As I pulled back the blinds  
It was still-  
A beautiful Day.

Aarushi Chatterjee

# Life

As I stood one sunny spring day  
Near a blue lake where the ripples gave way  
To yield to the rising sun, its reflection  
And my gaunt features replete with dejection.

I pondered my uncertain future  
As bubbles of dark blue and white  
Raced across the shimmering waters  
And set the crimson-necked cranes a-flight.

I knew it was going to be pretty hard  
A difficult decision I had to take  
Painful is starting on new journeys  
Leaving people you love in your gloomy wake.

Walking through the mists of time  
Following my way through dreary lands  
Footsteps traced up to a night no more  
Blown away no less by the wispy sand.

This was life, and I well knew  
As I stared upon my miserable face  
There were things other than strife too  
That I must need be bear in grace.

My destiny was written maybe  
Somewhere in those bubbles, never ceasing to shine  
And with a heart afresh I left them to go their way  
And me to go on mine.

Aarushi Chatterjee

# Lilies In The Water

With Monsoon come the strange lilies,  
Blossoming in the stream  
Giving out such sweet scent,  
Reflecting on their leaves  
The pale sunlight beam.  
Heads turned towards west,  
Waiting for sunset  
And like stars in the dark,  
Everything else they forget.  
Gaily floating on the water,  
On their stalk dances a prince.  
His robes are coloured white,  
Fresh, soothing, mellow and bright.  
His crown is coloured yellow,  
(As the Lilies' beautiful head)  
And slowly, gently, wavering slightly  
He goes to sleep on the waterbed.

Aarushi Chatterjee

# Memories

As I wander over cornfields with my old stick at my side  
Wearing up the singing hill where once a boy I lied  
Oh how I laughed as I remembered playing childish games  
Running along craggy rocks and bathing in the Thames

Climbing up the cherry trees and scaring off the birds  
Making motley little groups and free with careless words  
Scrambling through the long wet grass and sliding down the hill  
Playing as Red Indians and dancing over our kill

Lying on our backs at peace with heaven, earth and sky  
Smelling in the sweet air where the grass is greener by  
Oh how I miss those glorious days as a happy carefree boy  
Running wild in a world where no dirty tricks may man employ

Free and fair in word and speech and play and tongue  
As I trudged up the hill like a merry schoolboy I sung.

Aarushi Chatterjee

# Mother

When I was young  
You held my finger  
Clasped that little hand.  
Led me through  
All my struggles  
When life was slow  
You took a stand  
You taught me all  
You made me grow  
Never a pinch  
Or a pain  
You let me know...  
I blossomed bright  
Your tears of joy  
Which I still see  
As you saw me grow  
As you, after all, made me.  
Your sweet, sacrificing heart  
All spent in others  
You put into me  
When I shall grow up  
Wherever I be  
With you not reaching out  
At every step  
What happiness would I see?  
I am still growing-  
Soon I shall grow up  
And I will be  
A young woman  
But with a mother  
Who made me.  
I love you Mom-  
Hold me still  
You want me  
To go ahead in life-  
And I will.  
But without your eyes  
Love-filled eyes watching  
Where would I be?



Someday I will  
Tell a tale- to the world  
Of that noble woman  
Who made me.

Aarushi Chatterjee

# On A Midnight Stroll

On a midnight stroll  
On a moonlit night  
I gaze up at the sky  
The moon's a pearly white  
The stars are smiling,  
Like they know me  
While souls sit at peace in them  
Faces I know, but I can't see  
Figures pass in darkness  
But I don't care  
The light is lovely  
Too dazzling to stare  
And yet the moon-she smiles on,  
The houses are a dark line  
But there are white shadows past the windows  
Like souls divine  
Pass through the trees  
The stars are bright.  
Shining to guide me  
Through this lonely night.

Aarushi Chatterjee

# Save Mother Earth

## SAVE MOTHER EARTH

When she was young, like a mother  
She nurtured all mankind.  
Gave us food, gave us water,  
All the comforts that she could find.  
Bloomed in trees, to give us shelter  
Made for us clouds, to give us rain.  
Grew us crops, with lasting soil,  
Gave us blessed, sweet-scented rain.  
Preserved for us, a rich blue sky  
Lakes, mountains, ice-melted hills,  
Gave us all Nature's beauties,  
Flowers, rivers, butterflies with frills.  
So beautiful she looked, green with trees  
Sky full of birds, seas full of fish,  
The kindest warmest mother of mankind  
That all her children could ever wish.  
But as she grew older, Man grew strong  
Disregarded her affection, indulged in wrong.  
Cut her trees, polluted the seas  
Shot down the birds, shook off her pleas.  
Filled her air with smoke,  
Her land barren of green,  
The Mother grew weak, old and lean.  
She calls to her children, ,  
Full of despair,  
We are killing our mother  
How can we dare?  
Save dying Mother Earth  
To her we must bow  
She was there for us always  
And we must save her,  
Now.

Aarushi Chatterjee

# Small Things

A laugh, a clap, a pat on the back  
a little game with a jumping jack  
a cherry topped cake, a choc the flavour you like  
a summer scented morning, a ride on a bike.

a red-orange sunset, a nice clean slate  
a little bit of extra jelly added to the plate.  
words of praise from a teacher who you thought wasn't really nice  
a hallo from a friend you never thought about twice

little things that give us pleasure  
little things that make us glad  
don't push away these things of life  
don't let yourself be sad!

Such little things give us pleasure too, don't they?

Aarushi Chatterjee

# Springtime

When poppies bloom and springdales dance  
when the grey squirrels jump about in play  
as the new leaves flutter in the wind afresh  
as the gentle spring breeze makes its way.

'How beautiful! ' sighs the golden peacock  
as he perches on top of a tree.  
'the soothing freshness of the wind  
makes me feel so free! '

there are flowers on the tree branches  
dewdrops clinging to the grass  
which the blue-crested pigeon says  
looks like a gleaming glass.

watch out while touching the scented roses  
because they contain ferocious thorns  
as the nightingale spreads her wings  
cocks and coos, as she blows her horns.

the beautiful melody rings through the trees  
through the grass, through the gate, through my ears  
Beautiful, I murmur, to the birds and the boughs  
and my faithful puppy-dog hears.

Aarushi Chatterjee

# Summer Has Come

When water runs down dry shingles  
The ponds become full to overflow  
When the spine of the mountains tingles  
With the melting of the snow  
Summer has come at last; my child;  
Summer has come; I know!  
When beds of little babies are jumped out of;  
When children go about with smiles;  
Not a single cold or cough  
To be heard of a child from miles;  
When the fog clears away, leaving drops of dew;  
When the bright brown sun begins to show;  
Summer has come at last; my child;  
Summer has come; I know!  
When ice-cream shops open round the bend  
And juices all down the road;  
When all the pocket-money seems to spend;  
When mothers have sweaters safely away stowed;  
When dreams come floating from faraway  
When the summer fairies sing their song;  
Summer has come, oh my child;  
Summer is coming along! !

Aarushi Chatterjee

# The Call Of The Wintry Night

The year has moved past like flames of fire  
And now to face the sleet  
It's going to be a long season's wait  
For the roses again to meet  
Its arms are long, welcoming  
The sun shines with a withering glow,  
My boots sink deep into the ground  
The houses are flaked with snow  
The lights are flickering and fading  
It's nearly no more light  
The children's cries are far behind  
As I melt into the wintry night.  
My hands are gloved,  
The heart is both warm and cold  
But the cheeks are rosy with sleet:  
As night covers the icy town  
I move into the darkness deeper still  
My Mother still calls me to eat.  
And yet as I  
Pause by the belt of trees  
And gaze into the softly falling snow  
And think of the fire, the welcoming fire,  
Mum, and the dear sister whom I know;  
A delightful warmth creeps through my snowy heart  
And turn back towards the cottage,  
But my steps are slow. □  
Through the sheet of icy darkness  
I can still hear the sweet old voice calling:  
And make my way back  
Into the fire of warmth  
But the snowflakes are still falling.

Aarushi Chatterjee

# The Cuckoo

Perched high upon that tree,  
Singing her pretty little song  
Dances the sweet-voiced cuckoo  
Singing all day long.  
Singing of the bees that hum,  
Singing of anything coming her way,  
Singing in her drawly voice  
All about the beautiful day.  
Many a child are sitting below  
Below that big fig tree,  
Listening to the dancing cuckoo,  
Who's gone so merry.  
Her shrill voice rings like an echo  
Passing through the trees,  
She keeps on singing; clear and pure-  
Make everyone feel at ease.  
At last she stops and spreads her wings,  
And in the breezy wind does she fly  
Goodbye, sweet-voiced cuckoo  
A very merry goodbye.

Aarushi Chatterjee



# The Silent Valley

Sunlight showers the valley  
shadows pass and poppies grow  
fern and wild roses embroider the rocks  
the northern glade is steeped in snow

Sunlight showers the valley  
looking down upon a snow-steeped glade  
bright flowers, grasses of green and blue  
that grow in the summer and fade

Sunlight showers the valley  
rose-tinted clouds give way  
to the crimson sun that shone  
upon the raggedy rocks that lay

Sunlight showers the valley  
a stream originates, gentle in its flow  
gliding over the rocks, darting down the path  
strewn with wild grasses, quite and slow.

Down, down, down in the valley  
a quaint little countryside lies in sprawl  
sweet sounds echo in the silent valley  
as the pretty spring-birds call.

Aarushi Chatterjee

# The Start Of A Day

Dusk is gone, dawn has come.  
Light seeps through the shadows of the sky.  
The black curtain turns into silver,  
Then into a gleaming blue, by and by.  
And slowly by surely appears,  
A yellow ball, big and bright.  
Brightening up the shadowy earth,  
Wiping away the remnants of the night.  
The world arises from the sleep,  
Facing another day of life.  
Wondering what fate has in for them  
A sunny day or one of strife?  
And slowly begins, what I can say,  
The start of a fresh new day.  
□

Aarushi Chatterjee

# The Veil

Why do you hide under that veil my dear?  
Is it society or shame you fear?  
Why weigh yourself down with a sheet of white  
When to walk with your head up is your birthright?  
Why hide that face under folds of cloth?  
Be brave, my child, the world fear not.  
Why bow you down when you can stand high  
With head held up in the golden sky?  
Why crush those dreams which haunt you now  
Why follow those which make you bow?  
Why dispel the spirit of courage you possess  
Why be cowed down just by your dress?  
Summon that hidden courage, and speak out  
You are finer and bolder, the veil without.

Aarushi Chatterjee

# The Veil Which Covers Sorrow

You are sorrowful, weighed down with plight  
And yet do not permit it in public sight.  
Your heart aches, down with despondency  
And yet you fear the glare of society.

You bottle up your thoughts encased secure  
Pretend to be untarnished, still pure,  
Despite what caused you sadness, still causes you now,  
But you keep it in your heart, no tears do you allow.

People around you whisper, in hushed voices of grief  
But no, you mustn't cry, that is your belief,  
And yet your head throbs, your heart stumps low  
But no! It is unholy, you think, to let the tears flow.

You put on a guise, half sorry, half gay  
Go about like an easy mind, roam about in the day  
But in the night, when undisturbed, all alone  
You creep under the covers, , and relieve the heart of the stone.  
Those tears in society, which you fear to show,  
Now you weep silently, and let the tears flow.

Aarushi Chatterjee

# True Beauty

I don't care if you got a wonky nose  
A sun-tanned face or too big toes  
I don't care if you got too crooked teeth  
Or a chin that sticks out for a mile.  
I don't care if you got hair white or grey  
I don't care if you're blind as a bat by day  
All I look for in you is a smile.

I don't care if your knees bend all the time  
I don't care if you wear specs costing just a dime  
I don't care if your face looks wrinkled and old.  
I don't care if you talk with a lisp in your voice  
I don't care if you stammer or make too much of a noise  
All I look for in you is a heart of gold.

I don't care if you look really ugly on sight  
'Cause true beauty always comes from inside  
I don't care if you got the dullest eyes  
'Cause your goodness makes them radiant as skies  
I don't care if your teeth show up too much  
'Cause when you smile they're just a lovely touch.

Aarushi Chatterjee

# What A Beautiful World He Made!

What could be more beautiful  
Than the creation of the hands of He?  
Beauty eternal that captures our life  
But we so ignorant quite fail to see?

A sun in the sky a bird on a tree  
A golden horizon a jewelled blue sea  
A rose in a garden the gentle hum of a bee  
He made them all with His own hands for we

Flowers that bloom in their fragrance and time  
Stars in the night sky celestial sublime  
Winds that surround us with breezes each day  
Clouds that don't stop but are never faraway

Moments of peace in this circle of strive  
Beauty surrounds us and keeps us alive  
Rivers and mountains and glaciers He laid  
What a Beautiful world He made

Through sunrise and sunset  
Through struggles and shade  
We live, dream, aspire  
In this beautiful World He made.

Aarushi Chatterjee

# Wind Whispering Through The Trees

Wind whispering through the trees  
In the ear of the passing swallow  
Telling the baby squirrel- 'don't fear the badger  
Sleep safely in your hollow.'  
Wind whispering through the trees  
Going too swift to follow.

Aarushi Chatterjee

# World

World endless, boundless, dreamless  
World full of black brown white  
World so vast unimaginable  
World full of darkness and light.

Cities, mountains, lakes and valleys  
Rippling streams and tumbling dreams  
Voices of thousands of voices calling  
Silence, stars and bright sunbeams.

A world too cruel, sometimes too kind  
A world too big for my untamed mind  
A world befuddling with people muddling  
A world with sweetness, with crushing grind.

A world that sings of word and deed  
A world with varying caste and creed  
A world of joy, sometimes terror and thrill  
Where people help in need or kill.

A world that's plunged into despair  
Surfacing at times for gasps of air  
A world of wonder, a world too vast  
Where God made His people to last.

Aarushi Chatterjee