

Poetry Series

Aniruddha Pathak
- poems -

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Background:

Worked in Economic Times of the Times Group (research journalism) , and as Business executive in various companies.

A Bird In Hand

And I liked egg—today in hand,
Than hen tomorrow in dreamland;
I thought: the egg could hatch
Tomorrow more to fetch,
Not if in dreamland—it'd depend.

But my egg failed to hatch—
Not from a fertile batch,
And I looked at my smiling friend,
Looked too at the hen in his hand,
And wondered at his catch,

Which, appeared to say,
Mind not what proverbs may,
One without dreams walks empty hands.

Humour | 07.12.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Blouse That Wows

She saw a smart-fitting sporty blouse,
But at school it drew forth parents grouse.
When asked this was her take:
It's all for students' sake,
Striving I'm the young minds to arouse.

Happenings | 07.12.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Bubble Wonders

A bubble often wonders:
What ado, and for nothing,
We all know, life is fleeting,
Yet, who seriously ponders?

And after all this fuss,
In all thru their long life,
Men-folk still miss the bus.
Look at our life— so rife!

O look not life in lust,
It pays to look at us
Leaving out all the fuss,
And be ready for bust.

A key to live life full
Be: leave aside old school.

Musings | 19.12.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Chick From Chesterfield

There was once this chick from Chesterfield,
Though cheated by spouse self-willed and chilled;
Her guts you scarce can guess—
She sold her wedding dress
Enough funds for divorce suit to build.

Happenings | 12.08.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Child He's, Let Him Chill

When not a leaf moveth sans His will,
Man struggles taming a sprawling hill,
And He smiles a known smile
Rare still in a long mile:
A child not yet grown, I let him chill.

Tongue-in-cheek | 04.08.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Child Three-Way Styled

Marx-Angels `tween them sired a love child
With a poor maiden whom they reviled,
Both argued, not agreed
As to who sowed the seed,
And poor child remained sired two-ways styled!

Happenings | 03.11.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Child's Still Alive In You

If you still like to get wet in rain,
Every bird if to you sings as sweet,
If floral fragrance is rare treat,
Talking to stars never be in vain,
If you like chasing sprightly rivers,
Every hill looks an inviting friend,
Tempting, tracking on un-trodden land,
If you love waves, moonlit night's silvers,
Feel at home all alone by yourself,
Each day if opens up a new page
On which to write wisdom of your age,
If you fall in love with odds on shelf,
Rejoice wild as only you still can,
A child still thrives in you along man.

A sonnet set in anapaest meter

Musings | 01.05.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Chirping Bird Tells Me

Comes autumn, follows fall,
Brown leaves begin to fall,
And when it snows in winter,
Trees look like skeletons that can't stir.

And when warm winds blow forth,
All the nature feels buoyed,
Warm weather fosters growth,
That cold weather had destroyed.

So too happens in human world,
Men of cold hearts have little joy,
And those of warm bubble with buoy,
Tells me a little chirping bird!

Musings | 43.02.2019 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Date With Ducks

Comes when the mom comb duck crackling,
Her brood not far behind following—
With all her brood— chicks seventeen,
Marvellous that makes wetland scene.

In fresh-water swamps as they breed,
Togetherness seems their sole creed
Till they disperse in wet season,
In swamps, so scorching when gets sun.

To be in large flocks of hundred
O Knob-billed, seems your common creed,
And to have no leader to lead,
You've pecking order, tail nor head.

Do thou a few things to men teach—
That they stick to no chairs like leech,
Nor be proud frogs, nor rooster cocks,
He's leader's that fosters his flocks.

On swampy greens alone you feed,
And oft on sturdy water weeds,
On smaller fish and sundry seeds,
You O Mother of chicks in lead!

I admire how your life you lead,
Glad with your girth shorn still of greed—
Yet to see one of you so lean—
Your blue tinge goes off well with green.

Who can call you ugly duckling?
Lo, beauty there's in white and black,
Just one thing you perhaps still lack—
The way you sing— coarse crackling.

With feathers black and body white,
And hints of dark blue tinged with green,
A speckled neck nigh greyish quite,
But it's your claws that peace prize win—

Webbed, nor for hunt nor fight are made,
Nor your beak an aggression shows,
Nor your colour mix is war red,
Nor hunting, harming a duck knows.

As mom you seem considerate,
Care-worn your eggs to incubate,
Ye raise chicks single-hand alone,
All— a dozen and half ye own!

Comb duck, or knob-billed duck an unusual pan-tropical bird is found in tropical wetlands of sub-Saharan Africa, Madagascar, South Asia from far of Pakistan through India to Laos and extreme South China. Even the so-called ugly ducklings have a beauty of their own.

Nature/Flora | 08.08.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Demon But Still Honest

Wrathful, arrogant,
Ready to repent,
A demon but still honest;

Wrapped with raging lust,
Yet, one we can trust,
A demon all so honest;

Cruel, he did kidnap,
Fairness flowed on tap,
A devil and still honest;

Though born a demon,
Esteem of a sun,
For, a soul he was honest.

But masked as a sage,
In muck we engage,
Men, but demonic image!

A thought on Dussehra day

Reflections | 09.10.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Droplet In Sea

My ego rising tall from a plane lay,
I often feel, the world warms to my song,
To play a second fiddle, lost in fray,
And I conduct orchestra all day long.
But evening twilight setting in, I brood,
Contemplate and begin at last to see,
Me melting in shadowy solitude—
Oh, I'm no more than a droplet in sea.

The world's now bathed in radiance all new,
Beauty and bliss welling up from within,
And a window emerging with a view,
That lets me see a world never ere seen.
Man a mere point is in infinity,
And world looks at him as nonentity.

Sonnets | 04.04.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Faquir

Pilot, nor navigator,
Rickety old be the boat,
The wind's fair nor in favour,
The journey's still set afloat.
Rare be the joys O faquir's,
Never is his garden grey,
Gain or loss, he's on the way,
Fancies, fantasies nor fears;
Flowers nor are offered gift,
In strange ways he seeks Supreme,
Prayers nor pleas— life to lift,
He knows, life's dream in a dream.
To a boat riddled with pores,
What use sails, what use are oars?

Sonnets | 05.10.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Fossil And Seed

A fossil once there was of tree,
In layers of tradition wrapt—
Layers that proved, and proof well kept,
Yet, that was scarce her cause to be,
Of living in now's sole moment,
In hopes of unfolding morrow;
For, fossil was a force all spent,
Potential, nor seed that can grow;
When it chose to blossom as seed,
And be one day a tree well grown,
Flowers and fruits as promised creed,
And ripe possibilities prone,
 A seed soaked sooner might well sprout,
 As fossil it'd have frost in doubt.

- Sonnets | 23.08.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Game Of Shame

Politics, a kind of game of shame,
Pulling each other's legs the sole aim,
An odd set of raiders,
Not team, self defenders,
Game lost, there begins a game of blame.

A man in sixties is budding youth,
Prejudice mistaken be for truth,
All passion no reason,
Treason without season,
Black's new white, eye for eye, tooth for tooth.

An honest upright no more gets sought,
Deceitful readily sold and bought,
All devil's advocates,
All Machiavellian mates,
Nation's honour is when never hot.

He goes far and wide, his chair to keep,
Drink of disgrace with rivals to sip,
To pose as patriot
In wildest dreams he's not,
No limit he finds too tall to leap.

Keeping in mind the subject matter this piece is set in a Limerick form, a set of four.

Reflections | 05.01.2018 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Garden Of Thoughts

From grey woody growth in mind
Of thoughts intertwined,
If a green garden divined!

Haiku | 22.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Gardener To Greens

The land you've grown on be His
As water and sunlight is;
I'm no more than a keeper
And claim to be no owner;
I reap crops blest by His bliss.

Words he weighs at every plant
That has pleasure to him lent,
Where 'pon moves his loving hand,
Youth as meets an elder friend,
To his welcome have they bent.

He seeks welfare of flowers,
Admires beauty on bowers,
To buds in fragrant blossom,
He has this advice awesome
That keenly he now showers:

There's season O to mature,
That heeds to no haste, be sure,
Undue haste kills your childhood,
Enjoy long as it lasts good,
Nuggets of wisdom so pure!

And wither not ere your time,
Ere fragrance reaches its prime;
He then feels some tender fruits:
Do forget not, thank your roots,
Growth's fine, but roots only rhyme.

The seed and leaves and all else,
Each your success story tells,
Ungrateful O never be,
Be proud offspring of thine tree,
Bear in mind till it rings bells.

Whilst gardener's wards nodded,
Breeze pregnant from blossoms spread.

Reflections | 03.03.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Gift Of God

What time consumes is beyond cure,
What is yet to come is unsure,
Come to kiss me, fleeting moment,
Thou art a gift, a true present,
Gift is to cherish, not endure.

- Musings | 15.01.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Guy That Grumbles

Here sir, facts from fiction ferreted,
Analysed and incorporated,
Inch from here, pinch from there,
Due gut-feel taken care,
Your vision is all need be added.

This is how a planning head approached his boss with his idea of a strategic plan on which the boss can add his wisdom. But no, a boss is one that gets things done, doing bare little himself. He is a guy that grumbles and he did: I know I always get the hardest part!

Humour | 01.03.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Haiku Is Enough Help

A Haiku seems help
Enough when facing the self,
So benign an elf!

Haiku | 04.01.2019 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Jackpot When Takes A Lot

When hard is it beyond hundred to count,
To count up to a crore, punishment is,
And five times that suddenly all is his,
It must be like a live tiger to mount.
God, how many zeroes must make a crore,
Sure, it must be mouthful, a tiger's roar.

Hope, it turns out large enough a number,
A family all thru long life to feed,
And take care of some untoward a need,
Hope, it saves me a lifetime's hard labour,
Or else, I might soon be back to square one—
Tea with bare loaf that Bombay calls a bun!

And what an irritating irony!
How can money, of all, such problem be?
But all of three months would take for money
To come; till then he must pinch his penny,
He need worry thence no price tag any,
I'm told of pricey tags of Armani.

Sure, he seemed not in rhyme with the new fate,
A man in seeming love with life so lean,
First e'er he felt secure in pauper's skin,
A man who has with wealth a confirmed date,
Yea, nimble have I been with sewing needles,
I never knew money could make such riddles.

No'ne happy be with a pauper's penny,
But this prize prints on his face gloomy glows—
Draws wrinkled up furrows and knotted brows,
Such is the tangle of tonnes of money!
Happiness! Weird, wayward be thine ways,
Here comes O Happiness, worrying days!

A zari worker from Mumbai recently won half a jackpot of over 100 million rupees in a rag-to-riches life story. Fortune smiled at him but he was unable to cope with it, and seemed more comfortable with what he was before the fortune struck.

Happenings | 03.09.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Journey A To Zee

No straight line if any
Say, from point A to B,
Progress is a journey
Circuitous, A to Zee!

Reflections | 08.11.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Journey Called Life

Bare two pairs of dress and I'm fine,
I love to travel, travel light.
Now, nature moves on day and night,
Cares little to steal someone's shine;
It knows that the joy of journey
Inversely seems to vary
With carriage one might carry—
There's not so new here—none any.

In a journey that we call life,
We love a bulging baggage
That grows fatter as we age,
But no one knows how much is rife.
And this includes both tear and gross,
A rolling stone rolls, gathers moss.

Tongue-in-cheek | 05.01.17 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Journey Nowhere To Arrive

Let me live to be hundred and five,
A child once again and all so naïve,
Innocent dispassion
For a destination,
In a journey— nowhere to arrive!

It is the goal post, aim or ambition that takes one away from now and here.
Living with no burden, it seems, be what makes child a child.

Musings | 02.05.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Lady Scorned

And she came wearing a blue overall,
Quiet as ever— knocking not her style,
Electing her own time, no prior call,
Caught me unawares, void of welcome smile;
And soon as came she left giving no clue,
Nor a hint why she came to call at all,
Vague I found her ways wrapped behind a wall,
A loser, I was left my fate to rue.

If only she'd given me a fair chance
To be on guard, playing no waiting game,
Any way, I've none else but me to blame,
If she chose not to give me second glance—
A lady scorned called Opportunity,
If not chivalry, she deserved courtesy.

Sonnets | 01.01.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Lady So Fickle

Most metaphors, lady-like fickle,
A twain of siblings delicate—
Look like tenors drawn by drained vehicle,
Similar and still disparate!

In seeming sameness lies contrast,
Some harmonies jar, stare in doubt,
Oxymoron show doubtful pout,
Obscure ironies no light cast.

When as proxies spar sign-symbol,
Not like 'sleep a shadow of death',
Let the twain break their unseen wall,
Howso be thine poetic faith.

The whole may hint part, part the whole;
Yet, pray what sets metonymy
Apart from say synecdoche,
Neat-picking spares poems no soul.

A poet's no spring shocks to absorb,
Nor is a punster out to shock,
Planting props, paradox in orb,
Let pundits put him in a dock.

Poets per chance few metaphors choose,
But pick a befitting apt word,
A lot happens at the spur of Muse,
Some ponder, call it a rare bird.

Yea, a poem by nature's fickle,
Fains if forced metaphors can it tickle.

Some critiques and academics analyse poems in the manner doctors diagnose patients— on faults and ailments, never focus on patient as a whole. 'Life is but a walking shadow', (Macbeth) . Here, 'life' is the tenor, and 'walking shadow' the vehicle of the metaphor. But metaphors can be used without knowing their grammar and definitions. 'Sleep as an adumbration of death', said Robert Frost, but one can use the signs and symbols without knowing them precisely.

Symbolism comes natural to a good poet. The poetic devices like paradox, understatement, hyperbole, and irony can come to the poet's command without him knowing their technical names. There are people fond of 'paraphrasing' a poem. Now, this is something beyond me. Why need one do so and put a piece of verse (and a thing of beauty) as prose, and kill it?

Reflections | 04.08.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Loo Ere Ye Woo

Imagine if every village beau
Be all so wedding wise with strong view
That 'open' would not do,
And pass on this pet cue:
Better build a propa' loo, ere ye woo!

News: Womenfolk in Satara, Maharashtra, give their
nod to marriage only if the groom has a proper
toilet in his house.

-Happenings | 06.10.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Lunch Box That Lost Innocence

This vestige, blotch of a by-gone era,
Alive still as a wayside Tiffin House,
A common most companion of many,
Gotten of late it has people's odd grouse.

Once a blue-collared Brit, now brown man's treat
Much like many a colonial cousin,
Tiffin box, a fully subscribed lunch-speak,
Born a noun, now an adjective no mean!

Of modest make or stainless steel case—
A box— lid secured with straps either side,
That food retains its flavours, unique face,
Each box ah bolstered like a maid of bride.

Comes when lunch time for myriads of keen maws,
Bringing together men, many a shade—
A spectrum nigh—community, caste, creed,
Men of heart, but many a varied head!

A bearer now of a blood-seeking bomb,
This do-no-wrong box has gone sinister,
Carried on cycles, scooters with aplomb,
Ah carrier of a waiting disaster!

A friend it once was of a famished maw,
But now terror's foul face, unwitting friend,
Bearer of blasts, disguised as friend, but foe,
A forget-me-not help gone out of hand!

One, that came to town crested with a crown,
That has a name its own brought badly down.

Wednesday last week, now known as 13/7, added one more ominous ring to its cousin 11/7 a few years back when explosives went off in seven local trains in Mumbai. The 26/11 is still fresh in our memory. A friend of millions, Tiffin box has in this last case turned into an instrument of terror. Terror has snatched many innocent things from life— even children of tender age that become live carriers. Alas, a plane Tiffin box has now lost her innocence for ever. Would it

ever walk tall?

Happenings | 07.07.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Man From A Cool Clime

There was once a man from a cool clime,
He had an unhurried sense of time,
Cool and content, no let,
Time his treasured asset,
He'd enough time at right time to chime.
A poet, his verse blank,
And diction lean and lank,
He believed, words in right space-time rhyme.

Reflections | 06.06.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Manifesto That Mends

Schools they want where teachers would teach,
More than a showy world of wealth,
A country rich nor of vast reach,
They want a haven of high health.

Good roads on which safely to drive,
Sensible leaders that make sense,
With hope who would remain so hence,
Clean waters that daily arrive.

What counts to those that rickshaws run:
Their hard-earned wages would retain
Shine sans ransoms to policemen,
And the corrupt criminal chain;

Clear title's what poor farmer wants
For a piece of land that he tends,
Bribes, nor bakshis in babu's hands
This is what a common man haunts.

And in polls we call general
Let voters truly speak their mind
As if they were municipal,
That keeps grand politics behind.

A way where wheels to way-up works,
Not just muddles, twiddles and twirls,
They want straight-face deals sans vain curls,
No one wherein from duty shirks.

Simple things standing in front row,
Not beating around fancy bush,
Want ways and means that steady grow,
Want honest heads prying a push.

Long have they played musical chairs,
Now want real change, not hit and miss,
Manifestos not musing in thin airs,
They want rainbows long in promise.

It is election time, a season of false promises, claims and counter claims. Few politicians bother to find out what people really want. Here is a wish list. No big promises, people want first simple things of day-to-day life.

Musings | 01.12.04|

Aniruddha Pathak

A Mascot Called Chu-Ah

Public sector's holiest of cows,
Spied when a ticket-less tiny mouse,
Said this strange stow-away:
Frequent I fly this way,
Parasite, pest like you, why this grouse?

Air India, truly a holy cow, when found mice on board its flight three times in a week, it might look like an opportunity:

An epicurean dining at Crewe
Found a rather large mouse in his stew.
Said the waiter, 'pray shout
Not, nor wave it about,
Or others will demand one free too'.

Well, if sundry absconders and cheats so many can slip away quietly from the country, why not poor little mouse? Chu-Ah here mimics chuha, Hindi for mouse.

Happenings | 01.04.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Monk And His Ferrari

Indulgence seldom seems a disease,
Cravings and fear to lose always is.
A monk need not so rid
Save cleavings, good old greed,
Enjoy all blessings as heaven's bliss.

Once Osho was asked about his fleet of Rolls Royce sedans he possessed. Why would a spiritual being like him need such material luxuries? He posed: if you have an expensive car such as this and someone carelessly damaged it. How would you feel? The response was: One would feel upset and agitated. Osho: Therein dwells the difference. Even if I were to wake up tomorrow to find that the entire fleet is missing, it would not matter one bit to me. Indulgence is no disease, attachment is.

Reflections | 07.07.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Myth May Better Be Than Truth

Stripping Santa Clause of the crown of God
Would scarce him a lesser-loved old man make,
Nor faulting Truth Fairy to face vile fraud,
They are not they standing on title's stake;
 Some myths that motivate, inspiring youths,
 Far better be than fire-betested truths.

Armstrong perhaps was tough, doping or not,
That has done to the world a world of good,
Rekindling hearts by curse of cancer wrought,
Inspired now to fight, fight old attitude;
 Starved is this world of a role model rare,
 To scare head-strong truths with a strong-arm dare.

Scarce is this world at war with fairness creams,
Hair transplants, nor cosmetic skin routine—
To look nigh better yon god-given means,
Nor is seeding by tube satanic sin;
The world's fine with photo-shopped touch-up look,
Images cooked ere loaded on Facebook.
 But a li'le trace of banned drug is too much—
 To him that has lived with no crouching crutch.

Lance Armstrong, the holder of many a cross-country Cycling world records, who defeated debilitating fatal disease like cancer with sheer will power to fight with it, and was an inspiration to thousands of cancer patients, apart from today's youth in general, was recently stripped of all his titles in a USADA's dogged hunt.

Note: The subsequent facts of the case though indicate that Armstrong perhaps was guilty of drug abuse, I feel, the core truth stated here still stands. Drug abuse has become too common. It is perhaps because inducements for it—the money power if a player wins—has sky-rocketed. Sports has become a means of minting money, even business. Sports is no more an innocent game to enjoy. Yet, he was a symbol of grit and determination and courage against insurmountable odds. A myth has been broken. But some myths seem to serve better than truths.

The poem is set in a peculiar sonnet format— three Stanzas of six, six, and eight lines, each one a small sonnet with a couplet in the end in the form of a volta— an experiment.

- Happenings (Satire) | 11.09.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Needle, Not Scissors

A tale as goes of a tailor,
Straight, simple as his noble soul,
In life's ocean a skilled sailor,
Searching hallowed path his life's goal.

A king when came to pay homage,
Gave a pair of scissors of gold
That left the sage sober and cold,
He did his job but sought no wage.

He thanked the king, declining still,
Fine, but what else may I give you?
Nothing sir, if ye feel no ill,
If must, give a needle in lieu.

Scissors diminish and divide,
A needle sews together things,
Torn up pieces closer it brings,
And scissors may give me false pride.

Reflections | 03.05.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Paradise In Spring

Lord Vishnu once blasé of the same old scene,
Far too familiar with His abode's ease,
Wondered if a better place there has been
That exhilarates with rich fragrant breeze.

Arbudanchal¹ My Lord, Narada said,
His companion and a sage versatile,
A hilly resort to soothe a tired head,
It is waiting to welcome you with smile.

But how would I find this new paradise?
Look for a place bursting with spring flowers,
Naught whatso like it anywhere else lies,
Rich air wafts bliss from blossoming bowers.

No one can miss that golden yellow hue,
Aroma so rare in the floral world,
A long spring is about to be unfurled,
Once you reach there you'll need no other clue.

And ye can't miss those trees towering tall,
Glossy green leaves and ethereal fragrance,
Nor miss her pyramid-like sloping wall,
Once there you'll know this place, in single glance.

Yea, but this was so back in fairer time,
When earth nigh but rivalled all paradise,
Old Arbudanchal¹ of immortal clime,
Air spilled when with life breath and man was wise.

Today the green is struggling to grow,
Hills bulldozed bare, bald with brazen progress,
There's little left the old glory to show,
Save manicured greens wearing tailored dress!

And still enough hints of the old glory
That I hope would one day trace times hoary.

Arbudanchal¹: The present day hill station called Mt. Abu in Rajasthan. I was

there for ten days in late April to re-explore its beauty after a long time of thirty years. The difference I found was stark. This piece describes the place, then known as the envy of even the abode of Vishnu.

Reminiscing | 04.06.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Poem Is Love

Blank of mind I move,
Paper and pen, sky above,
And poem gets born of love.

- Haikus | 12.08.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Poem Is Pilgrimage

On a pilgrimage,
Faith in heart, sitting on hedge,
And she's seen in haze.

- Haikus | 11.08.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Poem Of The Passing Age

I looked up a poem of passing age,
And held it under powerful light
To sense its true essence, modern image,
All I saw, a colourful kite.

I read aloud to catch its time,
Tried, feel poetry from pompous prose,
Searching fine verse found verbose chime,
To look what in its deep within flows,

Struggled to spot an opening,
Put a sniffing dog in its tracks,
Pursuing whilst my own probing,
We both lost way and called it packs.

Hired owls of finest dark vision
Its Byzantine chambers to search,
Aborting this thankless mission,
They returned tired, lost of own perch.

I engaged then decoders of repute
To find if some words sang like birds,
Was told, when pure tune's played on flute,
Futile is it focusing on words.

Defeated, feeling so grim,
I slept; wise sense rose like cream:
What is not your cup of tea,
O best 'tis to leave as be.

Tongue-in-cheek | 06.04.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Poem That Just Be

One day I wish my pen's fruit
Ripens— a poem all mute,
And silent like engraved stone,
Layers of moss where get grown;
And singing still like a lute;
A poem painted with words,
Mute still like a flight of birds,
Poem not frozen in time,
In commune, as if in mime,
And a poem rather brief,
Baring no more, a fig-leaf,
One that'd mean to me so much,
It would just be— be as such.

Musings | 08.08.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Poem's Like An Iceberg

A poem if that be better, better be brief,
One that flows and floats like a dry leaf,
Hidden like an iceberg,
Set to sail smooth and snug,
What's unsaid and unseen rife like riff.

A poem they say should project an iceberg theory: To say more in less (words) .
This means: the visible poem is but a small part of what is being said. In jazz
short phrases, called riff, are repeated rife.

Reflections | 03.09.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Poem's Like An Uncut Gem

Welled up from deep, words make a poem
That soon forges her own emblem.
An ever changing dame,
Never is she the same,
Like a river whereso she came,
Keeps changing all along her frame,
Never same as was sent,
Gaining and getting spent,
But ye cannot her blame,
Nor yet ever her tame;
Much like a letter once posted,
Poets tend to lose poem's thread,
Like a much chiselled gem,
She changes, keeps still her emblem.

Musings | 04.04.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Poet

A poet's a man
Oft proud of his pen,
Little, what he can.

Haiku | 11.05.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Poet And River

A stream I am struggling with tears,
Blocked on way mine by a boulder stone,
And wonder how to move on my own,
How to flow unhindered free from fears.

A poet I am singing my heart,
To heart cleave I and in heart believe,
To head's devil my due still I give,
Two pillars and yet two poles apart!

An endless duel raging within,
What I wish to say be yon of words,
Words are all upon which I must lean,
Words and words, all wearing wings of birds,
A quenchless quench, dilemma of life,
There's not but walking on edge of knife.

This piece uses a nine-syllabic (three feet) anapaest metre
unlike most sonnets that have ten-syllabic (five feet) iamb.

- Sonnets | 21.08.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Poet Is A Painter

A poet, weaver of word patterns,
A painter be that to rainbows turns,
Nature would not him fail
His palette if turns pale,
Who, more than money, big laurels earns.

Reflections | 06.06.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Portrait Painted With Words

Pray what is it that you try to explain?
Explain? Poetry portraits of words paint,
Feelings are felt; yet, words being so vain,
There's li'le to know but enjoy fragrant scent.
A flower's scarce smelt to know what it meant,
Scent be the path the joy in flower packs,
Problem is: words waft meanings howso faint,
Poet distracts still; turns, twists, and sidetracks.

Lucky, if his ferry fetches some fish,
But that can make no ferries fishing boats,
As melody, mere ornamental notes—
Fishing nor a fish dish be poet's wish.

Still dear, if you enjoy my word portrait,
And call it meaningful still, wow how great!

Sonnets | 06.04.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Prayer That Be Plea

When a prayer is plea packaged in veil,
And puja¹, a covert plea for His pardon,
When a Bandagi² begs for heaven's bail,
And worship for a vaunted place in sun;
When sacrifice be secret plea for fruits,
Charity seeks to reserve place in heaven,
Gift gets given to gain matching return,
Pilgrimage a pass-time, no search for roots.

Yet, bless me Lord that my hopes breathe alive,
I pray thee that in happy peace I rest—
Content in my luxury-laden nest,
I pray, let honey sweeten my beehive,
 And as thou keepest supplying my store,
 I swear I'd love thee if so all the more.

1. Puja: The Hindu worship, service offered to God.

2. Bandagi: The periodical namaz (kneeling) offered to Allah by Muslims.

This sonnet is sung rather tongue-in-cheek and is a light satire on prayers that be veiled pleas for wanting something or the other and are not rendered as thanks-giving to God, as all prayers should be.

—
- Sonnets | 17.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Prayer's No Piece Of Art

Be frank and free, if ye feel lost, alone,
I shall be thine moving shadow for life,
I'll bathe, groom thee, soothe if tired be the bone,
Let me pick lice from hirsute hair so rife,
A shepherd prayed, feelings pouring from heart,
That Moses felt profane, loathsome apart.

No need, Moses, proper prayer to preach,
I've sent thee, God said, to meet devotees,
Build bridges that easy to me they reach,
Mere words make no worship, nor build bridges;
So, turn not my followers to machines,
Nor make prayers pontiffs' pompous routines.

A prayer that flows not from feeling heart
To ritual turns, a hollow piece of art.

An unlettered shepherd, a simpleton, knew no proper prayer, and would use absurd words, rather profane, as if talking to God. Moses who was passing by heard him while he was praying, and scolded him for using such sacrilegious words for God, and taught him a proper prayer. The shepherd then on prayed mechanically hardly understanding the meaning, the prayer a mere motion of lips devoid of emotions. It was then Moses' turn to get scolded by God for robbing His true devotee of love and emotion.

Sonnets | 01.11.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A School For The Fools

Ah, what a varsity down the town!
Fools where frolic flaunting folksy crown,
Where bright and nerdy wise,
May seldom get a prize,
Creative minds where can fool around.

Daddarpada Vishva Vidyalaya, Chitradurga, in Karnataka, India. Leading the team and the idea is a man who calls himself 'dumbest of them all', yet a pillar of folk music. He never got past class one in school. A school dropout, he wandered around the State exploring abundant folk practices and travelled as many as 29,343 villages, and given 12,508 stage shows, sharing the rich traditions of folklore. The five year course at the university will have less theory and more practical lessons covering some 64 disciplines.

Why such a university? The present system of education, he feels, is aimed at filling the stomach, and not the soul. The course content centres on these five tenets:

- shrama, i.e., labour, efforts
- krama, order, sequence, priority
- pari-shrama, perseverance
- par@krama, valour, and
- vikrama, victory.

I can't but agree more, and suggest reading another poem 'Go add to the beauty of life', | 08.07.14 |.

- Happenings | 09.07.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Setting Sun Upsets Me

I wonder why a setting sun upsets,
Departing, a fellow passenger,
A belated monsoon when hesitates,
Why good fragrance fades as a stranger.

And yet, the sun at dusk is aught to set,
Travellers board only in time to part,
Some monsoons made are not to be so wet,
Every fragrance is born to fade apart.

Only, when would and how is seldom clear,
The life's always born, die old in disease,
As dance of life at journey's break must cease,
Fair, time of death fraught is with mortal fear.

But what's not, man can't soothe the edge of strife,
When sorrows joyous tails of life follow,
And happiness when comes trailing sorrow,
Nor he hoists height of joys, nor makes them rife!

If honour should herald distant disgrace,
And pain-pleasure are bound to alternate,
If youth should one day wear a wrinkled face,
And wealth were to open poverty's gate,
If every breath breathed out is a dead breath,
Why not say good-bye to the last as Death?

Man is aware of the realities of life and still not quite. And this truth comes to light when death arrives knocking, arrives when failure, comes when pain.

Reflections | 01.02.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Silver Line

Clouds wear wet, wet gloom,
In grey darkling plume,
For silver line where's the room?

Haiku |28.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Tale Of Grey Grief

A tale of grey grief
Told by a brown leaf,
All leaf ears were stiff.

Haiku | 07.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Temple In Aid Of Aids

A piece of stone on the roadside
When worshipped is by a million,
Devout minds drawn like rising tide,
Faith follows dressed in vermilion.

A teacher took this in his stride
And founded a shrine— AIDS-amma—
An aiding mother, divine Ma,
A temple it wore folks to guide.

Inspired to do people some good,
He painted best a novice can—
Profile of a man and woman,
Image of AIDS one may call crude.

The temple a medium to him,
A place where people congregated,
In religious zeal worked his team,
To common cause so dedicated.

To spread message, cause of the curse,
Its deadly spell, and still much worse;
To Indian pantheon one more
Deity; and a path-breaking lore!

If one wants to serve the mankind,
Money may help but scarce is must,
A man comes with head and heart just,
And dedication well designed!

A disease beyond cure, elements beyond control, something beyond ken inspiring awe and fear are deified by humanity. A man here builds a temple called AIDS-amma (goddess) for creating awareness for this deadly disease.

Happenings | 07.07.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Twain Of Triolet

There is as much vice
As we care to find
With our prejudice;

And as much virtue
Of our very kind,
It's all how we view.

Reflections |10.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Whisper Sounds Like Scream

Oh today's un-tethered men and women
That listen to way less than a one-half,
Absorbing half of that— (all bull and calf!) ,
Reacting still as many times as twice—
In fraction of what we may call a trice,
Those that think thro their heart, head next to none,
No wonder that a lot in life goes wrong,
Sounding like an off-key, out of tune song,
In mad haste still, lo, these men and women,
On edge forever of a precipice,
End up (what else) bang on as they began—
Like two pawns of a gambling game of dice;
But when life sinks, and sours like a bad dream,
A whisper sounds like pathetic shrill scream.

Men and women seem to fall in love and out of it as fast; come together as fast
as fall foul; together in bed and still miles apart; always on the edge, pouts of
doubt; their whispers sounding like screams.

Sonnets, tongue-in-cheek | 06.02.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Wild Called Weed

What we call weed, a seldom loved vagrant—
Weed only to men knowing none her creed,
Uninformed of this hardy breed, unbent,
Its virtue lost in wild woody arid.
We that have amidst us society's weeds,
Condemned, uncared, that might never succeed,
I wish we knew well weeds' virtuous deeds.
Ere known, were not they all weed-like indeed?

Weeds that may never pricey homes adorn,
Their virtues still would never die in vain,
Nor languish like abandoned newly born,
Nor like love's labour die a desert rain.
Weeds need lose battle, nor die broken heart,
Hardy heads live in hopes of heady start.

Sonnets | 02.08.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

A Wild Flower Lost In Lea

I look not, but see,
And there's ecstasy—
A wild flower lost in lea!

Haikus | 02.02.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Abode Of Lord Be All This

Abode of His this all around—
All of cosmic world unbound,
And here's golden rule so sound:
Eat only but what you earn,
Upon sharing, comes when your turn,
Covet, nor incur a curse,
Nor greed vulture-like or worse,
'Pon giving get to earn gain,
On gaining, soon the clouds drain.

This is the essence of very first verse of Isha Upanishad.

Reflections | 03.12.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Age Is But A Page

Ye frowned at that fraudster called age,
The devil that lets us not sleep light,
In book of life age is bare a page.

A child lets life no fair passage,
Reads not by page, flies a fancy flight,
Ye frowned, kept the fraudster in cage.

He when grows and knows, hedges on hedge,
Wise enough, calls not that boaster's blight,
Life's a long book, age a passing page.

Happy, pushing hackney carriage,
Reaping fruits in life's fight-less flight,
He pretends to face that impostor's rage.

In second childhood, bit of a sage,
In vain sets out life's wrongs to right,
He readies to write life's last page.

But you dad, lived life in heaven's image
Fought your best to give age good fight,
Ye frowned on that fraudster's rage,
And proved life's a book, age but a page.

Inspired by my father who led an exemplary life and died at the age of 102

Villanelle | 01.10.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Ageless Body No More

Man may think a mountain's forever made,
None whatso on earth stable is like stone,
Old age, disease do strike ere man is dead,
The flesh of life's alive and dead its bone;
Yet, atom too lives though has no life breath,
And everything created comes to naught,
For naught whatso in world rises above faith,
The march of time with Dance of Death is wrought.

And yet soul was created immortal,
Until it so decides life never dies,
But it knows too notso is eternal,
And so fails above dance of death to rise.
Though life designed was to live for ever,
Thank death-wish that life pulls its own lever.

According to Upanishads, Man was so designed as to be free from old age and death. But, wishing both old age and death, planting such a thought, a death wish, man made himself mortal.

A spark from eternal Brahman,
God ere made an immortal man,
But he failed above death to rise,
Mind sowing seeds of thought man dies.

Sonnets | 02.03.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Agony, Honey, Long Journey

A weary way-fairer, and lost in wood
One dark night, tired, hungry, fell in a well—
Dry, unused, and that left him on fate to brood,
Lucky to clutch on to roots of a swell
Banyan tree, and hung half awake midway,
He spent the whole night praying for a ray
Of hope, precariously suspended;
And dreamt he was lifted out, not yet dead.
In times trying, as sole lifelines from blue,
He wondered what man would without dreams do.

Never in life had he dreamt for dawn more,
Which when came, came to spell disaster—
There growled at the well's mouth a mighty tiger,
Greedy that stared, hunger writ all over;
The only way was the unknown way down,
Hanging for dear life, let the danger go,
But no, he heard a python hissing— brown
And big, tongue twirling, ready to swallow,
Frail lifeline-like roots beginning to buck,
When destiny frowns, wonder what can luck!

But when his faint vision began to blur,
And tired brain lost of starch to think,
He felt a cooling, sticky little stir,
Dripping from nose to lips, slowly to slink
Down to his mouth; but how, how can it be?
A few drops of heavenly sent honey!
Ahead he saw a bear seated aplomb
A tree above, grabbing a honey comb!
Perhaps grave fears on his fate were not fair,
Perchance, life has something for all to spare.

Well, waiting he was ere for dawn to be,
And then those hungry mouths to go away,
And now for few chancy drops of honey—
All in an eon of a half night's play!
And it just dawned to him: life like that is—
But a few licks at a time to relish,

And hitches, glitches, catches everywhere,
And yet, option still smiles often that tells:
Plights come with pleasure in life howso bare,
Wisdom's to weigh: how long to wait in wells!

This poem is allegorical on life's long journey, which by and large littered is with agony, with a few drops of honey thrown in by destiny here and there. Man lives amid hopes of better times.

Reflections | 03.01.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Ah Life Without Labels

My name the first loop made surrounding me,
And then there were circles galore:
The second one was made by family,
Caste and community formed core
Around which circled county and country.
Living with these circles for long,
I began to like implied false safety,
The feeling felt was nigh cosy,
I even thought there was notso wrong.

And then one day I thought this thought:
A life where name was not,
Nor circles to get caught,
Life sans labels, ah what a life!
Nary a curb, nor controls rife,
O to move in open space—
In ample place to pace,
Man's own personal haven,
Life of let under Sun!

Embrace if can I vast space,
What use an encircled place?
But hard piercing these circles,
Each imposing its own rules;
Perhaps men are like turtles,
Carrying weight on their backs
That, they think are safety packs;
Or schooled in constricting schools,
Perhaps men are like draught mules.

Reflections | 8.10.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Ah This Game Of Golf

The game of golf nigh like this life,
Played all life, still perfect can't be,
The game of golf like player's wife,
Now on pedestal, now on tee,
With handicaps, roughs, bogies rife,
And played as if on edge of knife!

Easy to start, hard to finish,
And harder ever to master,
Pursued like an unfulfilled wish,
And just one stroke from disaster;
As in life, handicaps to cap,
Clap for birdies, eagles each lap.

What a rage this game every age,
Many a high, as many lows,
A game ever on players grows,
Ageless a sport still in image—
Yet to me a bit too high brow,
Pricey clubs, carts, caddies in tow.

And should ye think you the ball drive,
Beware, the game drives, O ye naïve,
This game of greens, good to relax,
Greener though goes an envied player,
And greatest of a leveller,
Pro or novice likes it like sex.

Reflections | 01.10.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Ah What A Dream

What women dream? Wear a hamper hat,
Go shopping, gossiping,
Sip leisure, picnicking,
Or happy be all life over that?
No, eat all without getting fat!

Tongue-in-cheek | 05.02.2015 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Alibi None To Celebrate

Life needs no alibi to celebrate
If only man learns to like whatso fate.
Time, born a mere moment massive as grows,
Multiplying into mounts of morrows,
Phoenix-like can man rise if from sorrows
But if to arise from ashes he knows.
Dark be when nights he welcomes Diwali,
Making it bright by lighting man-made light,
He waits for no full-moon that brighter be,
Nor life waits for joys turning to delight,
Sun rises and dawn turns unto daylight,
Does it wait till may vanish greyish night?
Morrows are never meant dream-like to wait,
Now is the time you sulk or celebrate.

Sonnets | 01.11.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Alibi To Be Inebriate

Life needs no alibi to celebrate
If only man learns to like whatso fate.
Time, born a mere moment massive as grows,
Multiplying into mounts of morrows,
Phoenix-like can man rise if from sorrows
But if to arise from ashes he knows.
Dark be when nights he welcomes Diwali,
Making it bright by lighting man-made light,
He waits for no full-moon that brighter be,
So should man know to say goodbye to plight.
Sun rises and dawn turns unto daylight,
Dawn waits not till vanishes darkling night.
Sure dear, no alibi to celebrate,
But I need one to be inebriate.

Poor wife, she spent here most of this sonnet telling her spouse to forget his night of sorrows and welcome a new dawn. But he was on a different trip.

Sonnets |05.11.16|

Aniruddha Pathak

All Don'ts Into Do's

There comes a man defeated in his mind,
Unsure like a dog— tail tucked to the hind,
And what ere was an opportune op door,
Looks to him unreachable far off shore.

Comes then a man with a belief in him,
Walking a lion's gait, if somewhat grim,
And what ere was a door closed shut in face,
Looks to him a sure shot— a tennis ace,
All odds-against to nil, fighting a deuce,
A winner to vantage, don'ts into dos!

"To a pessimist, his opportunities look like
difficulties. To an optimist, the difficulties are like
opportunities."

- Reflections | 10.09.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

All I Want Is To Dream

If I can hold on well to that high haven—
To that sweet truth if but for a moment,
Never mind it stands to no test of reason—
Day dreaming and dressed in dappled raiment,
Let me think tall, think big though a bit naïve,
Let my imagination space-time bend,
Let it wisdom's reality transcend,
Is not it delusion, man's all alive?

This dream within a dream, Nature's sole gift
To mankind— mind wandering to escape,
Musing, unyielding world falling in shape—
Let it my struggling spirit uplift.
No one does ever know the truth real
Betwixt twain of dreams, the real and surreal!

Sonnets | 10.08.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

All Of Nature Waits, Not Man

All Nature seems to wait with steely will—
Sloth-bears linger, snails seem no short of time,
Polar bears hibernate in snowy chill,
'Let it be, wait' seems Nature's panache prime.
The chill awaits sun as snow settles still,
To slumber in June's doldrums is no crime.
And winter whispers under frozen snow,
On her thawing dreams of far off warm spring,
Trees stand still pondering an inch to grow,
That, fair fruits of patience might one day cling;
Bees seem bestirred, honey for all to bring,
And birds on busy wings build nests, singing.
All Nature chills, patiently be cheery,
Why wonder I, need man be in hurry.

Sonnets | 12.07.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

All Package, No Product

Most fads, refuge of fashion's also-ran,
Subsist on: if she can, so too can men;
Take man's padded up pants, poor croach's hot hell,
So is lifted up butt lifting morale;
Be it man or woman, panty or pant,
Fashion pours off see-through shrunken raiment,
Obsessed as she remains with breasts and butts,
And men? Bod packs, what lies `tween legs, and guts!
And what God failed to grant, worry no more,
There're doctors, and designers too galore,
Nay, there're designing doctors off the street,
As doctoring designers too discreet;
Ah, fashion is perchance there to distract
From what's or not between legs, young and old,
Or from what's not between two ears, in fact;
From substance to vague style, subtle to bold!

- Satire | 09.10.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Amos

How utterly shocking it was
To see his smile fading like a flower
Withering in summer's hot sun,
He who with his 'Good Morn' would pause
'Pon delivering office papers
And daily supply of goodwill
With his customary broad smile
Only to melt soon as a moon
Might behind monsoon's grey clouds,
And dissolve unto his work;
A smiling mobile face
It seems is a forgotten grace.

And hard it was to imagine
Him in a hospital bed, but he was.
No, it was not the dark gloom
That enveloped his bed and room,
His searching, sinking eyes,
Nor yet the milieu all around,
Nor even a sunken, gaunt face,
I was struggling to trace
That ubiquitous smile in vain,
I hoped, would surface despite pain.
But amidst the surrounding dread,
A forlorn face sunk further in bleak bed!

Amos, he worked with me— a sincere, diligent hand ever smiling. I recall one day we heard the shocking news that his kidneys were sinking. The company gave some help and colleagues contributed towards medical expenses, but the treatment was long drawn, and he opted for VRS and left. The poem describes the scene at hospital bed. It has Hopkins's Sprung Rhythm.

Reminiscing | 03.10.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

An All-Knowing Fool

Here's a thought on this day of leg-pull:
Growing old is no more pretty cool,
It assures no fiefdom
Nor yet a fair wisdom,
For, there's no fool like all-knowing fool.

Aniruddha Pathak

An Ass In Love With Lass

Two donkeys at a wayside met—
One, a robust looking rogue was,
No master he had had because—
To chat on life's hindrance and let,
A lean-looking bare-bone loner,
His friend came from brick-kiln owner.

The robust fellow just he-hawed,
He worried no punishing rod.
The master his friend badly treats,
Giving him pretty li'le to eat:
Though I work hard in scorching heat,
For no reasons he always beats'.

Why don't you walk away from him?
Just like me— to live your own dream.
You know, he's a pretty daughter,
He beats her as well and ill-treats,
His friend felt, there flows deep water,
What's that to do with you, dimwits?

You see, he warns her, me witness:
I'll have you married to this ass!
Man too has been this ass, no less,
Takes ills, hopes still heaven to bless,
To get in life a gorgeous lass,
But all he gets is dry grey grass!

Humour | 06.12.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

An Escape Door

A wolf, bleeding mouth and claws,
Pleaded innocent as hell,
When asked who his witness was,
Said, my witness is my tail.

Now, if a lie's all a lie,
One can well fight it outright,
But if half a truth well nigh,
Nigh harder is it to fight.

Poor truth oh left all alone,
Void of witness, ill at ease,
Displayed a half-devoured bone,
But lost still, God bless justice!

Lies ever since aloud roar,
Sans red-proof, finds escape door!
And justice watches helpless,
Prisoner in its own fortress!

Tongue-in-cheek | 13.11.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

An Extra Mile

If I can't meet hearts with an extra mile,
The least let me try— walk half a more mile,
Let me meet half-way with inviting smile,
Let me not stand on an isolate isle.

In a journey of many a long mile,
It's half a mile that a long distance dies,
Imagine a quarrel sans compromise,
Life's worth living thanks to this half a mile.

Even Nature knows a wise compromise:
A fierce cyclone going out of hand,
Goes to flatten tall trees too stiff to bend,
Not bamboo stalk that bends, never defies.

Teach thyself the tenets of harmony,
No use demanding cost of compromise,
Its value always exceeds thine surmise,
If not, ye perish in self agony.

I know, I've learnt hard lessons late in life
O by not walking up that extra mile,
Nor in compromise walking half a mile,
And let life walk O on the edge of knife.

Musings | 04.08.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

An Ode To Information

I recall to our life when she came—
In early nineties one unknown day,
Few knowing for long years who she was—
Her mission, and what she dreamed to do,
And someone called it an Info Age:
Internet and e-mails and media—
Some perhaps more social than are ants,
In tone and temper unfairly free—
And info-knowledge spread sans limit,
But in just two decades we feel drowned.

Overload of info, opinions:
Social sites tweeting, tubes, sundry sites,
Searching sites, kindling books, what not apps,
Bits and bytes gagging us over board!
An ocean of Info, every shade,
Informing less and confusing more,
Now telling, and contradicting then;
But time was we had next to nothing.
Bits, bytes, nor statistics info is,
Nor info knowledge is, never was.

News nigh fake and more private views are,
And from truth no tiny tad far are,
Verified by none but someone's whim,
Twenty four by seven, news and news!
Ignorance a maiden of pure bliss,
No one has questioned camouflaged views,
Neutral media has been a sour dream
What with news views are with varied hues,
And fruits of a fertile mind and pen,
Let me have old ignorance and Zen!

Ere, soul of Info to inform was.
And inform it sure did without doubt,
Today it seems to drown us in doubt,
And the curious li'le bird, I'm not sure
If any a worm would ever catch
Even if ravenous hungry is.

Yea, time was info an asset was,
And people hungered for a bare byte.
Today's trouble—how to garner grain
O from heaps of bark and shell and chaff.

A maiden she is but no more shy,
Hiding still like peels of onion nigh!

Happenings | 16.03.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

An Ode To Life

O to die old man, tasks left un-leaven,
To return— a fake coin to this planet;
Work harder, yet more mileage points to earn
That heaven calls goodly deeds done to date,
To repeat not life's careless omissions,
Careful avoiding sinful commissions,
Grow up again, relearning things learnt ere,
Suffer old age again, same helplessness,
Same hassles of life, all of its bugbear,
Begin and end with diapers no less.

All this with some welcome blessings to fore:
The foremost: mother's love, her rage so mild,
Worth returning to earth often and more,
If but for just innocence of a child,
And its one more version— second childhood,
Small joys and pleasures, life's trinkets so rife,
For that lesson hard learnt in adulthood—
True joys come but from trivial things of life.

Sure, heaven and hell have their own odd rules,
And hell hands over no worse punishment
Than treating humans, what else, like draught mules
That must learn things learnt ere— in chastisement,
A karmic fate— there's no meaner kill-joy,
But is not life God's play-act to enjoy?

And still I'd feel, life comes with mixed blessings,
Like coins it comes with two sides: joy and strife,
One may call it tyranny of this life,
Or perchance destiny, dual voice where sings.

And still I love you O life, fall or spring,
I like this journey, pray keep me calling.

.....

Yea, life looks well should ye dwell on fair side,
All ye need have is pointed perspective:
Take the positive, leave the negative,

Deny the dangling duals any a ride.

If sin there's in life, it's not to endure,
And in despairs to hope for `nother life,
Yet, this very life has all the grandeur
That missed is amidst all imagined strife.

O worry not on life's pointless meaning,
Life's to be lived, for, there is one, no myth!
Philosophy has no place in living,
Life's lived far better without it than with.

All the courage, all bravery's loud cry,
All poetic lines penned to glorify,
Never for once needed O just to die,
But to live life fit for braves— manfully.

So, let me steal a day off life— to live,
And live as if there's no another day,
To live, live well be in life to believe,
I wonder if there's any other way.

And to live, even one percentage less,
Be justice denied to heavenly gift,
Know, no life's ever been made meaningless,
To say so is not to uplift God's gift.

If there's one exception to life I let—
It is when life outlives body's old cage,
Yet, happy flesh seldom for life does fret,
Beware; an ailing flesh faster does age.

Destiny has sent you here and knows why,
So, worry not clouds of sorrows shall rain,
Nor yet worry your life is lived in vain,
Everyone's well on way to reach his sky.

And God for no degrees care, nor medals,
Only but how honest you truly strived,
Only, where ye aught be, if you've arrived,
So, steer clear of life's lofty pedestals.

Life's journey, no straight walks, nor yet is short,
But life lived and lived well goes well ahead,
And belongs to one alive, not to dead,
No two journeys are same, seek your own port.

In safety's life lived, nor security,
Tire not of danger, nor yet avoid it,
The alt is no safer street, so brave it,
Life is a daring venture or naught be.

A vast field life seems, man cometh with yoke,
His struggles apart, life's no thankless field,
Were he at times to get no matching yield,
It's no fair calling life gossamer smoke.

For, unrest of spirit's the sign of life,
Go ahead, man, it's fair if heart rebels,
Destiny smiles if man's efforts work rife,
It is how man yon his level excels.

And life's no easy to compose besides,
It takes great deal more than penning this ode,
But if man's taken a few crucial strides,
He should feel light of load; he's right on road.

As is this world's horizon— infinite,
So is life's that in its fullness expands,
But whenso it stiffens to be finite,
Fossilised, man gets frozen where he stands.

A lump of raw material be this life,
To be touched, ennobled, given a shape,
Till all life's length be sharpened like a knife,
From constant renewal none can escape.

Man may have seen or heard of wars world wide,
Knows little still, life's no less a combat—
One that lasts till life's very end, aside,
To march ahead all through is no child's hat.

The only therapy O man is life,
Nigh patient, learn to live body and soul,

Live with life's vicissitudes all so rife,
There's no halfway house. Take or leave it whole.

Life is its own wealth, there's not else in world—
The wealth that no insurance can make safe,
And of no compensation have I heard,
Enjoy it or watch it go, mouth agape!

That life is worth living takes not so proof,
A premise that man must doubtless assume,
And when life lived reaches none its tall roof,
The reason oft is: life's plunged into plume.

Though short, life still runs a full marathon,
The truth is far to see, for it lives long,
For, threads of life keep running on an on,
Notes echoing in air, sweet be the song.

All said, life's no life if there be no death,
I see a twain, two sides but coin the same,
If I've in life, must have in death my faith,
And death it is that man has lofty aim.

A journey, O thou life, infinite vast,
To be lived each day as if it's the last.

The first part starts with ten lines in the first stanza. Every stanza progressively loses two lines, ending with a couplet. Each lifespan also is supposed to reduce the journey of evolution that ends with Liberation. But as this poem seems in love with life, it continues in the second part telling life all that it is.

This ode treats life as a universe itself, a vast ocean containing a world of variety. Things might often look contradictory, but that is life.

Ode, Musings | 03.07.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

An Ode To Old Virtues

Virtue, too old a wine to be virtue,
Admired by vintners of today no more,
But modern times land it a mangled view:
Where bad boasts of new good on world-wide shore.

Surfacing up are achievers hardcore,
And eviler the better if not bolder,
Take Tiger Woods e'en when could roar no more,
For, what roars are millions in his coffer!

If he were not a manic odd man out,
Would Mark be such a Face that he's today?
Would Bollywood biggies have such a clout?
Would scandal-prone netas rule country's lay?

Get me no wrong: achievements are no mean,
They wipe not a single negative trait,
Nor success comes but to purest Brahmin,
'Tis commerce, big bucks making biggest bait.

The principle's spread to many a field:
Be it movies, business, brands, even books,
Money's the recipe, that whatso cooks,
New reputations worst of ruins rebuild.

Actors are made and unmade by last hit,
Best sellers 'lone go to make authors best,
The dough drives it all; drives vilest grit,
While old values stare in face of a man modest.

Who remembers the Mensa topper boy?
Who does not the five crore KBC1 man?
Money when sings the world dances in joy,
'Bad plus big bucks', 'pon dung-hill hoots the hen.

Let me sound no off-tune with today's time,
Purist, nihilist, nor e'en Gandhian,
But credit to the crass close is to crime,
Nor centuries of values make heaven.

But talking of values of ancient time,
See what the wise Greeks² said: Thou shouldst secure
Some income ere vouchsafing virtues pure,
Li'le lucre never once was not plum-prime.

Some go for health, power, or reach for riches,
Honours, to some touch of pleasure pleases,
And those that place in virtues their chief good³;
Values of heart all, heady attitude!

To confuse more, there came Confucius⁴
Defining what a virtue be to us:
'Gravity's one and magnanimity,
Earnestness, kindness, and sincerity.

I know why virtue as species is rare,
For, all of them at a premium are sold
Today in a world that wallows in gold
Standard, driven by market, a dark mare.

These values vouch nigh universal good,
These prayers of virtue, in quiet said,
Can conquer no world that Lao-tse laid⁵;
Directionless, confused, I tend to brood.

I dug into many an ancient text—
Mahabharata, a storehouse of lore,
Though in today's times it might lose context—
Tried and failed fixing dharma— roof and floor.

The sage Vyasa failed fully to define,
Failed too Bheeshma, his fairest character,
Man of dharma Yudhishtir, wise Vidur,
All they managed: ah, dharma is divine!

But there seems just one thing I am quite clear:
Virtues and vice be but two things, of all,
Which survive death along with human soul,
I can my virtues cheer, my vices fear!
Or in today's times, driven in fifth gear,

I should my virtues fear, my vices cheer.

1. KBC: A popular TV show kaun banega crore-pati? ,
Who would a millionaire be?
 2. Anonymous Greek saying: 'First secure an
independent income, and then practice virtue.'
 3. From what Marcus Tullius Cicero said on friendship.
 4. 'Five things constitute perfect virtue:
gravity, magnanimity, earnestness, sincerity,
and kindness.' - Confucius.
 5. 'With virtue and quietness one may conquer the
world, ' - Lao-tse: The Simple Way.
-

- Satire | 09.08.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

An Old Man's Dilemma

Fortune seems to follow age-old mould—
To fall in fortunate man's fine fold,
Yet, poets who have been
Upbeat, far too sanguine,
Favour fortune to befriend the bold.
I may pass as poet
This perception to let,
But how bold a fortune be to old?

Tongue-in-cheek | 02.10.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

An Underdog That Dares

Innerwear, for long an underdog,
From hush-hush to headlines do now hog.
Well out of the closet,
Designers do them set,
Supermen swimmers dive, sprinters jog,
And the rest watch agog!
Models may have the flair,
Flesh to flaunt, wear and dare
With a stand-alone piece,
But whilst bare bodies dare,
The rest are left to stare,
If not, give it a miss.

Innerwear of varied nomenclature, were mostly underdogs till recently, not talked about in public. Private laundry baskets were always dried discretely, and were available only in one colour— any shade as long as it is white. But they are now flaunted in public, though no one except Superman wears it over the outer garment. Times sure are a changing.

Happenings | 09.08.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Anatomy Of Pain

An arrow hits to hurt, felt by brain,
And feelings are then felt of some pain.
Rage, revenge when follow
Oh like one more arrow,
Suffering is then gained in bargain.
Soon enough goes the hurt,
Pain once gone won't revert,
But nurtured, suffering does remain.
Flesh forgets pretty soon,
To forgive be thine boon.
If only you let in cooling rain.

Reflections | 07.09.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

And Buddy Came From Butty

A twain of mates as were Jeff and Mutt,
Buddy from butty was sliced and cut:
There once were two mine hands,
Close as bum chummy friends,
Blasting mines together butt-to-butt!

A pair of mine workers that always worked together in
risky mine assignments— as if butt to butt— were called
'butty'. The word buddy was derived from this.

- The ways with words| 04.10.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

And Colder Felt The Chill

Amid clamour that night and din,
The clout coffin scandal when claimed,
We shuddered with the stench of sin,
Those in snow were ash grey and shamed.

In sullied caskets feeling ill
Sat still, stunned with a shocked surprise
Robbed of valour, of battle will,
They frost bitten, battered but wise.

Those done to death but not wood-bound,
Peered out from their ash-covered face,
No less shocked and surprised, yet sound
And regained gallons of gallant grace,

To ponder on greed, fractured oath
Of those with and without power-chair,
Yet hungry of power and pelf both
To grab in greed in shameless dare.

And this being business of old,
Let us not lose our lasting rest
To worry whence we have no hold,
But get blest on what we do best.

Yea, lose not your well-deserved sleep,
None can their dark taints sanguine paint,
Let Judgment Day come, said a saint,
They too their karmic crop shall reap.

But we still wondered deep within:
Would those wanton souls saner be?
So wrapped up in a life of sin,
Would they vainness of dark deeds see?

So, there was still a nagging doubt
If sacrifice ours was in vain,
All our proud work, upright and stout,
For all blood spilled, all suffered pain.

And whilst we did wonder some more
The clamour did carry on still,
Piercing hearts' ashen grey core,
And colder felt the nightly chill.

Some time back there was a 'Coffin Scandal'. This poem takes off from it and depicts a dialogue between the departed souls of dead soldiers (war with Pakistan in snowy wilderness) and sentinels of life after: Was their sacrifice in vain?

Satire | 06.08.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

And Death Lingers On

In a twisted frame death lingers alive,
Pale rotting teeth ensconced in sunken jaw,
Nails crooked, bent inward like a clenched palm,
Death kept at bay by food forced on unwilling maw.

In hospital no better than a jail,
Hell to her might be better all the same,
For forty years oh ever since that night,
Violated she was when in inhuman shame.

Body it was mauled ere, now it's her mind
Locked in an unlocked room lacking sunlight,
She sure lives— like a shrunken grey brinjal,
Vegetables at least suffer no mental plight.

Freedom's what she's denied— a basic right,
Intruding tests to know her mental state,
Life's dignity—of which whatso is left,
Her only freedom— destiny's last date.

A friend fights battle lone— freedom to die,
Challenging letters of law mighty tall:
Defining what life is, what dignity,
What's freedom to live sans freedom to die at all?

She'd like naught better than in peace to die—
And die ere more dignity is denied,
Far from inhospitable pale prison,
Yet, sustained she's by liquid of life force-applied.

No one indeed be if that's no prison,
Far better off be one sentenced for life,
Her tormentor was jailed just for seven,
For no crime at all should she be punished so rife?

Where wisdom wears white wigs under black robes,
Blind folded where they see, nor hearken well,
Not oft does Fair Lady find eyes and ears,
Lo, lost in letters of law, justice rings no bell.

There are those that in mercy wish to die,
Wear new garments to start life once again,
Resignedly awaiting ropes some lie,
Life's none sans death as pleasure pales sans pain.

She was a young nurse in Mumbai's KEM hospital. One night in 1974, she was brutalised by a sweeper in the hospital's bare basement and strangled with a dog chain. Ever since she lives like a vegetable, artificially sustained by forced feeding hurtled down her unwilling throat. Her friend, a journalist, who has been fighting for her rights, brought her case to light. In defence she asked justice to define 'life of dignity', courts appointed a panel of doctors whose report being too technical, vague and verbose, the court had to ask for an intelligible version. But, we often lack the virtue of brevity, clarity, and time. And while the courts decide she has been suffering mutely. She needs closure of her case more than debate on euthanasia. Besides, death is a friend and a liberator especially when life so smothered is no more life.

This piece is set in iambic pentameter. The fourth line of each quatrain is two syllables longer (hexameter) , echoing the underlying mood of the poem—lingering death. Read also, *In search of dignity* (04.03.11) .

Happenings | 10.02.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

And I Am Searching You E'er Since

I still recall that fateful day you came
Into our life—a day o'er three decades
Old, but still fresh in this mind filled with blame,
The memory so deep it never fades;
And I well understand you were upset—
Upset that I was not there to take you
In my proud arms, fond eyes and feelings wet,
I too no less than you that sad day rue.

I know you scarce had time even to cry,
Nor wait for me many a mile apart,
And with your ma deep in induced sleep nigh,
You left soon as came that day, broken heart,
To leave us for a sterile life-long search
For you, ye for a more welcoming perch!

- Sonnets | 10.12 08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

And I Know You From A Mile

Your bewitching smile
Stored is in mind's file,
And I know you from a mile.

Haiku | 07.09.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

And It Reminds Me Of Thief

All life in awe was I of poetry—
A rare flower that few can fetch,
Or sour grapes from a far to envy,
I stretched and stretched, could not catch.
But tried still, turning in a few lines,
Like fishing it looked in a fancied field,
Using my twisted, tattered fishnet twines
From a farm pond I hoped to get fair yield.
And it reminded of a thief,
When caught was I metaphor-mixing,
Or call it figure-o-speech-fudging,
I too worried was of what if.
A scare it was if not a warning,
Which, o for long continued to ring.

Strung together a few feathered words,
Settled down in lines set to metre,
Menagerie of a few pet birds,
It made me feel like a creator.
It's fine; a fair jury too faces jeers,
I reasoned, resting with my false airs,
And felt like a fowl finding feet,
A fledgling priming her raw wings
Ere soaring, unknown blues to greet,
Even a bulbul takes time ere sings.
And sharper gets an oft-used pen,
And wings are born one day to soar,
Soar high, unknown skies to explore,
So does a boy become a man.

And then I think of my big bro,
Nigh too proud of my patchy pen
Gave me a laptop that I grow,
Books on verses for me to fan;
Since then, ten harvest moons I've seen
Putting to pen whatso I fancied,
Unlearning what dear to me had been,
Try and forget what ere was envied.
And yet, whenso my pen gets read,

Comes clear that motif of a thief,
Etched somewhat firmly with relief,
Or me all bare, a stitch nor thread,
And oh filled up am I with dread,
Frantic that looks for a fig leaf!

I remember | 01.03.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

And Rage Is No Rage

Yea, I am no sage,
But whenso I suffer rage,
I watch its image
On my mind screen's open page,
And rage is no rage.

Senryu | 53.01.2019 |

Aniruddha Pathak

And Silence Said It All

His eyes saw no more than her faint presence,
It was as if the past no more did matter,
Their future had held little in its platter,
And warm lips froze with a smile bathed silence!
Talking were they the tongue of reticence,
Where words were wafted by mute voice, not lung,
Deciphered by two loving birds at once,
It sounded like a song serenely sung.

The language of love is voiced less, more sung,
Vibrates, touches deep unknown depth to seek,
Known from evolution's earliest rung,
A dance of life in search of its lost peak!
Today the end seemed of his life's sole search,
Hers too, both were in look for life's new perch.

Two lovers
meet after a long agonising time. They have many things to tell each other:
complaints, frustrations, how they weathered their long wait. But the joy that
they met overwhelms them, and then nothing but the sound of silence survives.

Sonnets | 01.12.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

And The Scare-Crow Is Scared

What would befall birds, me not there?
Hope, they endure despite my dare.
Grass nor corns, what would locusts eat?
Worried ill, a scare-crow felt scared.
Trees no more green and fruits too rare,
What if grains for wings are not spared?
Their bruises might in due time heal,
I doubt if this famine-caused scare.
Fains would I know if it is fair—
Innocent wings to scare— not care.
Forest of feelings getting grey,
Would their love still be green as ere?
Hope, this mute life's blessed with courage,
Courage this famine time to bear.

Musings | 9.10.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

And Then Came The Denouement

And then came the denouement

Not how my poem was rated,
I did find it was recorded
By machine, and was being read—
Like a car moving in one gear!
Yet, pleasant still it was to hear,
If not by readers, machine read.

I listened well without a let
Till came sonnet ending couplet,
And what was just an underscore,
I wish it were en core, en core!

A budding poet had placed some of his poems on a poetry website, which added an audio to some of the poems. A machine voice read them. A line drawn with underscores to it was only a series of underscores, which gets read faithfully. He, a dreamer, hears it as en core, en core!

Humour | 24.03.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

And Then Stupor Takes Over

You might perchance think: why this change of face,
But things do change. Notso be from change free.
Give me one chance; he pleaded, just one grace;
Unable to think of life without me,
He came up with this time-tested a plea:
Time changes and I'd too— for my own sake.
Look, my life's a golf ball hanging on tee,
And agreed I, not sure though what it'd take.
The life when lurks on point of no return,
Oft turns, prodded by head, much less by heart,
Nor yet knows what it wants, nor where to turn,
And my life had become oh a push cart.
You get when frozen snow sinks down lower,
Chilly frost's felt and stupor takes over.

Sonnets | 02.11.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

And When I've Gone

Here was he set to flame, a big hash
And half-wit, now consigned to grey ash
Spare tears, all the ho-hum,
Gone hast he as had come,
Lifetime of fruits to fetch, right with rash!

If man's born to burn, smoulder all life—
Let this fire of last pyre be no strife.
Death's to lose the dross left,
Life's remnant, warp with weft,
And whatso spared be by surgeon's knife.

These two limericks are self epithets. And my wish is expressed in the second:
Let a surgeon take away whatso he deems fit for medical use.

Musings | 04.11.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Antique Is Still An Asset

Like a gold coin, if not, gilded
I once was a valued asset,
In currency and well traded;

But now, a loose change, rotated,
With down-the-hill sliding a fate,
Far from being highly rated;

Often below the face value,
One with a close expiry date,
Blood no more rated royal blue;

Depreciated as asset,
Value on a-written-down fate,
Yet, is not antique an asset?

Old is gold, no vain whim of pen,
And though facing an exit gate,
The old is not like dung-hill hen.

Tongue-in-cheek | 01.07.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Ardent Does Call The Spring

The news came, weight as if of a dead stone,
Heavy upon my weary worried breast,
Though I half awaited the shocking phone,
The after-shocks were far still from modest.
My worries were for the unmapped morrows—
How to mute old memories from outrage,
How to soften my traumatised soul's woes,
Challenge it was turning off life's old page.

When spring ardent does call with bees and birds
As they say, life aught be lived as unfolds,
As sympathies can't go far, nor kind words,
Life has to look for alter fit for moulds,
And like a quench-less sandy desert land,
I readily picked up a helping hand.

Sonnets | 11.07.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Art Is No Milch Cow

What if Mona Lisa's treated like corn?
In multiple forms made and marketed,
From one of a kind and mysterious born,
That steals a wondrous heart and turns keen head.
Imagine several shades of dull grey,
Epics that go on, never showing ends,
A race ran in endless rounds of relay,
A bouquet that brags big till blossom bends.
Art's art but if captured in compact space,
And least if stretched on and on till it yawns,
Nor if fattened in self-love, lacking grace,
Nor o'er-Indulged like wild-grown garden lawns;
 Art's no cow milked and marketed to death,
The mysterious is mapped not in one breath.

Aniruddha Pathak

As Flower Pulls With Perfume

He pulled me to him
As flower pulls with perfume,
My vibes had new vim.

This one is among four Haikus on Guru.

Haikus | 11.07.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

As Rains Recede

Rains would come, recede,
Wet earth's fragrant air
I hope rub on my poems.

Haiku | 15.02.2017|

Aniruddha Pathak

As Time Turns Its Page

Like an angered sage
Cold winds rage over brown leaves
That'd fall anyway,
The tree laughs at this vain rage,
As time turns its page.

Senryu | 06.01.2019 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Ass, U And Me

Assumptions he had far too many,
On which he verified none any,
And still lived— by them led,
That a fool of him made,
A strange power 'assume' has uncanny.
For proof, look at its anatomy—
See letters therein laid,
Of three words is it made—
ASSUME makes an ASS of U and ME!

'But I thought...' we often hear these words from many, defending acts of omission and commission based on mere assumptions. This ditty (in anapaest meter)warns.

Tongue-in-cheek | 05.03.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

At Home With Humdrum

If much of our life's laid to humdrum world,
To waste are rendered when simplest of joys,
What matters not be when nature's rare poise,
Innocent, pure pleasures pass by unfurled—
Beauty of dawns, dusks, daises decked in dew,
Hills and dales crying for our company,
A gentle cool breeze not getting her due,
Goes unheralded when birds' symphony,
Sea baring breasts to embrace silver moon,
The raw passion of a rising river,
Clouds playing with stars, joy to deliver,
Seasons when change, sun at cool wintry noon.

Yet man, at home with humdrum, life's leisures,
Blind tends to be to nature's pure pleasures.

Sonnets | 05.04.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

At Sixty Four

When freedom falters, reels under assault,
Even at sixty four we hardly walk,
Sixty four and still way behind the clock,
Sixty four and faulty things we can't halt.

We call us free, but live by others led,
Others dictate what be watched, what be read;
Our views subdued and have to be guarded,
And pay heavy price baking our own bread.

We have pizzas parcelled home hot at once—
But wait for hours ere comes home ambulance,
And once at hospital everyone shuns,
For, a patient must have immense patience.

Car loans easier and quicker can come,
Study loans— stiff rates for any a sum;
And easy comes a reserved quota seat,
That seldom can merit-listed names beat.

Multiplex, malls rise in less than a year,
Roads and bridges are built in slowest gear;
Lemon juice is flavoured artificial,
Dish-wash liquids claim they have it real.

Easy we spend small fortunes on house rents,
But still have no space for the old parents—
For, leaving aside things that be the best,
We copy basal things 'las from the West.

A menial hand abroad when dollar-paid
Sneeze at blue-collars here as infra grade;
For, once selling at mighty Dollar's par,
The Rupee is now left behind and far.

But we follow the western wisdom still
Designed and deigned to defend self interest,
Whilst we play polls from atop a tall hill,
The country comes last from this lofty crest.

Our first few words oft at a road-rage slam
Scarce are 'sorry', but 'do ye know who I'm? '
We are gaga on grand tours overseas,
But local spots languish as 'no, no please'.

We keep voting varied faces unfair,
Whilst the fair and honest poorly do fare;
We talk of art and culture sans refrain,
But throw out made-at-home MF Hussain.

Marriages we claim are heavenly made,
But two in love, alien caste, we behead;
Prohibition's still a favourite pet,
And 'dry islands' beat records of the wet.

Female forms worshipped are with fervent faith,
Mothers, goddesses placed are under dome,
Whilst still get second-class status at home,
And daughters still at birth are done to death.

Immoral politicians still endure—
To some even fodder has a great lure,
What they stand for hardly much heft carry,
Even Gandhi's words and deeds they bury.

Civil servants, servants nor yet civil,
Play dons, but dance on minister's vile will;
Being late at work is never a crime,
But privilege is virtue all so prime.

At sixty four if not yet liberate,
Fifteenth August can be any a date,
Not an august day to rededicate,
A date perhaps to blame us for our fate!

For, are we not a party to all this?
Let's blame us for a place in world to miss;
A nation gets grey rulers it deserves,
Get leaders that add to their rotund curves.

Magic of India people's wisdom is,

Celebration of freedom, if ye please,
If what at stake is to us precious,
Let's with our soul's spirit lift our status.

On 15th August, Satire | 04.08.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

At The Late Evening Of Life

Two sons, one lived across the continents,
One, visits her rarer than a Blue Moon—
With guilt-edged gifts to soothe rustled up guilt,
Or perhaps quid pro for their lack of time;
Another next-door close, and too far still,
Cared for money more than his mother,
Parents he felt a needless burden were,
And incongruent with spirit of time,
He's out to sell her memories-filled house,
And place her in care of an old age home.

Both too well knew what their mother wanted:
The one— far-off— hoped, she'd appreciate
That he can't be home more often than now,
Both felt, their compulsions were dyed in red.
Their visits soon dried up like a river
Tied up with dams and much irrigated,
Her own concerns remained confined to her,
And left to fend for her fate long fated,
She aged as never ere to wipe her tears.
Age is no child of time, but faulting years.

Time was, not in a far off horizon,
When children piled on mother's ample bed,
Evening sun sliding through slotted windows,
She a rare focal point of their young life—
Childish cares, complaints, concerns, bed-time tales,
But that seemed like ancient time too far gone,
No use she thought hankering for spent time,
Now reduced to fragile vague memories!
Soon an old age home was lined up for her.
Neighbouring souls shook heads. Poor she, what fate!

It was of little practical use still,
For, no one had the time to intervene.
She was even taken there for a feel,
Perhaps to make the future shock nigh lean;
An old inmate showed her expensive shawl
Her son had sent, which, as a parcel came,

With a telegram-like note that was all;
Her wrinkled fingers on shawl, but what shame!
As she tried hard her hurt feelings to hide,
Best gift is time, she seemed to say as cried.

Time was when rich was her fabric of life,
But on this late evening, life's rife with strife!

Happenings | 08.03.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Autumn's Visiting Card

And a brown leaf fell—
A card that announced:
Autumn had arrived.

Haiku | 15.12.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Awaiting Dream

From windows of my eyes half alive,
And wet with memories grey but good,
Mangled now and tinged with solitude,
I waited for my dreams to arrive.
Somewhat shy and no less meek of will,
I've put a paradise with the feel
Of my heart, wherein I've now planted
Fresh, sweet-smelling, soothing memories,
And await now a new fragrant breeze
To waft in life uninterrupted;
And in hope await that dream of dream
Along with early dawn to arise
Well before the sun wakes up my eyes—
And I hope my dream be no more grim.

In anapaest meter

Musings | 14.02.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Bad Maketh News

Look the lead pages; look all dailies—
A storehouse of sordid stink and sleaze,
Competing each to each,
Racing, rare heights to reach,
World as if caught with viral disease!

Only bad news makes news nowadays. From dog biting dog, to dog biting man,
to man biting dog be the news we read these days. People do need excitement,
but they need inspiration more. And good things do happen.

Happenings | 03.04.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Bake Cake, But Be Happy With Bread

I was once told life is made or unmade
Not on what cards the fate from afar lays
Upon man's lap, but on how well he plays,
On what happens not on acts of heavens,
But more on what he does to what happens;
That, destiny's a lazy man's charade.

Assured, I set off life's combats to win,
And just let go my life but by me led,
Playing the game of life— with cards dealt in,
Yet, wanting cake to bake, was left with bread
That oft was under baked or over burnt,
And life's lessons largely remained unlearnt.
Life's to be happy with bread, baking cake,
And know how most from given cards to make.

Sonnets | 03.02.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Ban All Banishment

Books banned banished not get, nor burnt lie burnt,
Beacons from brain confined scarce be to jail,
Art censored scarce so stays, remains on hunt,
As all inquests condemned are to derail.
Societies left free to function or fail,
At times tense in dissent and friction-prone,
Like ocean caught by turbulence of gale,
It's proof, freedom fairs fair, if left alone.

No art is obscene, books nor paintings drawn,
As does all beauty, obscenity lies
In a beholder's eye; seeds that are sown
And most minds scarce from basal level rise.
It's hard for a bailiff better to see
O than that shown by sheriff's attorney.

Much of intolerance seen in India and elsewhere seems deliberate. Take the recent ban on Salman Rushdie on attending a Lit Fest in Jaipur. Take the court cases on the well-known painter M F Hussein, who had to stay away from his country of birth till he died in London a few months back; take Taslima Nasreen of Bangladesh being driven out of West Bengal; take banning of books, paintings, and movies, even historical essays. But have they remained banned? What is banned seldom becomes banal. If anything, the book becomes better known, if not a best seller. The way out is indicated in the couplet concluding this Sonnet.

Sonnets | 05.01.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Bananas To Keep Gold Lure At Bay

Bananas, time-ticked traditional way,
That came, Customs to bale,
Laxatives did when fail.
If an apple keeps doctors away,
The lay fruit, lo, keeps gold lure at bay.

Nine smugglers who flew in from Malaysia had earlier ingested
89 gold biscuits, and Customs forced them to give up their
stash. The doctors when called in failed, failed when sundry
laxatives, they tried plain old bananas. And lo and behold,
the fruits of their labour were gleaming!

- Happenings | 06.06.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Bare Innocence

Wish I get reborn in your heart,
Would ye spare me a little space?
I assure I'd be me apart,
And try my best, lose my old face.
It's our love that gives me the nerve
To ask, my life is at mid sea,
You might feel, scarce do I deserve,
Yet, give me chance to deal with me.
Else, let me throw in my towel,
You'll see how bared innocence spell.

Tongue-in-cheek | 01.10.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Be Careful O Man

Careful O man, too meagre be the life,
No better chance you've than a greying leaf
Soon as it falls turns into dust beneath.

Man, be thou wary, fleeting be the life,
Look at that dewdrop dangling on a blade
Of grass, thine life no more is lofty made.

Know thou no higher is held human life,
O dwell on these bubbles barely afloat,
Mankind no special kind, gets no life boat.

Beware, life's precious and time flies fleeting,
A long way to go, little time ahead,
To undo ills callously committed.

Be vigilant and watchful all the while,
Panic not still, each soul gets a fair chance,
O to make most whilst destiny may dance.

A lot there's if you care, a lot ye can,
Human birth's rare; the next could still be brief—
A bubble born to bust, dew-drop, or leaf!

Be careful treading last lap of thine race,
Should ye wish this one to be nigh sunny,
Begin now; better late than none any.

Musings | 01.08.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Be From False Mercy Free

If pain there's in love, be from such love free,
'Fulcrum I'm of all', be from such whims free.
Both yes and no do bind— to near and dear,
Be from fens of anticipations free.
Sticking to which whatso makes little sense,
Be from dos and don'ts, rules and reins free.
Malls, golden dreams sparkle in be-robbed eyes,
Be from such glares, mirages and mires free.
From all ostrich-like fears, crocodile tears,
Face life's truth, be from false truth free.
They often wearing heart on sleeves meet us,
Be from sentimental ho hums free.
If thou hast not met thee at soul's leisure,
Be from lay faiths and false mercy free.

Free translation of a Gujarati poem by Mahendra Joshi,
titled, mukta thai j@.

- Ghazal | 02.01.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Be My Guest O Death

Books of life never are fully writ,
Cosmic egg comes with blank space unlit,
Come O death if ye must,
Ready am I if just,
We have an old custom, guests to greet.

Reflections | 04.09.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Be Thou Guru Thine Own

Guru's words go till gate,
Scriptures meet the same fate.
'Go thence whence greats have gone,
'Tread what they have trodden',
Holy books for years hail,
But great tail's what we tail.

There's no dearth of such souls,
Nor yet of given goals,
Gurus gather their grade
Multi-millions get made,
One such man¹ when he said,
Be thou self-made, self-led.

To his words we gloated,
And many made a grade,
But Buddha too had said
The same thing I'm afraid,
But he'd no millions made,
And here I end with dread!

One such man¹: Steve Job of Apple

Musings | 10.08.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Be Thou Thine Judge

Time was spirit of law when mattered more
Over legal merit, letters of laws,
Now crowned and honoured as key legal lore,
The spirit seems crushed under legal jaws.

Time to lift justice from these jaws of print
To keep its soul's spirit truly alive,
Legal print's but a vehicle to arrive—
A dimple may charm, but is still a dent.

O white wigs of wisdom donning dark robe,
Should ye be rich storehouse of mere letters?
A true test is to dig under to probe,
Much less letters of laws, spirit matters.

A fig leaf is not much of a garment
Oft sullied by overuse indiscreet,
Leave aside too heady an argument,
And better look for the matter's clay feet.

And let a free opinion flow, Milord,
The respect rendered is to the high chair
Ye warm, and to robe ye happen to wear,
The bow's to thine title, to legal rod.

Let a thousand opinions freely bloom,
Pray play down on that breach of privilege,
Many a warp and woof vie in a loom,
But then a cloth's woven lasting long age.

If legal fibre's loaded with delays
The remedies have to be looked within,
The load accumulated clearly says,
Justice delayed gets no robust, but lean.

Be thou thine judge; justice is more an art
Its body built by head, soul comes from heart.

Reflections | 01.05.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Be Thy Own Light

In many a scripture I read,
Divergent delve the varied views,
The world's wise various in their creed,
Enough this wisdom weighs me to confuse.
Hindu monks choose saffron to wear,
The Buddhists come in their yellow,
All-white is what Jainis¹ prefer,
And some wear none but their halo,
All contrive to clot my keen mind.
Whose word of wisdom to follow?
Who can help me heaven to find?
Who, my here-aft, or whereso we go?
 Not else than thine atman within,
 And be thou thine own light serene.

Jainis¹: The sect called shvet&bar wears white robes. The other called diga&bar believes that the dimensions represent their garments and wear nothing.

Anand was Buddha's closest disciple. Seeing Buddha breathing his last to leave the world, he felt a void without his guru's guiding spirit. It is then that Buddha uttered his last words: 'O be thou thine own light.' It is said that Anand contemplated on these words and realised true knowledge within 24 hours of Buddha's death.

- Sonnets | 22.08.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Beauty

Some say, beauty is but an opinion
Wrapped in wafer thin layers like onion,
Had it been heftier a fact,
It would be e'er the more perfect;
Berthed in beholder's bias'd eyes it lies,
To say naught of the holder's eyes;
Yet, light it is that eyes emit,
And heart the fount be to credit,
No wonder a winsome face looks the best
Hovers when beauty's heart o'er crest;
If or not be it a mere opinion
Discarded as if layers of onion,
And yet, a layer no less onion is,
As man is known by opinions of his!

- Tongue-in-cheek | 02.09.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Beauty, Beholder's Pleasure

If superficial, shallow and skin deep,
Beauty, as beauty buffs might well say, lies
But in a beholder's regarding eyes,
But can it from a shallow surface leap?
It's known to glow and gleam from deep within,
Emanating from holder's feeling heart,
And a thing seldom is of visual art,
A child of heart, beauty's more felt than seen.

Fine, fine but how many Helens you think
You give to me, be they from head or heart?
Well as a beholder let me not blink,
'With Helens' filled your every square-inch part,
'Yet, Helens seldom be your sole measure,
'You're a beholder's heart-full of pleasure'.

Millihelens1: As beauty is often graded— 1000 of them making one Helen, the unit of Helen being fashioned after Helen of Troy believed to be the most stirring beauty ever to have walked on this globe. In the octave of this sonnet, a husband talks about what beauty is. In the sestet the lady wants to know what he thinks about her beauty, and there is a political answer.

Sonnets | 04.02.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Beauty, If There's Beast

We all hail flower's beauty,
Thorn's duty the least,
And no'ne feels guilty.

...

Hate for hideous face,
No thought for fine grace,
But beauty be if there's beast.

Haikus | 04.03.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Before And After

Eons ere, there was space nor yet time,
There was reason to be, nor yet rhyme,
Before nor was there after,
Moment, and there was laughter—
Big Bang and Byzantine world sublime!
And one day there might be another
From nuclear stockpile's huge reservoir,
And from 'nought' would again tick the Time.

Reflections | 02.01.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Before The Day Is Done

Thought, let me my pockets check,
Check, things done and not, day on deck.

Let me check today's to-do list,
Let me miss not even the least,
In time to reinforce the bank,
Let me on my day's duties back.

Let me debit whatso I've lost,
See, mistakes made no more me cost.
Let me the depths of my mind wrack,
Let me go thru my duties' deck.

My grief and regrets on credit,
My happiness on the debit,
And then let me both of them check,
Before the day's done, ere I pack.

Lest, no promise is left in lurch,
The hurts imparted, left me search,
Let me all the entries made check,
Before the day's done, ere I pack.

Translation of a poem titled
???? - Poem by Devanshu Patel

Translation | 50.02.2019 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Before You Leave

You're not here to live like a guest,
Much less still, live a life as pest,
Think of it as your home and hearth,
Leave it in perfect shape well worth,
All alive and as it was ere,
If possible fully fragrant,
Why not a new sapling plant?
—For those yet to arrive, those there,
The least you do, O men in haste,
It is to have a thought on waste.

Musings | 11.01.17 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Being

Sunday meseems a state be of being,
Resting and retiring from all chasing¹,
Away from fruit-seeking doing,
Yonder the bounds of becoming.

A dress rehearsal ere retiring to forest²,
Learning to do without mundane joys³,
A day of rectitude and rest,
Listening to the inner voice.

To reflect on how the journey has been,
And if needed correcting course,
Listening to the voice within,
Letting the heart to head endorse.

The day ends up still all the more loaded,
For ruled `tis by the worldly winded head.

-
1. Somewhat similar to Jewish Sabbath, Sunday is the end of a week of work and devoted to resting, retiring from it all, learning, and reinventing.
 2. Retiring to forest: In olden days among the four phases of life, this was the third called vana-prasthashrama. The present-day retiring that we have is called here a dress rehearsal.

The life that a 'modern' man is living is too much oriented to becoming. And we all find it hard to escape from it all, if only temporarily. But one needs to try—trying to recharge, if nothing else, his low and lethargic batteries. But we often end up making the Sunday all the more loaded with activity, pursuing this or that. If only we halt, take a deep breath, think, and reconfigure our life a little differently. to look within, and feel the bliss of the Self; the joys of simply being.

- Sonnets | 09.06.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Belief Born Of Conjugal Bed

If I love you no more on morrow's date,
Would you still be indulgent to me, dear?
I ask, for, comes from same mint love and hate,
Reality is not what may appear.

Now that you know the truth let me this say:
Material things in world, alive and not,
Mere gossamer clouds are in a strange way,
An atom, you know, is an empty blot.

So, you and I as all, of atoms made,
Scarce are there in this world that's seldom there!
Is anything real out there as you said?
If there is, I'd never know to be fair.

Your doubt cast in if, born be of belief,
Unreal, it falls off mind like an old leaf.

Sonnets |06.11.2017|

Aniruddha Pathak

Better Check Your Heart

My eyes saw her face with utter delight,
Ears heard her singing that mighty did please,
My head nodded in passion's speeding flight,
Her ways and wit to reason were fresh breeze,
And heart as always apprehensive is.

She was mine, mind felt in utter fancy,
And felt humour would help me her to win,
My ego's false air felt, she aught be keen,
In conceit thought in fact she was at sea,
That dying she was my heart's gold to see.

But heaven did conspire to work against,
And everything contrived to scorn our love,
Hell laboured hard in a virtual heist
Forcing me in folly awkward to move,
And things broke down despite our mutual best.

When all ended my heart was left to grieve,
My wit and wisdom whilst sulked— still unbent,
Will wilted in defeat as to deceive,
My mind's eyes lost inner light they oft lent,
Discretion lost the sense of fair moment.

In matters such as this— of heart, not art,
Rid too many cooks, hail and heed your heart.

Tongue-in-cheek | 18.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Beware Of Gigo

And talking of man's old habits,
On number one comes what he eats.
Yet, what goes in is no big evil,
It is what he eats and feels ill.
Some insist on sensible food,
Weigh what to eat, what not, and how,
Some say food is bad nor yet good,
And eat whatso will for a wow.

Yet, while the world suffers from doubt,
Know, what's-gorged-is-what-ye-get—
WIGIWYG, no computer pet,
It is garbage-in-garbage-out.
Tummies may have been made so stout,
But quality still has some clout.

Sonnets | 05.12.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Birds Bring Me Relief

Life brings sorrows if,
Birds bring me relief,
If only not brief!

Haiku | 34.02.2019 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Blest Be To Earn Your Pardon

My green mood-maker e'er— no grief touched him,
Bringer of breeze— of good days wafting near,
Who the heart had my wails of woes to hear,
Whose visits howso brief be my life's dream;
And this time too I was looking forward
To meeting, talking to him, feeling light,
Excited, eager, fleeting like a bird,
In plight still, li'le could I sleep the long night;
Yet, came the breeze, passed by, not a leaf moved,
He came to town and left— not meeting me,
And I knew not how much or if he loved.
O deep sea, let no cloak in closet be,
Nor live nor can I die, huge be this burden,
O let me know; I'd blest feel to earn pardon.

- Sonnets | 01.09.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Blind Faith And Doubting Toms

Leading a herd of 'sheep' he comes,
A shawl may hang from his shoulder,
He thinks he's virtue's sole upholder,
Old refrains, much chewed stuff he hums:
It helps to doubt not what is said,
Questioning may help you not,
Nor thinking a heretic thought,
Wavering mind sits on devil's head,
Invest in me your trust, cultivate faith,
To think otherwise worst is than death;
God in me speaks truth ultimate,
Sin it is doubting guru's word—
A sure way to heavenly world,
So, gather up to feather your fate.

He cares little for a thinking mind,
Nor yet for an intellectual,
He prefers a pilgrim perpetual—
A trailing sheep trudging behind;
And creates unquestioning clones
Upon a garden path to lead,
Ensures, all sheep the same path tread,
A guru's glory goes by sheep he owns.
But it's soul that guides man to grow,
Followers like sheep scarce would know,
Nor know, ignorance by such men is spread—
He knows, they butter their ashram's bread;
'Follow me after-life to enjoy,
'Beware, doubting Toms self-destroy'.

In Bhagavad-Gita, Krishna told Arjun: I've taught you what the truth is. Ponder over and whatso ye wish do. But most of us hardly remember this. More often we keep in mind what Krishna said: the faithless doubting souls shall get destroyed. And this is what is exploited by many a god-man today.

Reflections | 03.07.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Boardroom Is No Bedroom

A bride sure deserves a goodly groom,
Yet, boardroom can't boil down to bedroom.
Compel, coerce or force
And kill a willing horse,
Quota comes, quality leaves the room,
Compulsion causes pores
Whence water leaks and pours,
Beware there's enough of merit's doom.

SEBI has directed that from April this year companies listed on the Indian stock markets must enlist at least one woman director. This means we have not learnt what quota system has done to quality in education, competition, and productivity. This provision might force promoters to place their relatives on the board. This also might devalue women achievers. It might be better to give indirect incentives to companies to promote this good cause.

Happenings | 02.04.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Bogeyman

My school tutored me when
To care much as I can—
Beware of a bogeyman.
Yet, wondering as to why
Most of my life still went by,
Me not yet wiser of why!

Old, and fiddling with golf,
Grudging one over par,
Winked once a twinkling star:
Bogeyman's one that cries wolf!

Humour | 02.09.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Boot Polish, Ego Maalish1

Gone for long has white man's much-longed crown,
Yet, skin's all that has changed— to now brown,
The servile do now wish
Big ego's to polish,
O to bend backward, browed bare by frown.

maalish1: Hindi, meaning massage.

As the legend goes, Sir Walter Raleigh gallantly spread his cape over a puddle for Queen Elizabeth to cross. In India of today, his tribe has prospered and multiplied, proving that chivalry (read, servility) is far from dead. Take this personal security officer of a Chief Minister of UP, a stern woman. Seeing her soiled shoes, he whipped out kerchief polishing the dirt off. Sycophants are still prone to bend backward and down.

Happenings | 07.02.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Born To Beget Only Blame

It frustrates: world belongs to flowers,
Flowers at helm ever since time was tamed,
Poor thorns seem to fume at their hellish curse.
It's not fair that we thorns be always blamed,
And they decide henceforth this ill to fight,
Let's first see who causes our life-long plight.

Poetic pens that should have better known—
They the yellow prejudice spread, who else?
Their burden seems: if loving care is shown,
Flowers blossom into charming rare spells,
But thorns are thorns and ever shall show corns,
Born are they but to harm, thorns hardy horns.

Rose to them rose remains by any name,
Short sighted, poets see our spikes, not aim.

Thorns suffer and bear everyone's hate. Protecting flowers they still earn bad name. People see their face and blame follows. Who's got time to go deeper than face? Thorns complain here. And poets pen emotional stuff far from facts.

Sonnets | 04.10.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Born Too Late For Today's Times

An aging odd pea in a greying pod,
He grew old blaming each passing season,
Frowned on things not meeting his whimsy nod,
And vouched for vague, frivolous a reason.

If things were cool, cosy, comfortable,
He'd wish they were a wee-bit warmer still;
In a climate heavenly sent, stable,
He was wont to find faults of flimsy ill.

A child he was more of chaff than good grain,
This man known around town as Subba Rao,
Unable to live happy with his now
And here of life, whose past perhaps was pain.

To feel sorry perhaps he was here born,
In constant complaint of the world unfair,
Keen to fly first flight to escape this morn,
To leave behind all wicked days of ere,

To time-travel to golden days of old—
When all wears were spot-less white, all so right,
The milieu mashed to his maudlin delight,
The time when wore glowing garments of gold.

He loathed today's o'er gutsy girls and guys—
Rebellious, too risqué, rowdy their romance;
Things not tied to his tether were unwise
To him, and looked like loud and lurid dance.

Classical south alone would pass his muster,
And matching old music again from south,
All else lacking rhythm was so much bluster,
To him all mod ways were rather uncouth.

His look of content yearned still what was not,
Rejecting things well within his slim grasp,
He dreamt of whatso his fond fancy caught,
Some vague and wild blossoms he wished to clasp.

He hated wealth, but wealth was what he sought,
And sure enough felt frustrate without it,
Pure gold should garnish every life, he thought,
He cherished hopes one day bull's eye to hit.

It looked as if shorn of luck born he was
Too late, in a wrong place and at wrong time,
Where everything clashed with his tinkered cause,
His life's lyrics were in rhythm, nor rhyme.

Some blokes refuse to blend with passing stripes,
And fuse seamless with prevailing spirit;
Subba Rao was no crime for all his gripes—
The problem was perhaps that of a fit!

Subba Rao was a kind we oft come across anywhere in India, as I did— one that lives almost exclusively in the past; one constantly in quarrel with all things of prevailing times. He was mired in contradictions and conflicts.

Musings | 07.08.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Bottles, Birth To Earth

From milk bottle at birth
To bottles for life's mirth,
Holy Ganges water
When the life's on totter,
Bottles till time to get mixed with earth!

Reflections | 01.12.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Brahman

Womb of life born and not yet born,
That, which cause of creation was,
And what destruction may still cause,
What 'oneness is all there is', tells,
Whatso that any which where dwells,
What darkling night is and still dawn.

A dream devoid of delusion,
What appears and disappears,
Water in waves and ocean,
What is seen, delusion when clears,
The sole thing eternal that lives,
And good-bye for good to death gives.

And science now knowingly nods,
The truth when evened out all odds,
That what was thought was not in groove,
What logic could prove nor disprove—
Matter-energy, what a dame!
Dance like rivals, still be the same.

The truth of truth in matters all,
The same life that varied we call,
Like in varied frames moon's the same,
Varied stars playing the same game;
In duals does dwell human faith,
In dance of life from death to death!

Musings | 02.07.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Break All Rules, But Know Them

It's not enough to just begin,
Still, good to start than not at all,
To have tried and failed is no sin.

Good things oft get born from no good,
A poor run's better than no run,
Fine if it first looks childlike crude.

Let a poet be howso great,
Poor packaging more than prevail,
Best of bards have passed thru this gate.

Sores grown whilst grooming greatly serve
Love of labour for your own eye—
It serves as a good learning curve.

To start with it helps to have heft—
A good theme: Love, death, destiny,
Fabric's woven with warp and weft.

Limerick, sure, it's often cool,
It need no one's leg needless pull,
But perilous is longish lull.

Beware still, heftier the theme,
Deeper dwell devils of details,
From depths of bottom rises cream.

Ye need no nuts and bolts explain,
Capture more heart's say than of head,
Few readers may love labour pain.

Poetic forms, mere crutching aid,
It pays to walk with and without,
Discard soon these shackles nigh dead.

A poet oft paints an image
That walks miles, words while strut on stage,
And weaken with passage of age.

A poet has a heart— his own,
And it aches quite unlike any,
Head still has a contending bone.

A poem's known by title head,
Or lost is like a nameless child,
No Shakespeare art thou I'm afraid.

A poem's a child of your pen,
And on a blank paper you paint,
Muse has li'le use— nine out of ten.

To pen, any place is as good,
If thoughts fall in frame what use mood?
Still what helps is some solitude.

Alliteration, goodly aid,
Easy, can it be overdone,
Let it not too much weigh on head.

Like oasis looks a good line
In a poem of a long spell,
The rest need be no salty brine.

Kiss no goodbye to private shame,
Nor keep worst of demons off page,
Keep a keen pen `pon honest frame.

Let your babes be beamed to wide world,
It pays to put your pen to test,
Cage is no place for a free bird.

Poetic lines easy do flow,
But put your peas in perfect pod,
Slog, nor clog, no shame going slow.

Try be good ere becoming great,
Yet, too much kills a poem's heart,
And penmanship's no better bet.

Promenade not on a paved way,

It's better to explore new ways,
And helps nowhere too long to stay.

And last, on no tips lose your sleep,
What suits let be your patent style,
Plough, plough, O best of crops to reap.

Here are some tips to turn out good poetic lines, each stanza a Sicilian tersect. Like beauty tips poetic tips too do not always work. Many represent the mistakes I committed and even do so now. But poets are ruled by hearts, and heart is prone to make mistakes. In fact it does not look kindly to the tips turned out by the head. And so the tip of all tips is: break all rules if you must.

Reflections | 01.10.11 |
Old caption: Poetic tips

Aniruddha Pathak

Brevity Binds My Spirit To Uplift

Some when worship guineas and gold heirloom
That lies buried all year in volts and cells,
When young fire crackers, old fret in their room,
In temples afar when beat drums and bells,
As time `tis to invoke Goddess of wealth
On thirteenth day of dulling, waning moon,
Worried of vile smoke, of my old man's health,
I was lost in thoughts of fate and fortune.

And yet, festive spirit what with loud boom
Around, can scarce imprisoned be by mood,
Even when confined be in a small room,
Making me on sonnet's sparse plot to brood:
How brevity binds, letting me not drift,
How its cramped space my spirit should uplift.

Written on Dhan-teras day of Diwali.

- Sonnets | 07.11.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Brinjal: Queen Of Greens

Debates, disputes if or not fair,
And controversies amidst spats and dins,
Let them annoy with shallow air,
Thanks to them I'm in galaxy of greens.

Way back I was a faceless girl,
A brown as if amidst fair skin,
Despite my crown, its crusty twirl,
I looked in awe with silly grin.

Remained for long a lowly brown,
Proud eggplants, nor swanky aubergines,
People looked down `pon me to frown,
What with my well-heeled pool of genes.

My plush beauty was passed over,
The lustre of my skin so smooth,
My chic classy curvy contour,
Be called a poor man's dish— my truth.

In hard times turning harsher still,
I acted pricey nor yet rare,
And all over I was a steal,
Nor learnt art of times nor false air.

But now arrived have I, if late,
For which GM squabble I thank,
Everyone gets his hour of date
From nobody be above rank.

From rank and file be versatile,
Of varied shade and size and shape
And a knack to go extra mile,
And win winner's logo to drape.

Controversies generate faster than bacteria. But thanks to controversy on genetically modified (GM)foods that poor old brinjal has acquired some prominence. The poem is cast in the words of Brinjal.

Happenings | 01.03.10

Aniruddha Pathak

Build A Loo Ere Ye Woo

Imagine if every village beau
Wedded get to this wisdom's fair view
That op to nature loo
Henceforth would never do,
Build a loo before a bride ye woo!

Womenfolk in rural Maharashtra, give their nod to marriage only if the groom has a proper bath and toilet in his house.

Happenings | 05.10.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Burning In Love Was I Bright

What a storming flight
Oh this love turned out to be!
Burning was I bright,
And she poured water on me;
Making smoke of me
That blew me up to my plight,
Down when breeze brought me.

And not in her heart,
Far and quite apart,
Pedestal where she put me,
A bust of fine art,
Alive, a ghost out of me!
What a storming flight
Oh this love turned out to be!

Musings | 46.02.2019 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Bus To The Banished Land

After a never-ending wait
A bus to the long lost out land
That once was a common homeland,
For, none can live in endless hate.
To find new ways from webs of maze,
Ah, like setting sail to a ship
Long stranded, to forge lost friendship
Anew— neighbours of good old days,
A way out from old hostile ways,
A bus to bridge a short distance
After nursing a gulf for long,
After conflict, give peace a chance.
See if peace sings a sweeter song,
A bus to banish years of wrong!

A bus from Srinagar to Pakistan Occupied Kashmir was flagged off despite threats from extremists, and despite, I would say, death of all hope.

Sonnets, Happenings | 03.04.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Buttons I Like, Not Fasteners

Fig leaf was all there was in times of yore,
Precarious, and held in place by hand
In Eden Garden as goes ancient lore,
Adam and Eve, sole two souls in all land.

Countless years passed, came some sort of raiment,
A sheet— to be wrapped much like a blanket,
And fashion had found no firm firmament,
This went on for thousand moons without let.

All fastening was matter but of knots,
Life at its simplest was, few knots and ties,
A Spartan life free from clutters and clots,
Necessities when but from bare did rise.

Life a trim fit, tailored to fit the size,
And tied on to contours thanks a few straps,
And fasteners took ages to devise,
Well, it was a sea change from body wraps.

Yet, centuries passed ere any change came,
Mankind being busy with survival,
And fashion still was a shy frugal dame,
But change a child is of time perpetual.

And man invented ah— what else, buttons—
To fasten garments at every odd place,
And soon there were buttons in tens of tonnes,
O of countless kinds, each with a new face.

This I'd think was the first fashion statement,
Buttons could boast more than straps ever did,
And free of malfunction at odd moment,
Ah buttons everywhere, need be or greed.

Then came zip fasteners from luggage end,
Accessories, invading man's trousers,
But buttons nigh like a long lost school friend—
Faithful— free were from glitches getting worse.

Fasteners to me look like windows tucked,
Secured sealed whence no fresh air enter can,
Whilst flexible buttons never get stuck,
And always score like a faithful hand fan.

I've seen zips getting stuck at awkward time
And place, and yet there's nary a way out,
Zips came on to the scene, reason nor rhyme,
But fashion needs no reason for its clout.

A fastener still when fails to function,
A fig-leaf of hands an expose to shun!

Musings | 09.07.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Call Of Commitment

What if tonight turned the last living night?
Paint in thy heart O man where soul is felt
The portrait of the sacrifices dealt
By thine sires and ancient seers of rare height,
And ponder on the frown upon their face,
Ponder on their displeasure showing clear
On their unhappy hurtful a grimace,
Think if ye lived up to deeds to them dear.

If no—I guess that's what thine heart so feels,
Thousand pities that all thy oblations,
All pompous pretensions and wilted wills
Would fail; go learn anew long lost lessons.
False pledges from vainest of head depart,
Call of commitment comes from holy heart.

For long years Hindus have traced their family lineage called gotra to one or the other of ancient seers and sages. On many occasions they are invoked mechanically and worshipped. But do we live up to their expectations? It has been reduced to mere rituals of this evocative heritage.

Sonnets | 11.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Call That Love Caused By No Cause

By laws of logic nor habit,
Love just happens, not can cause it.

Dwell in no doubt, listen to me,
Passion and pull spring from deep pit.

Blossom on bowers know this well,
Their poem not by spring is writ.

Who knows this desert's secret spell?
Mirage gets made when hope gets hit.

A soft breeze wafted sans window,
Faith and trust matters are discreet.

What use mirror, what use is muse,
Poet's own light's when no more lit.

Wisdom tells us from ages long:
Call that love that hath cause, nor kit.

Ghazal | 09.03.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Canine Kiss Of Caution

A dog came to me one late languid eve uninvited
On a sultry hot and cloudy summer day,
A full-grown mongrel in his prime, darkish grey,
He came as if on date on his own decided.

And scaling the compound wall he came,
Not through the main gate as guests come,
Nor side gate as friends, neighbours—some,
He leaped— long legs, bushy tail, and lithe frame.

But looked agitated, confused, afraid,
And seemed to be in a tearing hurry,
I thought of giving him a piece of bread,
But he rushed straight to the closed gate in a flurry.

Fine, he came uninvited scaling wall,
He still, I thought, hoped for a proper welcome,
Like neighbours, birds, insects and all,
He came quiet, beating no drum.

Nor craved welcome, but rushed to and fro
From the main gate to the side gate,
Mute I followed his path to toe,
And scarce could match his maddening gait.

It soon looked like a game of catch-me-if-you-can,
Now catching my trousers' sleeves, now leaving,
Me chasing, but overtaking he ran,
He jumped all over me short of hurting.

If a play, it was getting rather grim,
His mental state catching up with me too,
The agitated, confused, afraid him,
Was it play, me his game? I had no clue.

I succeeded then to open the gate,
He bolted out dissolving in the dying day,
This dog that came as if on a courtesy date,
And left, send-off, nor parting last say.

Like people dropping in— just-like-that,
I soon forgot it all that he ever came,
That, like them, he was pushy like a pussy cat,
I could scarce yet gauge his gag, nor his game.

As some visitors leave a telltale mark,
He too left his toothy red on my feet,
His bite as a token kiss was too stark;
Beware of dogs that never bark, but kiss to greet!

Poor soul, his innocent greetings were not welcome.
Somehow I feel so sure he meant no harm,
Unlike many, he behaved well, though not at home,
Though confused, he carried with him an old boy charm.

But man in this time and day, cannot a chance take,
And seek a sound sleep hoping all be well,
Modern man is baked cautious like a cake,
'What if' in life casts a devil of a spell.

And so, the doc would have none of my pleas,
'Friendly or no, dogs' kiss can scarce be kind,
'And no short cuts, a full course of pricks please
'Beware you deal with dog's teeth left behind.'

Yea, I'd prefer any day dog's worst bark
Than the kiss of caution they leave behind,
This one, may god bless him, did leave his mark,
If not friend, sure was not a biting kind.

The gift he left with me was sure unintended,
Like a kiss that leaves love marks tinged with red.

This piece based on what happened, has 14 stanzas, all quatrains, with no fixed syllabic length. The meter is loosely iambic.

Reminiscing | 05.10.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Cants Of A Canting World

O to walk unrepentant, head held high unbent,
Righteous be or not when your stakes,
Pretending to break bread with poor whilst eating cakes—
Bread as ideal soul insurance,
Cake, for the hound that with hares runs—
And pompous, paying tithes disguised as cant.

We live in an age whose soul is all shades of cant—
Callous to core, yet all correct,
For, no one, any age, is made perfect,
My walking straight makes little dent
To time's spirit unrepentant,
I am no fish against the flow to swim, nor act.

Take to sham-faced philosophy, or learn
Poetic lines a tad too tame,
Use ad lib moral cants; to turn
Turtle on head is no more shame,
Nor is it shame double-distilled lies
That devil honed to no one's surprise.

Cants, meaningless noughts on their own,
Made of base metal shining like gold,
And multiplied many a fold,
Trailed by a decimalled numeral of some renown;
Ah, what would world do without cants!
What if world's devils no more get their rents!

The lord gave a message of modesty
To man, that he live a life of lent,
He, biting apple once too many,
E'er since hides, his shame hind a fig-leaf far too scant,
Taking twelve hours of fast, twelve to repast,
Eleven months of cant, one month of lent, aghast!

- Tongue-in-cheek | 08.09.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Captain Crazy

He knows how biting bouncers to bowl,
To cool rivals who in pressure crawl,
There's pace, guile, seam and swing,
And Yorkers toe-crushing,
Generals thence too keen, called foul, foul!

Let democracy be damned. Pakistan's Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) chief, Imran Khan, former cricket captain, has always relished tormenting his rivals with pace bowling. He still continues in similar vein, now joined by a cleric, Qadri. Connived at by the army, he has pushed back Prime Minister Nawaz Sherif.

The captain was instrumental in winning the 1992 ODI World Cup, and thinks 'Naya (new) Pakistan' can be built without concrete plans. What so be, who so wins, the people of Pakistan might lose the match in the end.

- Happenings | 06.09.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Champaign In Hand

Champagne in hand the winning captain stood,
Exuberant, aggressive, rock like rude,
A rhino dared— in petulant a mood,
And feeling flustered red, flushed as he came—
Due not the least from a demanding game—
Winning again he felt was a tad tame.

Success settles down snug in a long lease—
In head if the win's won with so much ease,
And threatens to become a welcome lure,
What if a win's won at a steeper cost?
Seized he was, frozen with fear of failure;
Yet, is it sin if an odd game is lost?

Success in sports comes from sweat laden strife,
A mind seized with winning with failure's rife,
And victories, howso triumphant, breed
Heroes far too absorbed in their own thought,
Driven by a mind obsessed to succeed,
To whom failure lets notso lessons taught.

He struggling to succeed and on move,
Delighted in small but triumphant feats,
Knows how to win friends with a pinch of love,
Human souls oft bonds better in defeats.
He savours success that has stumbled ere,
Humanity comes from one humbled ere.

But to that captain cock, champagne in hand,
He often feels: what use winning a friend,
What use winning if you need be humble?
He wants to succeed without a stumble,
Only one failure's enough to crush him,
And a mere stumble to crash lifetime's dream!

Musings | 01.01.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Change, Or Back To Stonehenge

When winter relented
To say hello to spring,
Grey turned to green and red,
It gave my mind a wing.
Seasons change on their own
And wait not till too late
To kiss change on due date,
Change changes even stone.
Man rather in a pit
Gets frozen against change,
That seems to me no strange.
He last walked on two feet
From four the game to beat—
As ape his greatest feat,
But lost somewhere his wit,
Now on way to Stonehenge!

Reflections | 06.09.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Changing Times

This world, mad greedy and raven,
Values of late showing some cracks,
The rich laughing their way to banks
Laugh a mocking laugh to the ranks,
And moves on to the beaten tracks—
And looking for a tax haven,
The same smirk on its greedy face,
But I see an added grimace!

Tongue-in-cheek | 02.05.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Charity

She gives well when freely gives,
Feeling happy she has given,
Obliged that the gift was taken,
Feels happy too one that receives;
Charity's not to show the stature,
It's when giving is second nature.

Flowers blossom fragrance to spread,
It is flower's born-with nature,
Ego has no candidature,
They would till wilted and all dead;
It is flowers' born-with virtue,
They know as if not else to do.

A candle burns, light to all share,
It is candle's born-with nature,
Burn she will till no longer there,
Ego has she nor yet stature,
Born is it with this virtue,
It's as if it knows not else to do.

Clouds too give away all as rains,
It is the cloud's born-with nature,
They will till the last drop drains;
They check not receiver's stature,
Born are they with this virtue
And know not else to do.

Man lone when condescends to give,
In turn wants something to receive,
He feels the receiver's in chain,
In gratitude, so should remain,
He gives that he could one day gain,
His charity is vanity in vain.

The birds and beasts no efforts spare,
And give their best in pure instinct
When their newly born do they care,
But humans, species so distinct,

Hope, children would reciprocate,
Oh to await that thankless date.

Reflections | 01.08.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Child, Father Of Man No More

Soon as his wonderment gets wings to think,
We first err, a child's when not even three,
We hammer when his head with what WE see—
With stuff of heft more than height, him to sink:
Society conspires soon to take over,
He's seldom left alone— e'en for minutes,
Building boundaries that confines him to shore,
Tying with tethers, strangling with limits,
And soon duties dawn much like misfortune
That holds him a hostage, a hackney horse,
Mere sight of risk makes him dig unto dune,
Oh done and dusted ere running full course!

And whoso said, 'He that holds a child's soul
Holds nation', a square me seem in round hole!

Sonnets | 06.01.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Chimpressionist Painter

Of rare class and monkey none the less,
A simian master minting success,
Of impressionist school
And looking all so cool,
But is not mod art monkey business?

Funny things keep happening to bring smiles back to this sad world. There is a Capuchin monkey making poly chromatic waves as a painter. It is enriching the primate sanctuary in Toronto where it lives. It uses hands, feet, tail, and even posterior as creative tools, and has produced many abstract works selling for \$300 apiece. The little master is named as 'Pockets Warhol' - his paintings (ch) impressionist.

Happenings | 03.12.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Circumstances

Ye unravel man as only you can,
And force him to reflect, give him deep tan,
Shape and sharpen and build from boy a man,
Ye even out, trim rough verges of edge
Awhile he adds up wise years to his age,
And etch wrinkles of wisdom on visage,
Much like spirals of age on a tree trunk—
Ye ensure, lessons of lifetime have sunk,
That he walks not a hollow chunk of hunk.
Remember, never a man is
Mute creature of circumstances,
He's made when bends not on his knees.

Musings | 05.02.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Clenched Fist To Op Palms

All this and more is but mine,
So thinking we breathe life's breath,
Nothing whatso is mine,
So thinking prepare for death.
Born are we bare, a clenched fist,
Go op palms leaving laid feast.

Reflections |07.11.16|

Aniruddha Pathak

Climbing Height

Higher up the tree a monkey goes
More and more of her hind would expose—
The height it ill deserves,
As one on ground observes,
Nor to safety it serves,
Nor shows dignified curves,
He's nigh but monkey that this not knows.

Tongue-in-cheek | 11.01.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Climbing Up

Higher the tree a monkey goes
More of her hind would she expose;
Beware a rise you ill deserve,
Every contour is no good curve,
Every girl this golden truth knows.

- Tongue-in-cheek | 14.01.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Coal When Clamours To Be Diamond

When facts loosen tight grip, truth its bond,
A monkey nut when struts like almond,
Rigour loses its rage,
Precision its sharp edge,
Coal clamours then to be a diamond,
O lose not last courage,
Persist on the same page,
Precious stone comes but one in thousand.

Scams, scandals, cons and corruption while flow unending like perennial river,
investigations when go on feigning legal and judicial processes, truth gets lost in
thousands of sheets of affidavits, witness statements, evidences, and erudite
long-winding judgments, truth never sees the light of the day. What is wrong is
clear like daylight, but who wants action? Activities are what we are fond of.

Happenings | 05.03.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Come Only If

The journey might long stretch, in sight no end,
Come if you can keep up with life's ho hum,
The sun shall stare merciless, out of hand,
If only you can hail it heedless, come.

Fair-weather friends we shall forever face,
Pulling away, pushing ahead be some,
In adverse times may show their fractured grace,
If you can spread your wings to lead me, come.

And dangers may careen carelessly close,
Peering eyes shall pry, and poke needless nose,
Were I to face passion's sin and fall plum,
If you can wean me back with love, do come.

And life's a never-ending thankless search,
If perchance too tiring long should become,
If only sure you're to find me a perch,
We rest a while, catch breath to proceed, come.

And to our life's relentless marching drum,
If you can keep steady pace what may, come.

A lady love warns her love to join the long journey only if...

Musings | 09.07.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Come To Inspire, O Death

Come O Death, right time's no later but soon,
Thine fault so oft I think is waiting long,
Come at appointed time, thou art a boon,
To scorn thee is: pain of life to prolong;
O come, carry out thine thankless duty,
Thou art benign, thine mission's mystery.

Men mortal, made are of shorter a breath,
His life's milestones made in the path of death,
Of all that should in time end, I believe,
Thou O Death hardly art monstrous devil
So often deemed, soul 'tis that opts to leave,
Spirit that hath its own will lives on still.

O Death, oft deemed as an unresolved riddle,
Whilst life lives on long, firm in journey's saddle
To pursue evolution's unmixed struggle,
To die ere time a sin is so evil,
But when ye come, I know well not to haggle,
Not to die on due time is greater ill.

Scoring a goal but once is no life's aim,
But to strive on till death declares the lull,
To keep the ball in play until the whistle,
And still, death ends the round, never the game;
And keep in mind, there's always extra time,
So keep your raw grit alive for game's grime.

Life that rises in death sets, sun as sets,
And then arises for the next voyage,
Death's like penning life's penultimate page,
Like leaping unto dark that frightful gets,
Warding of winter a migrating bird,
That knows not what should be its life's last word.

But when ye come at last, help me O Death,
With my baggage of babble, my pen's crimes,
Li'le whispers, half truths, though writ in good faith,
Help me polish it nigh in newer climes;

So, let me die pen and paper in hand,
Till then come to inspire O Death, my friend.

Musings | 02.11.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Come To Judge, Milord

Revere rulings but esteem more the court
Than the men warming up exalted chairs,
Who, howso tall sentries of legal fort,
Should safeguard, justice falls not on false airs.
The lords and ladies have for long since gone,
What others could rid in one gritty stroke,
We for decades seem to pick pry and poke,
It seems like licking a left over bone.
Gone have the lords with white wigs, vain status,
Time, old outlook goes, goes colonial mind
That has unfair legacies left behind,
This done, we need speed up the legal bus.
So, judge thyself; mind not if late, Milord,
Are we not children all of equal God?

When India gained freedom over half a century back, every Indian was made equal in true spirit of democracy. We needed to forthwith abolish all colonial honorific like His Excellency and Milord, honourable to be used only for the court, and not for judges. Yet, our Supreme Court, the last hope of democracy, is still steeped in pomp if they stick to such crutches. The mannerism smacks feudal what with their dress code and court practices. It is high time the focus of justice is on speedy judgement.

Happenings | 01.11.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Come To Me Just To Be

Think well and deep, mull over every sin,
Look into mind's mirror, critical, keen,
To wash thine every single evil clean,
Close eyes, confess his confidence to win.
Thou art the plaintiff, thou art the witness,
The defence lawyer art thou and the judge,
Harm there's none to come clean and self-confess,
Need there be none to feign, nor ever fudge.

Beware, there also is an impostor
That pretends to be what he never is,
Who, may mislead you— being an actor,
He'll pose as true self, too ready to please.
Leave him alone, amidst body, brain, bone,
The true to him be nigh like a millstone!
Yet, should everything fail, come dear to me,
Forget the world; come to me just to be.

A man is torn apart in the conflict between his ego and conscience. And then in a denouement a voice comes from his wife: Forget all this pursuit of becoming; come to me and just be. The sonnet allows an extra couplet for this.

Sonnets | 02.03.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Come With Me If

When the going gets hard uphill
Of a marathon that be life,
A voyage on the edge of knife,
Come, should ye suffer with me still.

The struggle sure shall test your will
As life with misfortune is rife,
And mired in millions of raw strife,
Come, if your raw side can reveal.

Weird are ways of world to deal,
Wayward are ways of life, and strange,
That few manage can with smooth change,
Come, if you can to worldly ways kneel.

Push people down, proceed at will,
The law of life it be today,
No'ne to notso ever gives way,
Come, guiltless if can gulp this pill.

A wish here and a few wants there,
And lifetime's haunts that ever snare,
Come if these toys tinker joy still,
Come, if you feel no worse, nor ill.

Musings | 03.01.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Comes Effortless Ease With Efforts

'Pon eons of hit and miss
Nature mastered its nature,
Near perfection to reach;
But man in his foolish itch
Thinks, he's reached his high stature,
Not knowing, comes effortless ease
O after years of hard practice.

Reflections |30.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Controversy

Controversy, easy that never dies,
That a Phoenix-like from ash does it rise,
Many make from it most,
Endure a life-long ghost
It makes wise look foolish— fools otherwise.

This piece may look like a limerick in construction, but it is not in anapaest metre, but iambic pentameter.

Tongue-in-cheek | 03.05.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Cooking Up Budgets

The halwa¹ cooked we hope is sweeter made,
Flavoured with sops and served with a straight face,
That, our household hisaab², now inflated,
At last may recover its long lost grace;
The budget-cooks, (many that the broth spoil) ,
And oft hard-placed any sweetness to find,
Try as they hard, end up with over boil,
O to pass off ripe fruit with bitter rind.
The top chef when comes with his witty lines,
Summoning some quotes from a retired rake,
Whilst poor tithe payers show impatient signs,
And dine on that stale loaf that looks like cake.
Ah budget, a fine recipe to bake
A cake that oft seeks electoral stake!

1. Halwa¹: A sweet dish and code word used by bureaucrats for budget preparations.

2. Hisaab²: Hindi for accounts of income and outgo being kept by middle class families every month.

Sonnets | 03.02.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Cool Lesson

Tired of walking under raging sun
I sat under a shaded tree.
Feeling fresh, I looked when at heaven,
I heard the tree talking to me:

And still ye stop not felling trees,
Nor learn to share shelter, nor breeze;
Walking upon these fallen leaves
Be wary on what so much gives.

And tread ever so soft at once,
Be no ingrate you've ever been—
Fraudulent on favours of green,
Recall, ye sought their shelter once.

Beware, sun raging hotter still
You will have nowhere else to chill.

Reflections | 03.08.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Cosmic Journey

Visitors— no more, we earthlings are,
Here, wearing a new cosmic garment,
We may scarce again come to this star—
And would leave soon as the time is spent,
Look at still at our envious face,
And note that our eyes no farther race
Than to neighbour's green garden; good grace!

Tongue-in-cheek | 01.03.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Cosmos In Tune With Me

Comes when night and clear is the sky,
I try look at the cosmic heart
That looks back with weird apathy,
And strange stirrings deep within start.

I marvel, muse: how could it be,
My within nods in disbelief,
And says, rendering some relief,
Not apathy, mute sympathy.

And when I explore unknown things,
Hesitant, how to go about,
My belief turning into doubt,
Whence comes that help? Who from far sings?

And doubt deems to look like pillow,
Into dreamless sleep do I fall,
And wake up when birds' chirpings grow,
I muse: who gave me wake-up call!

The cosmic world from far and out,
In tune is with within, no doubt.

Musings | 08.07.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Courtesies, Then And Now

Five hundred years ere in free-spelling times,
You may be in a 'pinck of curtesie'¹,
Like a minstrel 'pauz for a courtezy'²,
Servile, bend knees to show a 'curtesy'³,
Deeply bow else as your bounden curtsy;
Today they old-fashioned are, nigh like rhymes,
Time was it— a free-flowing free-spell,
Today scarce if values old still sell.

1. Shakespeare in Romeo and Juliet (1592)

2. Unknown author, Shakespeare's contemporary in 1575

3. Yet another spelling during Elizabethan times

Today, spellings are specific. There is no room for a leeway as was in older times. Also, we use courtesy for general politeness, and curtsy for specific. So much precision as is in mechanical tools, and yet, courtesies are old fashioned and rudeness prevails more than ever!

- Ways of words | 05.05.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Coveting

Oh this vain world, with wanting-greeding seized,
Ever with more and more, less and less pleased,
Pitted as is with marginal returns,
Chugging on profusion, loosely laid tracks,
Truth paying tithe to logic it much lacks,
From needs to wants, to coveting when turns,
The vulture¹ shows up, too much by greed kissed.

If greed beyond need should fall, comes to grind,
Let learned lament, call it recession,
The world should still well off feel so to find,
It's universal cooling of hot passion,
Dampening of red greed and blasé desire,
That fueled markets to a raging fire,
Same market same demand, no vultures wind.

1. Vulture represents greed, from Sanskrit gridha, to covet, greed. From this comes gidha, vulture in Hindi.

Sonnets | 04.04.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Cow-Dung Cakes

shopping closes on to sink,
So it seems in India one may think.
Take gift-wrapped cow dung cakes,
Raking up such high stakes,
And ah what a revengeful sweet stink!

shopping seems to have taken India by storm. And even cow-dung cakes are sold on-line. It has proven to be one of the most popular gifts ordered—often with a request to gift-wrap before delivered. Stocks often run out. An eight piece package may cost up to Rs 400.

Happenings | 07.03.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Cows And Cattle

A Texan rancher Samuel Maverick,
Who never his calves and cattle branded,
Caused maverick to mutate off cow-shed,
And gave birth to a word in time to tick.

Ere it breached borders native and national,
Maverick meant 'all cattle unbranded',
Mutating to 'master-less quadruped',
And thence to mean 'one unconventional'!

And now this minister— maverick calf,
Who, all but lost cabinet's lower berth,
Talking of cattle-class travel in mirth,
When he guffawed to win a half-wit laugh.

Ere, 'hidebound' meant skinny cattle of drought,
Bare to bones and ribs all but sticking out;
But hidebound now means man narrow-minded,
Provincial, parochial, of petty-head!

'Holy cow', one may say to interject,
Oft meaning, 'sacred cow', mixing a fact;
Holy cow a cow is one scarce can touch,
We have many nigh hard to humour much.

Comes 'cow' from Sanskrit holy 'gau',
Comes cattle from Latin chattel—
Movable wealth French calls capitale,
But Capital's cows 'lone seem holy now!

To migrants ere cattle was sole money,
Domestic to the Romans was 'Pecu',
From the indo Aryan Sanskrit 'pashu',
Today e'en prayers go pecuniary!

Words ne'er respect a boundary line,
As birds and religion, as music,
But man's e'er busy borders to define;
May be world can do with a maverick.

- The ways with words | 03.10.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Cracks Of Light But No Go

All shut

When we find doors,

Ships sailing from no shores,

We might see some cracks of light, but

No go!

Cinquains | 27.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Crisis Comes With A Seed

We care not crisis comes with a seed—
Seed shows how to face crisis indeed!
Uncared still the seed dies
And a way out defies,
And in place there grows a wanton weed.

Reflections | 05.07.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Crocodile Tears For Heritage

We've a cart-load of concern for his specs
When way little of his vision we share,
We seldom walk on his astute footsteps,
Feel fervent still for a pair of footwear.
His tokens on pedestal get moth-balled,
We care not to be punctual as he was,
Too keen on gestures and symbolic cause,
We garland his bust everywhere installed.

If we defile still his values so rife,
If we cherish not still his chequered life,
And then an alien hand of due merit
That might cherish values on which he led,
Let him his lost mementoes inherit,
Not those that only crocodile tears shed.

There was a lot of hue and cry when a few items of Mahatma Gandhi's memorabilia were put on auction in a foreign country. We were perhaps riled by the fact that a foreigner was in possession of such items. But why did we lose them in the first place? What were we doing all this time? How do we maintain his heritage in our possession? Do we follow his teachings well? Do we care for the values dear to him? No, we seem to like to raise noise only on tokens and stray symbols.

Happenings | 01.03.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Dance Of The Duals

Take anything under the sun,
Take churning depths of an ocean,
Along with nectar of life,
There always comes venom rife.

Duals come dancing all along,
Silence and sound dance to sing song,
Perennial twins, take dark and light,
So be the twain, pleasure and plight.

Only when life burns out in pyre,
Death's ashes do the new life sire,
Life and death nesting together,
Birds they become of same feather.

Things all come like coins from same mint,
We humans have or not a hint.

Reflections |05.11.2017|

Aniruddha Pathak

Dark Seeks Depths No Light Can

Man oft is afraid of darkling night,
But it's night that lets him deep insight,
Opens up a rich treasure,
Shows a glimpse of self measure,
In dark does man see end of his blight.
Dark seeks depths no light can
To introspecting man,
Who, in day light can reach hoary height.

Inspired by

He that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts,
Benighted walks under the mid-day sun.
-John Milton

Reflections | 04.10.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Death

Myth may it be, or be it man's blind faith,
A rehearsal perfecting dance of death,
Life is death; death is every passing breath.

A cosmic law—death is fortuitous fate
For a fresh new life with a fresh new date
For one more dance of destiny in wait!

Be it a fruit, a flower, or a fly,
Man or matter, notso can death defy,
Are not all things destined one day to die?

With his morbid phobia man stands alone,
Is he scared of death or of fate unknown?
Does not life come, seed of death duly sown?

And Death, not just a balm to every pain,
End of every suffering, every strain,
A sunny rainbow should perchance it rain!

And what dies is raiment worn out and old,
Death delivers a new garment of gold,
God-given gift is death for a fresh mould.

Let it what be, death's no devil so grim,
Nor is life a poet's pet theme, nor dream,
A golden chance is death to rise like cream.

Musings | 07.02.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Death 'tis That Life's Immortal

Man has survived the quakes of angry earth,
Giant tsunamis and floods every age,
Red hot eruptions `pon her greenest girth,
And tilts of Poles, and ice ages in rage,
Every doom's day prophecy and death-wish,
Yet lived long years caught in jaws of such death,
Kept getting born and ageing in anguish,
Oh paying dear for his undying faith—
Man mortal in immortal Petri dish,
A deathless soul in dying body bed,
That each passing heart beat he's further dead,
But it is death that life immortal is.
Death, so that soul can a new garment don,
Death's a device that life can carry on.

Sonnets | 07.11.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Death Comes To Call Every Day

Thinking of death when sleep half possest me,
I saw a daunting figure, still benign.
Hello, end of all life, Death's how I sign,
I wonder if you care to come with me.

I'm not so sure nor would I ever know,
For, body dies a bit each single day,
Not easy `tis to know the time to go,
You scarce come to take every cell this way.

No, I need not come, bodies to deport,
I come when soul is ready to depart,
Sure, come only then my soul to escort,
I doubt if every cell has soul apart.

Death comes to call each single day of life,
I wonder why body-death be such strife!

A dialogue between a dreaming soul and Death, Indic belief is: on death Yama,
Lord of Death, comes to escort the soul.

Sonnets | 07.09.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Death Conquers No Life

Whatso gets green in spring
By autumn soon shall fall,
To whatso born, living,
Death shall sure one day call.

Grieve, gather up or cry,
No happiness is missed nigh,
With so much death around,
Life survives still holding ground.

Amidst throngs of thorns pricking,
Flowers lo keep blossoming,
Daily do deaths catch many,
Life lives gets death a penny.

Look this miracle of life
Trapped in such sorrowful strife!
Ah, death can conquer not,
And life defeated is not.

Let autumn do her damnedest,
Spring shall spawn to do her best.

- Musings | 17.08.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Death Is Life

Some while away their life in vain,
Some in fear of death, some in pain;
Some feel, death comes when life gets tired,
And yet, life all its life in death is mired;
To some death is inauspicious,
And still, there's naught a thing more precious.

Death if a messenger is of Dharma¹,
It teaches men to abide in karma;
Death is to soul if not sole freedom,
A parole, an invite to Lord's kingdom!
To man in a lifetime of pravritti²,
Death is a few moments of nivritti³.

And time 'tis when to go, body and mind,
Why not forget all that we failed to do
In life; O leaving all worries behind,
Than upon the spilt milk to rue,
For, there awaits one more life yon
Death, O to carry further on.

To do all that was left undone; to mend
The broken fences of life's farmland;
So then, walk up to welcome Death,
No one aught run away from friend;
New beginnings, death is no end,
Soul carries on with an immortal breath.

But all this wisdom's too vain to me, please,
A simple truth I knew was this:
In all life, of mundane things rife,
I knew none whatso about life—
That scarce is life without a cause—
Till death upon my death-bed was.

Dharma¹: The Lord of Death, of righteousness.

Pravritti²: activity, engaging in mundane things.

Nivritti³: karma-less-ness, retirement.

- Musings | 04.12 12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Death Is My Friend And Yet

When a river in sea subsides,
Alive unto sea it still lives,
So does life, to death when abides,
Departing, birth to new life gives.

On giving birth to a new life,
Udders flush with milk, ma cow
Turns to newly born calf in love,
Death too is with milk of life rife.

Drops of rain, a great life giver,
Die soon as fall upon parched earth,
Whilst falling into a river,
They die as well but not their worth.

So Death cometh no life to end,
Nor with breath ceasing the life ends,
Life to a new journey extends
To make fresh start; Death, thou art friend!

And sure indeed, Death be my friend,
This I know as everyone knows,
And yet, when Death is close at hand,
I wonder where my wisdom goes!

Musings | 02.07.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Death Is No Candle Blown

Death— no candle blown,
But a lamp put off at dawn,
Soul shines— light its own.

Haiku | 10.05.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Death Lingers Between Two Breaths

Between two breaths lies lingering faith,
Each one an escape door
To here to farther fore,
Survived if, life takes an anxious breath,
Succumbed if, new dawn dawns after death.

Reflections | 06.03.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Death Of Good Old Flirting

Prelude there is, nor a lightning affair,
Nor yet the heaving heart's heist to explore,
Routine good manners nor yet eyes' flutter,
Frisson nor frown favoured nor yet deemed fair;
A harmless hailing from the male of sex,
Nor the other warmly acknowledging
That, both are true to their sex and not lax.
Whatso, but dearth there's of good old flirting.

Perhaps people are no more ruled by heart,
May be sex is simmering much in head,
Or the male mystique has turned a tame tart,
Gallantry nigh has gone, chivalry dead.
Venus is scarce spotted amidst eve stars,
Nor is visible the reddish brave Mars.

The good old art of flirting it seems has gone almost dead. The traditional male etiquette, chivalry, and gallantry survive today only in novels of ere. An average young man has turned timid to make even an eye contact, perhaps for the fear of sexual harassment or personal embarrassment. So much, even a harmless appreciative compliment has dried down. Even in India, the land of nymphs, apsaras, naayikas, and dasis, flirting as a fine art has got all but frozen. In a somewhat humorous tone, this sonnet explores why. The answer is ventured in the Volta voicing from the 9th line.

Sonnets | 06.10.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Death When Challenged Life

And death once told a much defeated life:
Life is no life lived on the edge of knife,
As struggle for survival's soaked in strife,
The life's lived with many a mute death rife.

As death I'm always pure, death's rife with life,
And heard I've of life asking on deathbed,
Pray, tell me Death, how long ere I'm all dead?
Tired I'm of this daily dose with death rife.

To this said death, straightening up, stiff head,
Moments when like long minutes stretch ahead,
Minutes when look like endless hours instead,
Hours hang for days and days for years, life's dead.

Remember, life's lived moment to moment,
And measured is in a moving moment,
Forget not: death alone is permanent,
I dwell in life from birth, and live dormant;

Freedom there's from life nor yet from death's pall,
Death changes only bricks of prison wall,
Petty, O Life and Death, seems your quarrel,
None taller is, none on a pedestal.

Life traces a small piece of graph too blurred,
The poem metered is nor yet measured,
It begins much like a fledgling young bird,
The next breath not taken, the end's unfurled.

Eons pass sans measure for endless time,
Nor the clocks tick, nor dare at hours to chime,
Rocks break unto sands, time stills without rhyme,
Stones grind unto grains, earth turns into lime,

And journey of countless births starts with life,
It ends when death triumphs over last strife.

Musings | 07.08.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Death, A New Beginning

If what we call an end beginning is,
New destiny when beckons after lull,
And beginning, a birth of end— to cease,
The end's no end— a fleeting interval,
Cosmic Design when renders a young heart
To rekindle the life with new spirit,
And death begins to look like a new start,
That lets life's journey with a new light lit.
Yet, only if we learn to live, let go,
Move forward getting distracted the least,
Learn to flow with the flow, not to resist,
That death begins to look like friend, no foe.
To be a butterfly its avowed faith,
A caterpillar hates to call it death.

My heart always goes to much maligned death, a friend no foe, no end but a new beginning, a brief interval, a device to get a new kit to rekindle life's journey, and a new start. A caterpillar is transformed into butterfly. It is no death.

Sonnets | 01.09.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Death, In Defeat Shalt Thou Die

Destroyer O Death ye might thyself call,
No more than toy art thou of Destiny,
It's Time that in time devours one and all,
A cosmic scheme, thou art no almighty.
And O Poor Death, those that ye think ye kill
Never art killed, but take much deserved rest,
They're in deep slumber blest by heaven's will,
In truth, the soul shops to get newly dresst.

Not even toy, a slave to divine will,
No more than a trigger in hands of Fate,
To its design art thou called `pon to deal,
Ye might a sceptre wield, at whose dictate?
And ye aught know: soul lives eternal nigh,
Flesh alone dies, so in defeat ye die!

Sonnets | 10.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Death, Life's Dance Of Renewal

Ever alive, life knows death's no evil,
Body alone gets burnt, decayed, buried,
New name, new game, life on to a new drill;
It may or not change, nor yet learn new creed—
But change immortal is, and mortal is
Only what changes; and still scared of death,
Afraid of dying flesh, life in disease,
Man's scared of change, of fostering new faith.

And where's in Nature what we call as death?
A change, no more than cosmic reshuffle,
To matter energy's rare kiss of breath,
Obvious to some, to some far too subtle,
Alive or not, all things transform with time,
A dance of renewal is it in mime.

Sonnets | 02.09.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Death, Life's Last Page

The sage of old age,
Death's like a last page
Of life played on stage.

Haiku |35.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Decree

Born was she after grandsons—
His eldest son's two sons,
And darling daughter of a daughter,
In a desert as is cool water.

To a nearby garden one day
She was taken to play.
'Play my child, whilst I relax here,
'But don't go too far, Decree.

Decree, their friends were not quite clear,
Why on earth was she called Decree?
Someone volunteered, no, not decree,
You see, in Gujarat daughter is dikri.

Not quite, her grandma clarified,
Well, Okay there's nothing to hide,
To a college for a degree,
Was her mother sent, you see.

But what she brought home instead
Was this child, earning a higher grade!
Enough, enough of degree,
We all felt passing a decree!

And then on she was called decree,
Her Ma had earned MA degree.

Humour | 40.02.2019 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Deep Does Dwell A Man

Wish, man were a book open and fair,
Not one dwelling so deep
And needing a fair peep,
You dive deep, his dark secrets to share,
But he's still not there at bottoms bare.

Reflections | 02.06.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Democracy— A Hapless Bride

Wedding scene— a hapless Hindu bride:
The groom side boasting of gain landslide,
Groom feeling fabulous,
Bride side: they cheated us,
A bride whilst still alive, all but died.

Someone compared democracy like an Indian bride. This ditty elaborates how she might be feeling.

Tongue-in-cheek | 10.05.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Derrieres And Posteriors

Time was of a pretty face so fair,
Figures when flaunted, busts not so bare
Gave you good enough boost,
But rears now rule the roost,
Derrieres dare and claim undue share.

Today style rules over substance and package pulls more than product. There may be windows of exceptions, but why, I wonder, derrieres are in news more than any other feminine asset?

Happenings | 02.03.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Desire

She begins small, to become a big beast,
And spurs but never speaks, nor is she schooled,
A sovereign king in a life-long feast;
Muse of every man who by her is fooled,
Like a kitten nudging him with soft paw,
Pestering to pay heed, rubbing keen knees,
And much ere he knows she's a raving maw,
If starved, a forest fire on wings of breeze.

Long hath man mused: to be or not to be,
World's Oliver Twists wanting ever more,
And having had the wish, seldom happy
Still; and hard 'tis showing desire the door—
 Wonders, men still dream of champagne, caviar,
 When, they should no more than hot dogs and beer.

- Sonnets | 02.11.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Desire And Sacrifice

To some, man's made of desire,
And some swear for sacrifice.
For desires that douse no fire,
People do pay heavy price.
They that put out passion's pyre
When bare but few things suffice,
Forgoing things in a trice,
Stands sacrifice far higher.
Yet, in eyes of paradise,
Virtue or vice is desire.□

Reflections | 10.08.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Destiny

As metals must always fight rust,
As love that latches looks like lust,
Diamonds get made deep down in dust,
Destiny's deemed to be unjust.

Yet, whatso idle lies would rust,
Love not freed is looked down as lust,
What fetches diamonds their due trust?
Fire and depth build a solid crust.

No, destiny is unjust not,
The seed and sprout do say it all,
Man reapeth no more than his lot,
Fruits, never ere they ripen, fall.

To man much starved of manful means
Destiny sure one-sided seems.

Sonnets | 04.02.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Destiny And Dance Of Will

Rain as an unbiased boon blesses all,
Every seed grows to reach stature its own.
But man's desires and dreams play role no small,
Once born, get burst into blossoms unknown,
And thought by thought channels anew create,
Weeds duly plucked, seedlings getting watered,
A fragrant garden grows at destined date,
Or woods of wild weeds flourish undeterred.
Marauding rivers get tamed like wild beast,
Waters saved to bring back arid land's smiles;
Life has its own momentum, fate fares least,
It is man that steers to the destined miles,
If man still seems to bow to destiny,
He's bestowed too with free will aplenty.

Sonnets | 02.01.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Destiny Dies But Once

The wise say: live in now's benign presence,
Not in times yet to come, nor duly dead,
The past's buried in graves deep, dark and dense,
No sunshine falls on one dreaming in shed.
We take the fibre of life on unfold—
Dye it with rainbow colours on our own,
Weave it with all the warps and woops unrolled
The fate of fabric still remains unknown.
Seeds sown in spring bear no fruits by next fall,
The light and dark shadows we gather here
Cast their imprint on life's eternal wall,
And fruits of labour may or not appear.
Man as if on New Year's dying eve lives,
One eye on what may come, one on what leaves.

As Krishna's Song would ne'er die on book-racks,
Nor Vedic chants stop reverberating,
Nor ever notes of Beethoven's or Bach's,
None would ever lose mystical a ring.
So is the charm of unfolding morrow,
If seeds be sown fruits sure are awaited,
The taste remains, desire ever on grow,
Desires dying, man is as good as dead.
So then the soul lives on time and again,
The past leaves its tell-tale marks for ever,
Man must savour or suffer fruits of pain,
Soul dies but once the journey's when over.
The past may die, never its lasting charm,
Things die leaving fond memories so warm.

Man ideally should live in the present moment, but would continue still to dream coming from the world of past. The life gets born on the wings of this eternal dilemma. The basis of rebirth is desire and the journey of life ends only when all desires die. In a way everyone's ultimate destiny is the same. The soul merges but once when it realises the ultimate, and reaches the end of its long journey. Yes, the destiny dies but once. These concepts form the basis of this piece, which is actually a combination of two sonnets.

Sonnets | 08.10.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Destiny Has Room For All

Dawn dawns, night in grey gloom
As some lotus buds bloom;
Despair not O young buds,
Ye all have a reserved room.

Musings | 31.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Diagnosis Of The Left

A neurosurgeon once said
To his Marxist comrade:
With all concern I've this to say:
The left has in it nothing right,
And to add, if I may,
Nothing much seems left in the right!

Tongue-in-cheek | 13.12.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Dictator Is No Dictater

All there be is when custom, no rule,
The tail wags, an un-fixed tinkered tool,
Free for all a feigned rule,
And free-spell the sole school,
When spirit of time wills feel free, cool!

Suffixes (the tail) not long back still mattered, but no longer. Noun formation from a verb with a suffix at the end (whether it should be an -er or -or) these days hardly matters, and either seems good enough. So, impostor becomes imposter; protester becomes protestor; most advisers are now advisors; supervisors, supervisors; yet sailors, sailers; and jailers, jailors. Even the difference between dictator and dictater has vanished. Little can be done if custom has no system; no rule reigns.

- Happenings (Ways of words) | 02.05.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Dies Ere Gets Wise

Old age creeps, man dies
Well before gets wise,
Tragedy of life!

Haiku | 12.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Differing But By Degree

Flowers and rocks in life stand miles apart,
Passengers still, same weather to weather,
Each with its own but kindred ticking heart—
Things that would seldom frolic together;
If flowers greet, life newly born receive,
Rocks may well build a welcoming home bridge,
If flowers bid good-bye to those that leave,
Rocks may well build a blockade of tall ridge.
In every flower's bosom lies a rock-
Like will to spread her blossom's rare fragrance,
In every rock's core there's a silent clock
That says: I'd too evolve given a chance.
Life, it seems, differ but by a degree,
All things alive be by cosmic decree.

Sonnets | 01.09.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Dilemma Of The Day

Between firmness
Of too demanding parents
And harshness
Of the teaching tyrants,
Between those with a creative ring
And those condescending,
Between one parent's protective pod
And another's disciplining nod,
Between one's vindictive rod
And sympathetic—now so odd,
A dividing line
Ever so fine,
Has to be one day drawn—
Made of, may be, a kindly frown,
A line that many know is there
At the end of a long, long tether.

For, youth blossoms in freedom,
We know that as we ought,
And yet, what we do not—
Not in an un-ruled kingdom.

And while we search for this land,
Perhaps on the edge, land's end,
Worse still, while we debate,
The youth suffers her worse fate.

-Reflections | 04.02.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Disappearance

A nattily dressed drifter,
And a deft shop lifter,
Gave to his young apprentice
This spade-of-an-ace advice:
It's what I call appearance,
Good looks is great reliance,
A battle won more than half.
And pray, what's the other half? '
Asked his keen student at once,
'Well, a quick disappearance! '

Tongue-in-cheek | 11.12.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Disillusion Is When Bliss

If life's naught but energies that vibrate,
An if what vibrates as well makes some sound,
If or not can man grasp it or translate,
A strange matrix of sounds world's all around.
Yet, if the world is not but illusion,
Vain it seems to search for its warp and whoop,
Meaning, nor purpose of all the motion,
Lest he get caught in a deluding loop,
That the wise of world call disillusion;
Ah, what a serendipity it be,
Disillusion, spiritual inversion,
And bliss, other worldly and heavenly!
 An if death every illusion destroys,
 Ah, what a friend 'tis fetching blissful joys!

If the phenomenal world is nothing but Maya, an illusion, a man who is disillusioned with worldly life sees the truth. The only time he seems to be in sense. And in a final Volta, the sonnet says: death, if it destroys all illusions, is the greatest friend, no foe.

- Sonnets | 07.06.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Disparity

We walked hand held in hand
Some fair distance— to mend
Our woes, which, still so red,
Oh walked farther ahead.

Pensé | 08.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Do Karma, Renounce Still

Fuller the glass,
Faster shall it spill;
Sharper the knife,
Sooner wears off its will;
The more ye fulfilled feel,
Lesser would the heart feel.

Do your work,
Step back still,
Tao Te Ching had once said.
Indic Books of BC era had:
Do karma, renounce still,
But we still from work shirk.

The title of this poem talks about kuru karma tyajeti cha |
The last two lines of the first stanza talk about the law of diminishing returns.

Reflections | 09.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Dollar Dreams And World Weariness

Not being a straight-trading animal,
Man has long weltered in world weariness,
Pretending oft to escape in denial,
A jack ass wallows as in lukewarm ash.

And feeling hurt nursing his hidden strife,
Man is busy harming him none the less,
Calling it a philosophy of life—
This wayward stance toward the world of mess!

A word that means world pain¹, twister of tongue,
And newly minted by Jean Paul Richter,
And one more— world perception², a word young,
A vast field waits should we wish to welter!

We see pain pouring, angst in urchin's eyes,
Begging for crumbs, cherishing a big dream,
Her eye whilst child's raw innocence defies,
She hopes still one day to wallow in cream.

The eyes of a house-help show it all clear,
As of office colleague amidst hardship,
Dreams of making good, gagging a stray tear,
Yet, no one knows to laugh, nor ever weep.

Take daily grind to work in rank non air,
Pitiable public passage, crowded
Journeys, problems galore—the rush for bread,
Oh woes of weary world never seen ere!

Mid-age men, ill at ease, in life-long mime,
And women hair-dyed face done up, pushing,
Prancing, pretending having a great time,
What with sad eyes, drunk or doped, still showing!

In false bravado—these men and women,
Unable the will of life to challenge,
Mocking at dangers in a disco den,
Behaving in ways bordering on strange;

Running away from reality's face,
Hiding their pain, eyes still keen to escape—
Escape from this never-ending rat-race,
But who'd stop still this reality's rape!

All, a few excluded, passengers are
In this street car we may call 'sour desire',
A fellow traveller's idolised movie star,
The rich much as poor in as deep a mire!

Fortunate bare few facing no travails—
Americans are not— spending today
What for long years their progeny would pay,
Lucky be Greeks should they survive what ails.

We all cherish weirdest of dreams, and hedge
In Dollars, ah, our future to mortgage!

1. Weltschmerz: (Greek, welt=world, schmerz= pain) , apathetic or vaguely yearning outlook on life.

2. Weltanschauung: (Greek, welt= world, anschauung= perception) , philosophy of life, conception of the world.

Satire (Ode)| 05.10.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Down Memory's Bye-Lanes

Soft hues of young dawn give mind a few nods,
And I hear a frail but full voice singing
A hymn in praise of glory that be God's;
Voice wafting thru the air, years unrolling
Down memory's bye-lanes, I see a child
Struggling off winter's cosy warm bed,
Singing along in tune followed and filed,
She's not so frail and wears a younger head.

Me, three scores and more, carried by the song
To old times, wish me pair of wings my own
To travel there where I yearn to belong—
To my reverie's mesmerising dawn,
As things do, the song ends as it began,
The time warps back, and me the same old man!

I hear my mother sing a morning hymn. Rather old, she sang in a wavering, broken voice. But the experience transformed me to my childhood to a similar scenario down the memory lane. She was quite young then and not so frail, and had a fairly good voice. I want to be there— back to childhood. But soon oh, realisation dawns— that no, it's only an early dawn's dream, and I come back to where I began.

Sonnets | 09.08.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Dressed, Over-Dressed

Clothes sure play a role
And one must make an impress.
I recall a verse¹
I had learned in my childhood:
Clothes important are
In looking prim and proper,
And yet, there are times
When all wrapped up in yourself,
You are overdressed.

1. kim vasasaa tatra vichaaraniyam,
Vaasah pradhaanam khalu yogyataayaam...

As goes the mythology, when the ocean was churned and there came out goddess of wealth, her father Ocean opted for Vishnu who was well-dressed and well-groomed, not Shiva who was no less in qualifications, but was wearing only tiger's skin, unkempt hair, ashes and all. First impression lasts, and dress makes that.

And yet....

Translations | 54.01.2019 |

Aniruddha Pathak

E=mc²

The egg lives on— caterpillar to be,
And this voracious worm when sheds its skin,
To hide unto a shell all so hardy,
Gets born alive, be butterfly within,
And soon dies, painted wings fall to wither,
Manure to be for plants that grow to bloom,
That, birds and bees can feed on its nectar
And lay eggs, new cycles of life to groom.
Or take a frozen snowflake's icy chunk,
Take droplets of water, see how hot steam
Transforms, all keeping cool face of a monk;
Notso dies vain, nor fails to live its dream.
What we call death is an eternal cycle
Of change; and thou O Death be a miracle!

In death, body matter merges into elements— from matter to energy, an ever-changing cycle, a quantum change. When the contents of an egg become a caterpillar, it is only transformation, no death; so also when caterpillar transforms into butterfly. Only, some changes are not so visible.

Sonnets | 03.11.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Earth Day

In Vedic days man prayed for good of earth,
That bestowed he's with joys of Nature's bliss,
Endeavoured not to wound, nor risk her worth.
But look at him today, to greed of his,
The audacious him feigns still her to please,
Dedicates a token day— of all things,
Forgetting cool, a jack of fool that he's,
Knows not, all bounties but benign earth brings.
Oblivious, he's here on a short lease,
From her womb was he born, whence would return,
His smile green be if her goodness green is,
Long ere she dies due his sin, be his turn.
Mortally wounded O she bleeds today,
Too little too late seems, man, this Earth Day.

Man dedicates a day to earth forgetting that days and nightshappen thanks to earth. So, every single day that dawns is due to her. Who is this man to allot a day to her and pretend he has done enough for her? International Earth Day: 22nd April.

Sonnets | 13.04.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Earth: Man Knows Her Not Enough

If man's not treating Mother Earth as should,
Nor yet knows enough as yet about her,
When far of stars more his mind should bestir,
No wonder his mother's in nasty mood.
Keen on sun-spots, not her spots losing green,
Nor turmoil, temperature of his hearth,
Nor yet study of her life-giving worth,
No doubt he looks more without than within.
Not life earth-bound, he dwells more on alien,
In healing some vague heavenly headaches,
Rather than knowing more on her earthquakes,
He explores Saturn's moons and life Martian.
He knows well, world is vast and wonderful,
Perhaps not, one within is more fruitful.

We understand the interior of Sun far better than that of the earth, someone had said. Perhaps it is more romantic to explore the far frontiers than the equally vast and wonderful inner world. Our ancients had said, yathaa pinde tatha brahmaande (as is the macrocosm, so is the microcosm) . Yet, when it comes to thinking, he confines to the box. This piece reflects on the truth.

Sonnets | 03.01.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Ego, What Makes It Go

I once asked my ego what makes it go,
What with vain-glory vanity and pride:
It's not I that's on a vainglorious ride,
Nor is arrogance my fuel, ye know,
Nor vanity be the vehicle I use,
Nor I, me, mine be my identity,
Puff and pride never within me suffuse,
What I can't stand is soul's divinity—
That he and Him from same lineage are lined.
My claim is humble and quite down to earth,
Unlike him, I am my own unique kind,
Discerning few do know my genuine worth,
My sphere's Earth, heaven nor yet nearer sky,
Confuse me not with id, nor super I.

Freud gave the terms id, ego, and super ego, which someone interpreted as 'it' (instinctive impulses inherited as part of the unconscious) , the 'I', and 'beyond I' respectively. Here in this light-hearted piece, ego points an accusing finger at id, and super ego, while pulling soul's leg.

Sonnets | 01.09.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Eighty Four Hundred Thousand Lives

Eighty four hundred thousand times,
Getting born, dying, in-out of grimes,
And then getting as human born,
Living vain, blowing vainest horn,
And in due time O to get old,
And getting still life's no real gold,
And then, when time is it to leave,
Life's warps in an unfinished weave,
It's more like borrowing a book,
Giving it a cursory look,
And return it as was, unread,
Life lived all but vain, and now dead!

Reflections |04.11.2017|

Aniruddha Pathak

Enough Flows Conjugal Juice

You men, having come from the martial Mars,
And us women from the virgin Venus,
Have long been in unspoken silent wars,
Eons and there's little change in status.

For, feigning love that but be carnal sex,
Man has long sharpened his pyrrhic war axe,
Whilst to get loved the fair sex has paid tax,
Ah these pretenders! No one genius lacks!

Conjugal life centres round, what else, sex,
If we believe what an expert sayeth¹,
Fains if there be freedom from sex or tax,
Cometh liberation only at death!

So then there's un-spelt avowal of truce,
Abundant surges still conjugal juice!

1. Havelock Ellis, a well-known author on the subject of sex.

Sonnets | 01.08.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Enough Is One

Peeping off a crack,
Its beauty on deck
Ah a rock garden!

Haiku | 06.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Epic Eternal Ever On Unfold

A great piece of verse seems this universe,
Lyrics emanating from quantum soup,
Each of whose word vibrates as it quivers,
Inter-linked, its lines make eternal loop.
Has a unique metre but blank of rhyme,
It's too subtle in human ken to sink,
The warps and woofs are made of space and time,
And every line's writ with vanishing ink.
An epic of immense proportions,
Its quaint imagery yon of man's reach,
Leaving one speechless its figure of speech,
And deeper delves its meaning than oceans.
In constant change, ever evolving mould,
An epic 'tis forever on unfold.

Sonnets | 02.05.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Epicentres Galore!

Pedants fume, and furious seethe with rage,
And lexis surrender shall in age,
Media always misuse
Commoners to confuse,
Quiver not nor shake, quake `tis on page!

Yea, epicentre sounds a bit grander than just centre. But is used only in context of earth-quakes—the point on the earth above the spot quaking, from epi (Greek) , meaning over or above. But media prefer epicentre in all contexts— political, social, economic, any. Pedants and classicists and seismologists may quake with anger, or boil with rage for all they care. Yet, dictionaries will ultimately capitulate and compromise. Granted, media have their deadlines to catch and have no time to be precise.

- Ways of words | 06.05.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Escapism

The Circle at which once was Arctic Pole
Yon polar seas wearing a snow white dress,
And far from today's frozen wilderness,
How if a warm wavy sea should unroll!

In place of vast tundra, frost forsaken,
A new born sea that knows never to freeze,
Ah escapists' early dawn dream for one!
A lush green new-found-land wafting warm breeze!

To world one more weekend spot to escape
From a sizzling summer's hot season,
A place wearing a spring-like lush green cap—
An all-well cap, to be smug sans reason!

Ho-hum from reality to depart,
And mankind's alibi for inaction,
The cold calculus of a callus heart:
'Global Warming blessing be from heaven'.

Man should feel grateful not to face ice age—
Calamity disastrous ever more
Than mere warming and advancing sea shore,
But man finds logic all his ills to hedge.

And if you ask, the task is yon repair,
Cutting consumption is girdling his greed,
Produce more to progress— his basic creed,
Hope, in long-term when we die, things look fair.

Like playing war—to prove life's existence,
Escapism is search for safe distance.

Many in the world still behave as if Global Warming is no more than a paper tiger, and not a real threat. The Polar frost is melting with the world warming up. If one day a warm sea appears where today Polar frost prevails, some escapists might even welcome it as one more vacation spot.

Satire | 03.07.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Evil Ways Are Nine

If whoso fights should sure suffer defeat,
Naught is worth fighting o'er in this tired earth,
If there's naught worth opposing, retreat,
To fight for one's view is an idle mirth,
Like shadow fighting with a mirror's beam,
A mere image that mimics at one's own!
The world is good to good in world's esteem,
Evil, the world has the worst never known.

We are taught: let not the light of lamp die,
There scarce is but one way should one walk out,
The darkling night ends to light up the sky,
Pleasure past pain, life pointing to death's doubt;
 Yet, wisdom of all books lives in one line:
 The right way winds but one, wrong ways are nine.

This sonnet is inspired by a shloka (a quatrain) in Mahabharata as under:

Shlokaardhena pravakshyaami yaduktam grantha-kotibhih |
Paropakaara poonyaaya paapaaya para-peedanam ||

- Sonnets | 12.09.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Experience

A better teacher than any a book
Experience gives life a sharper look,
But ere teaching it takes toughest of test,
That a lifetime's lessons follow in haste.
Take principles, precepts of the time past,
Of essence proven for life all along,
If man his life in right mould were to cast,
He seldom if ever would go wrong.
And yet, what price is this experience?
Wanting to buy it as if for a song,
Hurried souls would end up waiting too long,
Or ride a horse that at right time not runs.
But youth is not designed to go by book,
Untaught it tries new recipes to cook.

And I am tempted to add this couplet:
As well, for, none can anything acquire
Without first passing through a self-lit fire!

Sonnets | 02.03.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Expiry Date

She: for long have you been staring at
This scrap of marriage certificate,
He: see, foods lose freshness,
Marriages too I guess,
Yet, this one has no expiry date!

Food items packaged and sold must come with a best-before date, the
administration finally decides at long last. And why not, for, everything in life has
a best-before date, even marriages.

Tongue-in-cheek | 03.02.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Facts And Fiction—a Bouquet

A lady of fertile, fiction-filled head gets killed
By a ghastly fellow called fact!
She when in an inquest gets grilled,
Confesses, 'I care hoots for heinous act'
The jury was justly divided still:
Some felt, facts were juvenile like a child,
Some felt senile and too old-styled,
Sure, truth oft is a bitter pill.

O fact, let me play with the child in you,
Let me cherish thine notions old and new,
Let me follow wherso you lead,
Be it abyss, or I learn naught indeed!

The world of facts nestled by many a rare bird
Silent does sing a song unheard;
And yon when sings a familiar bird,
Born of head to heart's satisfaction,
Whom world of facts would call fiction,
And call it even absurd,
While world of fiction oft reacts
Pointing to, ah 'fatal futility of facts'!

But facts are no flowers stray
Picked up to praise, for applause,
For prayers on a personal cause,
They go together in a bouquet;
But no use 'tis a bouquet to make
Of fiction stray trying facts to fake!

Not always can ignorance seal man's mind,
Nor can a soaring mind freedom find,
Mind loves freedom when well stirred,
Facts to mind free— one type of bird,
And fiction, a wide open world;

A freed mind when takes off to soar
To farthest shore, goes deeper to the core,
How I wish the twain comes to meet!
But know not where on a one-way street.

And yet, one must search for a meeting point—
For facts and fiction, be it pub or joint,
I would then want them to drink to get drunk,
Such that the truth between the two gets sunk.

Let these dream birds thence search
To find a common perch,
Where fantasy of heart
Fuses seamless to make a work of art,
Where fiction has faith in the morrow
Of facts, their withered past to follow.

If a man nowhere is amidst all facts,
Nowhere burns his mind's fertile flash,
Nowhere in wonder acts, nor e'er reacts,
When facts cast none of their magic spell,
They to him be good as trash—
Bricks piled on to make a prison cell!

The truth of facts a way to glory,
On its own does reveal no story,
Till someone comes to coax them to reveal;
But, truth too soars upon wings of fiction,
Helped by the tailwinds of conviction,
And in storms loses even keel.

Some facts get stuck in foggy sky
Some stay rooted to solid ground—
Stay firm, substantial as sound,
While fiction takes to wings to fly;
Yet, facts on surface be one thing,
When on go, ah what a bird on wing!

Take facts and stir them hard as whole

And drive deep enough a hole,
To reach the core where lies their soul,
And there, there lies my friend thy goal.

Yea, 'facts are stubborn things'²,
And fiction that no spring brings,
Is not it a strange thing?
Man is left twixt the twain ever to swing!

Facts often but raw materials furnish
To cook dishes not well defined,
And fiction gives condiments to garnish,
For serving to a credulous mind!

Knowledge is dresst with varied fact,
And tailored is by intellect;
Belief it is that nothing wears,
Comes her dignity from the faith it airs.

Brute facts! Thou art worst foe
Of human heart's sole hope,
But I shall still with ye go,
And give thee a long rope.

No facts to me
O sacred be,
None are profane,
And none too sane;
But all these opinions
Are dresst the way are onions,
And man's fancy notions
Too vague, too queer,
Like female face lotions,
Soon as are applied, disappear!

Yet, give me fiction mothered by intellect,
And sired O by a weighty fact!

First take your facts from a proper port,
Honest, as is and whereso is,
And then you can them much distort
O much as you so please;
But with them fiction, there's much ease:
In cold blood you cavil, ne'er would they sneeze!

The facts when with self weight are sunk,
The fiction nods the nod of a monk:
'We never sink, e'en when dead drunk,
'Vain gravity sinks and stinks like a skunk'!
And elsewhere paucity of facts
A ready excuse is man when not acts!

Aniruddha Pathak

Fading Shine Of Faith

As graves be for fair sex no fair sign,
Women get banned from a Sufi shrine;
Thought, Sufis liberal,
And Islam all equal;
When would man's faith mature like good wine?

Citing Islamic injunction against women visiting graves,
seven Sufi shrines in Mumbai banned women from
worshipping with any access to the sanctum. I though
Sufism was known for its
openness and liberal views. Perhaps it still is, but no
more are its male interpreters.

- Happenings | 06.11.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Fair O Nightingale, Ye Fall Silent

You fall silent, clouds when come,
O Nightingale, wise with wisdom;
Strident when frogs mating songs sing,
Fair, silent ye fall well past spring.

Trans-creation of a Sanskrit Subhashita:
bhadram krtam krtam maunam kokila jaladagame |
durdara yatra chitkarah maunam hi tatra shobhanam||

Translations | 20.11.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Faith And Reason

To today's man of ken ever on move,
Deprived of faith, re-supplied with reason—
The reason why deprived he feels of love,
Faithless and love-starved he lives under sun.

But why faith and reason poles apart stand?
Faith helps believe what man can see the least,
And a sole means is things to understand
Ere science proves a thing of faith exists.

Man when plays a devil's dire advocate,
Faith to him is belief from logic fled,
That can't stand at reason's illumined gate,
And poor heart pleads in a court chaired by head.

And comes then a philosopher from far
Believing what's on wings of extinct bird,
Unknown to world, as unseen as unheard,
The chair feels: faith comes from an alien star.

And so, faith-born belief looks a strange bird,
Avoidable, swears the voice of reason,
Blind belief is illusion, feels this world
That sings tunes of old well past the season.

Needing no faith than one in human breast,
A poet toils, his heart searching warm hearth,
In faith he sings of wonders of this earth,
The reason whilst primes its wings in the nest.

Wait for the day the hatchling new wings sprout,
Grow up to go far, mate and multiply,
The wiser world when vanquishes old doubt,
To push out siblings of faith ere they fly.

The siblings seem to yell on their way down,
But what's seen as fall is no fall at all,
Nor is it faith that ye seem to frown
All alive it thrives as a miracle.

A gift of God so hard to comprehend
By reason and logic of a fixed roof,
And too much wisdom wills wonder to bend,
And faith has no room for merited proof.

Yet, faith fallen short of fair reason sinks,
The two well need each to each for life breath
As reason too, robbed of faith, often stinks,
Reliant are rivals— reason and faith.

And too much reason for mortals seems odd,
Faith seemed to say regaining its lost voice,
It's faith that helps flourish peas in their pod,
Reason may at the best render them choice.

The ego now could not but intervene,
We aught know, yesterday's faith is fable,
To minds of today's men far from serene,
Faith is a horseless deserted stable.

It looked as if this debate may not cease,
Faith may never wear good enough reasons,
Nor would the reason wait till faith seasons,
Faith and reason can't coexist in ease.

Let graceless zealots fight battles till death,
An old faith many a candle may light,
A burly truthful reason might them blight,
Still, reason's one thing, another is faith.

Though head and heart hatchlings are of one bird
Nestled by soul, which, when deserts its stead,
The belief and faith too desert this world,
And man with all reasons, all rhymes, is dead.

This poem is woven with a variety of warps and woofs of arguments between faith and reason, between head and heart, soul and ego, and shades of opinions from philosophers, thinkers, and poets. And yet remains inconclusive. A compromise is reached at the end.

Ode | 01.06.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Faith Needs No Loud Acclaim

I scarce knew if it was muezzin's shrill calls
In the holiest month of Ramadan,
Or temple bells blaring from prayer halls
In much hallowed Hindu month of Shravan¹,
Or if it was a peacock's sharp pancham² call
Made higher pitched by monsoon's mellow rain,
Perhaps what woke me was a mix of all,
Hid therein was the same soul-felt refrain.
Behind world of belief's pied paths to seek—
Humanity's lifelong search for meaning
That Sphinx-like rose from within this morning,
And in holy month reaching its high peak,
I wondered if faith needs any a name—
Play needless game, or any loud acclaim.

Shravan¹: The holy month around August based on a Moon calendar.

Pancham²: The fifth note in diatonic musical scale. Peacocks sing in this note.

Sonnets | 03.08.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Faith, A New-Born's First Breath

When it comes to one's faith,
No need to yell from roof,
The scriptures from ages
Come with patent nor proof,
Nor are signed by sages,
Faith's like new-born's first breath.

Reflections |17.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Fall, The Best Of All

The best of season to me is fall,
A brown leaf when ready is to fall
That a new one can sprout—
A rule so hard to flout,
Not just leaf alone, meant `tis for all.

And the best time of life too is fall
One is when ready for a recall,
The time of renewal,
Re-creation and all,
To evolve, inch by inch to grow tall!

A stone at Earnest Hemmingway's tomb (1899-1961) carries an inscription—his own: Best of all he loved the fall.

Reflections | 02.09.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Fames Are Made To Fade

Whilst proudest of graves get green coat of moss,
Greedy goats browsing on shoots tender green,
Fames are made to fade— fainter like dull floss,
And undercoat of graves gets grey and lean.

The seeds of fame sown as fail to flower,
As heads of footstones sink in, lose their prime,
As red brick-work blackens further with time,
Weeds wanton are and above all tower.

Even pages of a poet's famed tomes
Get yellowed and frail moving hoary homes,
Fated to get sold, recycled as waste,
At last get melted into pulpy paste.

Once more to be a blank paper again,
Get washed all clean lofty, lyrical words—
Much like the home-turning migrating birds—
O ready to sing new song, new refrain.

As grey lichens leach on tomb-stone's nameplate,
The crisp name and date to obliterate,
Best of names do one day die with their fame,
Loftiest life returns to dust the same.

Musings | 06.08.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Far And Near Sex Is Here

A dildo has been found
In shape, size to astound;
No, sex toys of no modern mind are,
They were still there in historic far,
Sex is prime; go any a far star.

But what looked like dildo
Sure was one sans shadow,
Constructs all of a guilty mind are,
This planet or be it any star,
A guilty mind fails to see too far.

An excavation in Sweden has turned up what may be an ancient dildo— carved out of antler bone, nearly four inches long, about an inch in diameter. It was unearthed at a Mesolithic site (4000-6000 BC) in Motala, Sweden. Here are two views on the find.

Happenings | 12.07.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Fasting, A Human Heritage

Humanity's common-most heritage,
Helping a hardened head with heart to mesh,
Spiritual prayer and pilgrimage,
Fasting, the mind and body to refresh,
Invigorating men with inner grit,
Fasting to restore, tired gets when spirit.

Hungry maws all our awareness command,
But mind material things seems to hanker,
So is the soul in spiritual hunger,
But all welfare of man to maw-ward wind,
A rotund man more of problems create,
Than hungry, as does a river in spate.

Fasting flesh seems to reign in craving mind,
And the soul goodly nourishment does find.

Sonnets | 03.03.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Fate, A Script Writer

The life's script is writ,
Writ of Fate writ large on it,
We act— will nor wit.

Haiku |06.04.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Fear From Frightened Skin

In a house haunted, old and looking grim,
Where she lived all alone, bare bones within,
A monster once chased her in a dark dream,
And night by night then fear surfaced from skin.

The dragon drawing close, the woman
Feeling death's icy breath in her frost blood
On the nape of her neck; she hailing heaven
In scare, her blood rushing as if in flood,

One night whilst she ran like a soul possest,
Death cornered her; the poor terrified she
Nowhere to go, just turned around the best
She could; and finding voice shouted, why me?

The voice from within heard was free from fear,
Startled, death straightened its face somewhat grim,
Challenged when, it moved in a backward gear,
And shrugged: Sorry, but it was only dream.

You should have known: fear takes many a name:
Dread and worry, panic and anxiety,
Each a differently dressed variety;
Exposed when, made when nude, it looks the same.

Taught to avoid and to procrastinate,
Never to judge, justify, nor control,
Fear when takes over undivided whole,
In ways violent oft we demonstrate.

I've found my dare, her voice said from within,
For, fear stalked only from the frightened skin.

Reflections | 02.08.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Fear Of Death

When two owls came, sat on a branch beside,
One with a snake caught in bent up bowed beak,
His companion a mouse, from close by creek,
Both, pity be, waiting to, not yet died,
The snake still, seeing the mouse forgot death,
Such has in food every life's fervent faith.

Seeing the snake, poor mouse, too fraught with fear,
Nigh well forgot that caught was it by death,
And both the owls mighty mystified were,
Lo, fear of death more dreadful was than death!
So, life is not of death so much afraid,
As is of fear to die— fear's greater dread.

Yet, more one curses death, more kisses life,
The more he lusts to live, be it fears rife.

- Sonnets | 04.02.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Fear, If Flaws Fail To Irk

Only when a flaw mighty irks,
To rectify the fault, man works.
But for progress let's thank a jerk,
Never a ten-to-five desk clerk,
Funny if old friends have no quirks.
So fear if faults should fail to irk,
For, a flawless might be a shirk,
Need, the mother is of hard work.

The subject matter demands serious reflection. But the piece is set in tongue-in-cheek style.

Tongue-in-cheek | 05.08.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Few Things Please Us More Than Lies

Hair turned all grey, I still am far from wise—
As to why few things please us more than lies.

Why pens portray shadowy truths in grey,
Why a paint brush goes off to kiss vain clout
Of grotesque— called a creative play,
If that's what art be, I've a serious doubt.

We pay for a peep of pulpy films more,
For fictitious pens, frames of painted lore,
We switch off history for entertainment,
We muse and day-dream, not mind this moment.

And why we find those fifty shades of grey
Exciting more than truth in black and white;
Why we wear masks, less than truthful roles play,
Oh, why lies live longer than truth's fair light.

Lo, an angel of truth whole life does strive,
And never hesitates— truth to uphold,
Yet, a crucial moment in life arrives,
And an untruth, call it half truth, is told.

The epic as says he does for it pay,
The message is: tell untruth, pay the price,
An escape root, call it realm of grey,
Was not he defeated by loaded dice!

A pet patted and pampered O for long,
A cat loves none else than her own sweet self,
Illusive remains than a fairy elf,
Man still likes her, facts not right, fibs and wrong!

Men stay married for the same odd reason,
More commerce is bought by the myth of lie,
More nations are friends, for, truths lowly lie,
Untruth blossoms whatso be the season.

More, cruellest lies in silence are said,

He who said that may have reason to say,
But lies do get eloquent by the day,
It is the truth that suffers when muted.

And in a warm company of white lies,
Post truth, by half of its lofty measure,
Gets treated today like a rare treasure,
Couched in courteous décor, it is on rise.

Lies help nations save from the path of war,
We admire liars glibly that can dare,
And detest those that a bare truth declare,
Suave, subtle, lies foes are today no more.

To stick to truth is to lose hard earned lead,
Cosy rests the sin on a pedestal,
And lie maketh a handle that fits all,
So, dare to lie; truth is no more in creed,

Go ahead; telling truth any fool can,
Managing untruth well makes today's man,
Those that can't lag-behind, are also-ran
On dunghills, crackling like helpless hen.

It's old fashioned to think lies live no long,
We need learn that lies would live to be old;
For, today's truth is: old age makes lies bold;
In ripe old age I'm learning a new song.

Musings | 04.07.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Fighting Or Feigning Tears

Found was he fighting tears frothing by,
Hope, it was no well-tryed a feigned try;
We shall soon have a clue,
That the tears teemed up true,
If wiped from nation's every sad eye!

The new PM entered the Parliament House apparently overcome by emotions. Bowing on the steps he was found fighting moist eyes, a rare sight indeed. Let us take the gesture on the face value, although people we know wear masks. Yet, we shall soon find if people's eyes are wiped dry with achhe din as promised.

- Happenings | 04.05.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

First Rain

The smell
Of thirsting loam
Soaks in when free to roam
For a short time in all its spell,
First rain!

Cinquains | 25.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

First Step

First step
I took to bend,
To walk across to mend,
But to my smile her smirk was slap,
Last step!

Cinquains | 26.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

First Stone To The Sinful

Character has depth, width nor yet length,
Nor yet lurks a few inches from waist,
Sexual mores cause on heart heady heist,
Only but height renders moral strength.
It can't be confined to continence,
Nor yet when life is lived, loveless bare,
Our sages and seers, most, married were—
And cared for no total abstinence,
Some sought love transcending their marriage.
By nature man has been error-prone,
And has from flaws and faults higher grown,
History still spares seers a pink page.
He that hath not in sin grown his bone,
Let him to sinful aim the first stone.

Thoughts on Christmas Eve, an odd piece of sonnet set in anapaest meter.

Sonnets | 07.01.2018 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Five Lines In One Garland

Five lines
In one garland
Tied in together stand
And the whole thing as if one shines,
Cinquain!

Cinquain, despite its apparent French connection, is an American poem-form of recent origin. It has five lines forming a single stanza of 22 syllables. The number of syllables in each line:

- 2 in the first line, and 4 in the second,
- 6 in the third line, and 8 in the fourth, and
- 2 again in the fifth line.

The first four lines are iambs, and the fifth one a spondee (with two stressed syllables) . It builds up a climax progressively, the fifth line being some sort of conclusion with a surprise.

Cinquains | 24.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Five Men, Five Sides

A village simpleton saw a strange thing,
An honest man, he took it to the king,
Prompt who felt, let more heads decide,
That is where he thought wisdom lied.

A layman saw but from one side,
A man of ken from every side,
A biased man stuck to a single side,
Man lettered (what else?) took time to decide.

And yet, no one could clearly say,
A learned man was then brought into fray—
A pundit, he looked from every angle,
Faltering yet into deepest tangle!

A village bumpkin watching rather keen,
Then offered, 'why, ain't it just a pumpkin'!

- Sonnets | 04.03.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Flaws, Happily Married

Take a man that can't above flaws rise,
And his spouse that on every flaw spies,
Now weld them together—
The flaws of his and her,
Stir together that they neutralise;
And then count on their luck,
But it's like drops on duck,
The chances are: each flaw multiplies!

Take heart, the married couple here may not be happily married, but their flaws are.

Tongue-in-cheek | 04.09.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Flyovers

Proud our progress might look with flyovers,
But not for me are toll-speckled speedways,
Pylons hacking hinterland, tall towers—
I long for the good old fashioned highways.

Cunningly covering up urban mess,
Gloating over the land be-locked problems,
Demolish if we can't the urban slums,
Ostrich-like fast-forward from past, I guess.

Treating the world below as nether land,
Cut off as if from sun and cast asunder,
Whilst ugly growth is left on self to mend,
What price progress? What price this urban blunder?

Till our progress is wide, as is well-spread,
Unto empty space, skyward would it head,
All us desire a brand new world to build,
But should we let whatso greenery killed?

Fast flyovers are fine, and expressways,
But urban poor nor do the farming hand,
Nor poor villagers need be locked in land,
Over-looked, nor yet stranded on bye-ways.

But that's what most flyovers seem to do,
The expressways when but two metros care,
Leaving smaller towns in suspended air,
Don't we on dotted lines but two dots woo1?

The rest are if left out from larger share,
Progress me think shall remain ritual fare.

Happenings | 03.06.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Fool And His Thinking Small

God thought of universe when to cast,
He made it infinite, not just vast,
Work of a Creator,
Me a tiny factor!
But man's wonder did not for long last.

The world infinite to see and size,
Man needed to close his mortal eyes,
Shake up what thought defies,
Till oneness does arise,
But not whatso made him any wise.

And no barriers ever did fall,
Why, he built up more of mental wall,
'I am the universe',
The fool long hence suffers,
Ah fools and their thoughts ever so small!

Musings | 02.06.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Football And Tv Footfall

Here, a handful of hysterical men
Seeming to run aimless for endless hours
In a display of sweat-soaked endeavours,
The men that ah together only can.
Now fighting longer tenure of the ball,
Well past the goal-line thence in testing time,
Grit and guts, gumption getting mixed with grime,
O to hold whole beholding world in thrall.

This, whilst million squatters on cushioned chairs,
Millions of crazy, stiffly lazy bones
Called couch potatoes all with expert airs,
Sit immobile, limp like lifeless mile-stones,
Who, can well do with their own grit and gall,
But would much rather cheer than chase the ball.

Sonnets | 02.06.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

For The Gold Of Her Heart

The Love I love lacks the eyes of a doe,
A gaggle of girls might boast eyes better—
Bodily art, bewitching face to go,
Yet, her modest assets still me fetter.
The earth in my garden, a shade of grey,
May have more red than the red of her lips;
Late dusk still has more lustre one to sway
Than of lingering smile she ever keeps;
Her visage has warmth of autumn's late eve,
I see wilted rose in her wrinkled cheeks,
The bouquet of her bosom that much reeks
Would make even brave-hearts her room to leave,
And yet, one truth works as a Cupid's dart,
I love her thanks to the gold of her heart.

Sonnets | 16.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Forests Where God Rests

If there be a place in world, a big beast
Has nary a bone nor bugbear the least,
Where all life lives in hallowed harmony,
And conflicts confined should maws get hungry.

If there be place where plenitude prevails,
Where no dweller grabs governed by the greed,
Plenty prevails when each heeds to this creed,
Abandoned, goddess of greed where now wails.

A place where world of life is left alone,
Where cleanliness code of the self prevails,
Where any a decay soonest is gone,
Waste and wealth get where the same weighty cares.

If there's a place that breathes new life to all—
A green lung where breathes for all of planet,
Where all life-forms cohabit, big or small—
What civilised world scarce can emulate.

A place, ancient Indic texts did extol¹
A life divine spirit would well uplift,
A place to meditate and touch the soul,
What to mankind bequeathed as Nature's gift.

A place with sacrifice, service-imbued,
The dead where served as much as the alive,
Dead trees as wood where vie for common good,
Such a place man is out man to deprive!

Greeted by woods man was a welcome guest,
He's lost old wisdom: God dwells in forest.

1. Mahabharata, the epic which can be as old as 5000 years, has many a verse which extols the virtues of woods and forests— plants and animal species.

Forests wherein God dwells and which act as lungs for all life, are getting destroyed on a daily basis. Rainforests at one time covered more than 14 percent of the Earth's surface. Today they have dwindled to less than six per cent.

Aniruddha Pathak

Forget Not O Mind

Ye miss O mind in thine mindless vain mirth
That every shade from a rainbow's palette
Ye paint with, brightening life's dreary state,
None else but by Heaven has been added.

And ever since thine birth upon this earth,
The sweetest notes of a melodic scale
Ye use, music to make and to regale
The world, are but by Heaven created.

Ye forget, lost when in thine puny worth,
Marvelling in thine mind's enormous power
That lets man rise, kiss tallest of tower,
That too never hast thou, by heaven made.

Get down from thine vainest pedestal thence,
Think, the power ye wield who's willed it long hence.

This piece has a rhyme pattern not generally seen in sonnets.

Sonnets | 01.08.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Forgot, He'd A Soul

Hitting life's golf holes,
Struggling to score vague goals,
Forgot, he'd a soul.

Haiku |02.10.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Fourteen Beautiful Birds On Wings

A baker as packs thirteen eggs to claim
A good dozen, a sonneteer— fourteen
Sweet lines in praise of thine slender good frame,
That thine mysterious marvels never lean
Might seem, he too that fledglings fully hatch
Ah, gorgeous birds to be, ready to fly
In time together in one single batch,
Or in formations that but sonnets try.
The eight of them in front to face all strife,
The six that trail, as if in counterpoint,
Resolve to soothe— ah, sonnet's very life,
As Volta, some poets choose to anoint,
 Of whose last two, twain wings of a couplet,
 Come with a short song ending the sonnet.

- Sonnets | 04.11.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Fourth Pillar, Not Estate

Call me tattered estate, I care less,
Call me even a prostitute press,
Paint me jaundiced yellow,
But I have my hallow,
I'm a fourth pillar that bears great stress.

Press and media have been called by many a name: yellow journalism, porters carrying too many agenda, fourth estate, (not fourth pillar) , noose-papers, and prostitute. Despite their drawbacks, media provide a check (no blank cheque) on the other three pillars. Targeting them as deadwood does no good to country.

Happenings | 03.04.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Freedom Is How God Loves

Pure love, ifs nor buts, be His law,
His heart heaves if ye love in faith,
For, compassion dwells in His maw,
The world of God's built on no math.
Nor He's worried ye broke some law,
Nor yet ever frets if ye err,
God's glad you're good though no one saw,
The field furrowed by you is fair.
Not the sinner, He sulks at sin—
Even those that might errant turn,
He wants His way-farers to win,
And freely lets them err and learn.
In content He coos like a dove,
For, freedom's the way He shows love.

Sonnets | 12.05.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Freedom, A Mirage

In freedom if I search for freedom's fruits—
Sweet or sour— there's freedom nor free spirit,
And fear there's of getting caught in deep roots,
A song sings off tune, off pitch, out of beat.
And the freedom fought for oft won't be won,
For, ensconced in a prison's cosy wall,
One might feel, blest he's hallowed by heaven,
Yon of all struggles and strife, gore and gall,
For, freedom is free choice— if a free fall,
Whilst warm, safe and benign may feel bondage,
It's strange but man feels safe oft in a cage,
And prison need be not of a brick wall.
Mirage is it— like blank space not yet walled,
Ask a poet long on his last line stalled.

Freedom goes with free choice and often one feels it is nigh but mirage. Often there is safety in a cage, and cosy feel prison's walls. Prose may seem to provide a lot of freedom, not poetry. Yet, a kind of verdant imagination possible in poetry is not there in prose. Further, blank space is freedom for a poet, so is an unstructured poem. But it is an open space not yet walled. Yes, he has a free choice insofar as imagination goes.

Sonnets | 03.06.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Friends

Seen have I friends fishing self-centred good,
Busy flattering, placating to please,
Words from vainest deeds veiled in a coiled hood,
In whose presence I seldom breathed in ease,
Never around when needed their friendship,
I've seen them deserting a sinking ship.

Yet, there are friends like a pair of spare hands—
Friends that stand steady, sun or pouring rain,
Crossing conventions, trickiest of bends,
Giving a helping hand, pleasure or pain,
And wise counsel, bitter be it or sweet—
Friends that strove hard their self standards to meet.

There are friends and friends, a spectrum of band,
He that sticks closer than brother is friend.

Sonnets | 05.03.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Friends And Mates

Friendship has two wide welcome gates
Whence have come all the friends and mates:
Shared loves and interests,
Shared enemies and hates;
Friends endure long; mates have short dates.

It looks like one but is no limerick, nor is it cast in anapaest metre. It is iambic tetra metre. All the five lines have the same rhyme. The mood too matches not with a limerick. The tone is serious.

Musings | 04.03.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Friends, How Many Touch Heart?

If you can treat life as if it were sea
And see your heart heaving like a seashore,
If you can see beyond what your eyes see,
Easy can make friends with the wayward waves,
If your imagination be an oar,
And if your mind eagerly the sea braves,
Then, and only then, it matters no more
If friends came to your life only to part,
What would matter forever here to fore:
How many touched the vast shore of your heart.

For, friends that come on wings of rising tide,
At your life's waxing phase, a friend's no more,
Wait for a waning tide that would abide,
See, how many still knock at lonely door.

Sonnets | 04.04.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

From Kicks To Kickbacks

Referee ah getting a red card!
A warning to play fair, be on guard,
If football's life and death,
They need to restore faith,
From kicks to kickbacks, what a standard!

Seven FIFA officials are arrested by Swiss authorities in Zurich, in a scandal in football history. More than \$151 million in bribes and kickbacks are being investigated and 14 top football officials and promoters have been charged by US Justice Department. If it is only a tip of the iceberg, imagine what is not visible. Perhaps a red card was needed like never before because the system gave no yellow card.

Happenings | 13.05.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Frothing For Vague Future

Prohibitive when flex the costs to falter,
Option none to fail, success at all cost,
Cracking the code, reaching exalted AIR1,
Do or die morphs into mantra of most.
And as such plans come with a fine blueprint,
This too has been— two years long, seven days
A week, and all hours of undeterred dint,
For, on a war footings come winning ways.
Hordes of wide-eyes are weaned from cosy life,
Bidding good-bye to home in spring of youth,
To live a life that's no life, rife with strife—
Our higher learning's harshest of this truth—
Of plight-packed days and caffeinated nights,
Frothing for fat dough, future-feigned delights!

AIR1: All India Rank

Private coaching from early years after school hours has become a norm. War-like competition has come in and fun has gone out from even primary education. The last two years of the secondary school need a commando like war tactics. The cost that the society pays is not just fat fees of the specialist coaching schools (coaching classes are now often boarding schools) , but immense in socio-economic terms. Yet, no one seems any wiser in this rat-race world. From these gloomy thoughts has arisen this sonnet.

Sonnets | 06.01.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Fury, A Shy Maid

Angry me when I felt and watched it,
Lo, my rage beat hasty a retreat;
A shy maid fury be in black mood,
Vulnerable and vain like one nude,
So exposed, she loses all her wit.

Musings | 03.05.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Gain A Saint, Lose Mother

Canonised, she gets a saint's halo—
From mothers' mellow pink to yellow,
Saints shine from starry sphere,
Mothers be far too near,
Saints in skies, mothers work from below.
And if I aught be clear
A mother has no peer.
Whilst saints from pedestals' pale light glow—
Not high, mother's nigh close to follow.

Happenings | 02.09.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Garden

A garden's no green patch made rich,
A school for humans hard to teach,
In patience to learn from Ma Nature,
To ponder on man's greedy nature!

Industry, hard work like an ant's,
Thrift, that tomorrow plenty grants,
Eternal hope on things adverse,
Nature has the will, things to nurse;

Has trust, a newly born infant
To care, her devotion unbent—
Ensure, sprouts would get ripe one day,
And for a long while stay that way

That this Earth a paradise be
If only man wills so to see,
If acts in thrift, clipping raw greed,
O not to reap unsown yon need.

Yet, man's careful not nor patient,
Grows wanton weeds unrepentant;
Let gardens mankind on earth warn:
Ye shall heed or else die like corn.

Mystique nor myth, heaven's good grace,
No patch of greenery so rich,
But charm packed in a small green space,
Schools gardens are mankind to teach.

Musings | 03.02.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Gender Catch

MOM in short stands for Man of the Match,
POM a prize, female players may fetch;
One need here careworn be,
World has grown nigh touchy,
So be safe, concede no easy catch.

Happening | 09.02.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Gentle Unto Death

He was alive if breathing be called life,
Peaceful and blissful with no surface strife,
To me, he was suffering for far long,
The man I knew— a man of self-esteem
Died long ere—awaiting to hear death gong,
In life's melting pot his dream had gone grim!

Alive, yea, all vegetables sure are,
Those that grow and ripen to reddish tinge,
Yet, to say they scarce feel is going far,
Softest of touch makes some shy creepers cringe,
And man's born with a head, and feeling heart,
In hierarchy of life he's way apart.

And man's body being a garment born,
Like any raiment gets worn out and old,
Yet breathes on unlike things far from born,
What would a soul do but seek a new mould?
The body's gone beyond a fair repair,
It is only alive on borrowed air.

The right to own things, be it west or east—
Be it a hut or house, or an estate,
Or hankering for none whatso the least,
If never be in doubt to hesitate,
We scarce should snatch away this divine right
Bestowed by heaven in fecund foresight!

Yet man, but a mere man, seats in judgment,
And thinking too hard with his hardened head,
Mundane logic, legal letters, and scant
Respect for feelings of what's in heart's stead,
Rules what he feels right be in his wisdom,
What if it goes against heaven's kingdom!

The right to life when heavenly right is,
Should we deny his right to die in peace?
It's not against heaven— wanting to die,
But sure it is his freedom to deny;

For, when a man seeks freedom from all strife,
A man he's in search of new life yon life!

And one day when he dies in agony,
We wise folk be at fault being unkind,
The docs and nurses, all and so many,
The legal lords clueless with tomes well-lined,
And heaven shall curse hallowed heads hell bent
To deny him dignity of garment!

Bhagavad-Gita says death is like a change of garment. Man therefore should feel free to change it if he so wishes. The right to own things is a fundamental right, but is incomplete without the right to disown things if so desired. The right to life as the fundamental right is no different. To wish to die may be uncommon, but it is not unnatural. Survival is instinctive but hard; and as it is too easy to die, law should protect man. But we seem to be totally mixed up on this and have complicated things for the old and suffering wishing to die peacefully and in a dignified way. It is time we think of this, not with our too rational a mind, but with our heart that can empathise. Euthanasia is not mercy killing as is made out. It is about dying gently, is more about human right to live in dignity, and die too in dignity.

Reflections | 02.10.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Give It The Voice Of A Rainbow

Vivid, vast, vibrant was my dreams' canvas,
Potentiality as never was,
Balmy breeze wafting softly ashore,
Come, I said, open my heart's closed door.
It lasted no more than a mere moment,
And vanished all the gold once dreamt.
And there remained scattered in its wake,
Drizzles of day-long tears that'd fill a lake;
The call of my muted mourning heart,
Had no voice—yon violin's wailing start,
Alas, for long broken was its tired string,
And nor it nor my heart could sing,
Both trying tired interventions though,
Nor music nor breeze then on did flow.

You had the music once created,
You were the conductor that it led,
You had made its tuneful voice muted,
Give rainbow's voice—violet to red.

- Musings | 06.02.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Give Me A Needle And No More

A story 'tis of a noble tailor,
A great sage in the garment of lay soul,
In ocean that be life a skilled sailor
In search of a hallowed path as his goal.

A king once came to him homage to pay,
And gifted a pair of scissors of gold
That left the sage sober and somewhat cold,
In wisdom to decline, no more to say.
What may I give O great sage? Asked king,
Give me just a small needle for stitching.

Scissors cut things, diminish and divide,
Needles strive to bring them back together,
Bring broken hearts fallen apart to dither,
I wonder if scissors can cut false pride.

- Reflections | 03.05.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Global Freeze

Polar winds showing strange, sudden quirk,
Northern world getting a frozen jerk,
Heaven hells to a halt,
Appearing there no alt
But to slow, good old dodge— shirk all work!

A full circle from Global Warming to Global Freeze! For a world perennially on a rat-race mode, for rush-addicts that can't relax, there is a lesson to learn: Slow down and reflect. May be there still is time and a way to change. Here is Global Warning.

Yet, this northern freeze seems to show, there always is a meeting ground. Even for two different thermal scales, Celsius and Fahrenheit, there is a meeting point, at minus forty degrees that some places have recorded.

- Happenings | 01.01.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Go Add To The Beauty Of Life

No pilgrimage on a hired mule,
Nor yet so much a learning school,
Regulation nor is there rule,
It's no use walking a way-trodden track,
Go discover— one step forward and back,
If enough love in life you pack,
Know this: life's a creative tool.

Go add to beauty if that be life,
Banish as much you can its strife.
Add to its music some more melody,
More of poesy to its poetry,
And if you can, perchance,
Add a little more dance,
Life is creative tool, no chance.

This piece (which can be a sort of sonnet) tells us what life is not what it is, and what one should do.

- Musings | 08.07.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Go Light Up A Lamp

To see truth, not myth,
Go light up a lamp forthwith;
What use grinding teeth?

No use blaming dark,
Nor being a divine spark,
Use it if we can't forthwith.

Haiku | 03.04.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

God Gets Tested More

The day dawns tests Him
More than it tests him,
And God seems to fail.

Yes, He seems to fail,
For, we men are frail,
Not fit for His trust!

Haikus | 02.04.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

God Wot, We Not

Good luck sure to some happens unsought,
Some even fall in a honey pot.
But it's not been my lot,
Nor has fortune me sought,
God wot, we all are taught, but we not!
So, it has been my lot
To get nought after nought,
All I need: a digit `ther than dot!

Tongue-in-cheek | 03.06.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

God, Far Off And Vague

In this world of many a faith and god,
Man has managed to keep poor Him so vague—
Viewing Him in various ways to me odd—
A bookmark, tag, or a faith-hanging peg,
Not for his soul but welfare, wealth and weal,
His prayers are pleads hid like onion peal.

Man's often made God swallow bitter pill,
Vilifying, crucifying poor Him,
Take, labelling Him as son of devil,
Killing Him that He rise again supreme;
Yet, few want God close in the heart to rest,
He's scared. Is not soul enough of a pest?

And if God stands face to face, flesh and blood,
Doubt, if he can spot Him—this man so odd.

Sonnets | 03.11.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

God, The Nest Of All

Birds that blue skies soar,
Return home to nest and rest,
God is Nest of nests.

Call it safe haven, sanctuary, shelter, asylum, or safe harbour. Is not God all that
and more?

Haiku | 09.05.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Gold Standard

Coffers spilling with gold, jewels and jade—
With precious pearls, and treasure deeply laid?
No, loafs of bread maketh far better aid—
If hungry maws nigh happy should be made.
If everyone is lost in priceless gold,
Its value way behind price tags gets lost—
Say, mettle cost multiplied manifold,
Gold standard be a fat man's toast to boast.
And greed for gold me seems is not for gold,
Nor for silver that hardly has glittered,
It's promise vague that precious metals hold—
A promise posted, not yet delivered.
Pity be to man of material mould,
Were he to want his dreams glitter like gold.

Sonnets | 05.05.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Good Earth

Some say, God's made earth so fertile,
Wonder if man should ever toil,
Some ploughing here and probing there,
Watering, weeding and some care,
And lo, abundant crop should smile.

I tickled garden earth, so, in some haste
To see if she laughs with goodly harvest;
She did laugh but seemed not so pleased,
From a mild shock when I felt eased,
She said: you seem some sort of jest.

- Tongue-in-cheek | 07.01.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Gossamer Gauze

Life a long voyage of pilgrimage,
And actors we all acting on stage,
Who, for a rare applause
That we might hope to cause,
Love to linger on to prison cage.

And we all might think we are great actors, while in truth we are no more than buffoons in the eyes of a spoil-sport called Fate, Fortune, or Destiny. And applause we see is gossamer gauze. The voyage guide gives no tour programme. The director of the stage-play gives no script. The destiny provides no prompt. And still we hope for applause!

Musings | 05.09.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Grand Old Party That Was

Old for sure, no longer as ere grand,
Flavour lost, it tastes now British bland,
King cobra has just passed,
Dead skin not aside cast,
Hood and hiss, hard put still to defend.

The Congress, the so-called Grand Old Party, is in dismal shape after elections. And yet the old stiffness is intact. Not in touch with realities, it is likened in this ditty to an old cobra: defanged and badly mauled.

- Happenings | 07.05.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Graves Of Past

Let resting ghosts buried be
In dark alleys of oblivion,
Of bitter taste and none
Your past is like a dead sea.
Why dig open the graves of past?
—Of painful memories lay,
Of a forgotten yesterday—
Not but grey shadows half mast
They'd cast upon a promising today;
Let resting ghosts, buried, decay.

- Musings | 09.09.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Greed Has Gotten Good

If newspapers spread what use bed-sheet?
What use vehicle with a pair of feet?
Small is my footprint's tread,
What fuss is all this greed?
Comes when time, bare handed must I quit.
Drop by drop still it fills,
No one knows when it spills,
Platitudes feeling good, we repeat!

Tongue-in-cheek | 03.07.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Greed Is Good

If well off we're than were,
Why's jolly Joe still a broody Bill?
Why's a smiling face rare?
The more one has the more he wants still,
On thankless a path puffing up-hill!

The points raised by Matt Ridley in his book, *The Rational Optimist*, sound temptingly good. And some of them valid too. But he seems to say: Greed is good. I hope human greed follows an inverted U curve. If so how much of greed is greed, and how much is need? The common good of humanity at a future point will have to decide this. Yet, only Destiny has the big picture with it; and knows what is good for us. So, let us be optimists, rational or not. See also 'Peak-less-path up the hill', |11.07.14 |.

This piece follows limerick style but packs a serious thought.

-Happenings | 10.07.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Greeding Vultures In My Head

If fruitless should grow every goodly deed,
And if a pleasant song of soulful lilt
On melodious notes of pathos is built,
How long can sustain man's grand-standing creed?
For, as they say: knowledge alone won't do,
Let wisdom in life-long battles apply;
As willing head alone would seldom do,
Let it a set of willing hands supply.

If with all renounced heart I eat my bread,
If none whoso in world— alive or not—
I feel attached—not even my blood red,
Doubt if I can fill up my karmic pot!
With tenets of many a scripture read,
I struggle keeping vultures off my head.

Sonnets | 02.04.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Grey Shall Turn Thine Green Pride

Once, Earth felt proud in her family meet.
I've the power to create—unlike all you,
All ye art pale shadows with no light lit,
Nature has blest me with a rare virtue,
I alone can nurture life and nourish,
Sun knows to scorch mad one day to perish.

Sun smiled a benign smile showing no ire.
I burn off my flesh part by very part,
What ye call scorching heat is sacred fire
Thine womb to warm my child, give thee upstart,
My sacrifice O of billions of years
Help thou witness upon thee trillion cheers.
If I were to scorch thee a wee bit more,
To ash shall turn thine green pride on grey shore.

Sonnets | 01.11.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Guru Of Great Girth

Big brother and benevolent guru,
Ye save us from some straying shooting stars—
Rebels and renegade missiles of Wars—
We on this earth do cherish thine bright hue.

Bestow to us thine blessings auspicious,
Do tell us the secret of thine huge size,
Like colossus ye straddle solar skies,
And fatherly figure art thou to us.

Ah moons ye have exceeding dozens five,
Fascinated we feel with just our one,
And wait for weeks for full moon to arrive,
But wonder if more is or not more fun.

Ye give tail wind to earthlings' curious wings.
And source of strength thou art to all siblings.

The poem is for children. Missiles of wars refer to meteors and fragments of Mars, or a planet between Mars and Jupiter that broke up due to an unknown collision in the past.

Musings | 03.08.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Gurus Of All Seasons

Come, trust me to give every odd answer,
Have faith in my wisdom to deliver,
Come, have belief in thine own latent power,
O waiting to be unleashed; they aver.

If wading art thou unto floods of woes,
Confidence conspiring to disappear,
Strife nor thine stress any gravity knows,
Come if thine earnings run in a slow gear.

A guru handy is with whatso help:
Birds of brave feathers like Dale Carnegie—
Winning disciples, seeking power and pelf,
Be it Napoleon Hill's 'Think and rich be'.

And happy-to-help industry is rife—
Bookshelves are crowded like yet-to-reap crops,
There are retreats galore, sundry workshops,
An ocean pulsates as if with odd life.

How taxing tough and testing this time is?
Emperors when ventured the world to tame,
No more a stressful age it was than this,
Same are human heads and hearts, same the aim.

When Arjun and brothers suffered exile,
Or when Sita fell into Ravan's hands,
To rescue her when Ram reached Lankan isle,
Even when Noah abandoned flooded lands.

The cares and concerns of life scarce much change,
Sons still believe: their fathers had it good,
Only broadened hast aspiration's range,
Perchance grumpy has grown man's attitude.

A starry role of a Greek tragedy
Man oft readily takes, soaps fresh in mind,
Refusing all the while to remedy,
Nor take command of the life with pain lined.

And wants and wishes have grown ever since
Adam and Eve did their innocence lose,
To douse his growing desires gone obtuse,
Man blest is with many a modern means.

But then, pray, what ails this much-hassled man?
May be, man's tuned more to the outside world,
And his inner voice now much less is heard,
On dunghills as if seeks her joys a hen!

Man looks like a seafarer in a storm,
With shortcuts and set-solutions galore,
Happy-to-help crippling all the more,
All he does: dream of shore to keep heart warm.

But man has to figure his own way out,
Happy to help can't his miseries end,
At worse, it may leave him with same old doubt,
Tied hands they teach him to swim end to end!

The best of cooking done is at slow fire,
Instant noodles please but for an instant,
If your belly burps with enough desire,
Let all gurus wait with gyan so pregnant.

Leave all the guru-gyan buried in texts,
Jump in to know what's right in right contexts,
It's no use watering flowers and fruits,
The plant need be nourished nigh at the roots.

For every little problem in the world today there is a happy-to-help book, or a guru retailing a what-to-do gyana (knowledge) .
They regurgitate the ancient wisdom presented in a smart, ready to accept way.
But, most often, they deal with the symptoms rather than the root cause. There is no short cut in life. The basic problems are not so different than they were in the past, but the complexity to search the root problems has greatly increased.
There is no one size that can fit everyone. The true self-help must start at home, or else it will not work.

Satire | 03.07.10 |

Guts And Courage

Guts when show success soon there follows,
Buts nor ifs, nor yet chasing shadows,
Courage weighs when you win,
Hedge sitters watch and grin,
Putts may pay if golf ball to greens goes.

Note, the opening and ending words of the lines rhyme here.

Reflections | 06.07.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Gym, A New Route To Divorce

Gym, not for forcing fight with the flab,
Nor yoga to tone up sagging abs,
But, for aside affair
With fitness trainer there,
And new route to divorce, lab of labs!

Husband busy with business of money: away, uninterested,
or incapable. And wife, 'for fitness, honey'! Gymnasiums
and yoga training centres come to help neglected wives.
The fitness trainer is young, fit, suave, and receptive. The
forcing flab also needs urgent attention. All make up for
a good fuel for an impending fire. Yes, gyms are new labs
and a short route to divorce.

- Happenings | 24.08.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Had Man Not Evolved From Ape

God might be a lazy man's quirk,
Man can't be God's noblest of work.
From what appears I've this view
That God needs further to ponder
That, man seems His biggest blunder
If man's not done his damndest due.
Perhaps He played a game of dice,
And Destiny played a spoiled sport,
And poor Earth had to pay the price,
Yet, farther seems his journey's port,
There's time to test faith placed in man,
After all Darwin was human!
Wish, man had not moved up from ape,
His progression took a strange shape.

Sonnets | 15.01.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Haiku 1: What Of Your Own Shame?

What about own shame?
Before you put me to flame,
Go, get spotless name.

Dussehra was celebrated all over India on 20th October, a day of triumph of good over evil when the effigy of Ravan, a demon of Ramayana fame, is burnt as a ritual.

Here, the effigy of demon posits to people scorching it.

Reflections | 06.10.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Haiku 2: Ere And Now

The demons of ere
Demon on face were,
These days a disguise they wear.

Dussehra was celebrated all over India on 20th October, a day of triumph of good over evil when the effigy of Ravan, a demon of Ramayana fame, is burnt as a ritual.

A contrast is made here of things before and now.

Reflections | 07.10.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Haiku 3: With Demons All Alive

Out Ravan to kill,
And scorching all ill,
With ways and means still evil!

Dussehra was celebrated all over India on 20th October, a day of triumph of good over evil when the effigy of Ravan, a demon of Ramayana fame, is burnt as a ritual.

Ravan is long since dead, but his ghost is alive in men.

Reflections | 08.10.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Hanging On In Hope

Pundits and priests, souls learned,
Pious pouts educated,
I asked whoso might well tell,
In plainest words hope to spell;
I entered their doors all hopes,
But expelled was, tangled ropes.

In despair I looked at sky,
O Heaven, pray tell me why.
That said, I asked a strange bird,
Trusting wings who in hope fly,
In hope lives each day, soars high,
Thought, birds know this secret word.

O bird, witnessing whole world—
All getting stirred and be-stirred,
Tell if man, who lives life grim—
Life of getting born and bust,
And then getting one with dust,
Does he live on wings of dream?

Tell me how they paint rainbows,
And how they live for morrows,
How at all they live their life.
Simple: aspiring for dope,
In hope hanging on by rope,
And survive miseries rife.

Musings | 06.03.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Happiness

Like perennial stream happiness flows,
A stagnant pool filled but with sorrows
Stands in way, in river as rock,
Intending flowing waters to block,
Yet, what get stuck are sorrows, water flows!

- Reflections | 02.11.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Happiness At Dawn

The night's when turning into day,
And stars begin to slowly blur,
The early birds when move to stir,
Dreams seem to pour on to pillows
Whilst unfolding tend to lose flair,
There wafts refreshing fragrant air,
I suffer when waking up woes,
Sun's candles when light up on own,
My body bones begin to whine
As if they've lost a youthful shine,
And brushing aside last of moan,
I wake up older by one day.
Happiness is those extra blinks
One steals, dawn unto day when sinks.

Morning musings | 02.01.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Happiness Frozen

There was once this man. Let's call him Ted,
Twenty-four-by-seven happy made;
Good lord, isn't it too odd?
I almost see Him nod,
One happy all the time's nigh but dead!

Happenings, humour | 20.03.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Happiness, A Maiden Shy

Happiness, a maiden ever shy,
Not averse still in public to cry,
Ask her if she's happy,
Happy she no more be,
No more chased, willingly she comes nigh.

Reflections | 03.02.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Happiness, No One's Pet

Happiness I thought was a puppy,
And got me a kitten plus doggy;
My days dawned with dog-walk,
Cat never walked my talk,
And still wondered what makes men happy,
The pets made me busy
To miss my angst easy,
Happiness, slave to notso any,
It wells from human bosom, you see.

Reflections | 06.01.17 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Happiness: I Know And Not Still

Man's is useless passion, a thinker¹ said,
Life is futile, a foison of stale dreams,
And not worth all the fuss should it be made,
Which, more is made, more futile to me seems.

A hackney horse, happy he seldom feels,
As work horse too, man's no less miserable,
Trees happy look, so do birds, even eels,
For, little they care for an assigned label.

The truth: in happiness he seems him not,
Nor when in love he's, nor yet when he sees
A beautiful sunrise, a lovely spot,
A silent lake, nature as nature is!

Should there be no happiness on this earth,
Unto a hellhole the planet might turn,
Or else, the Creation's monstrous non-worth,
With strange smirk the sun smiling now may burn.

Yet, more melancholic man grows, the more
Meaningful he feels— this man of ego,
Strange, but in joy, apart he feels from core,
And seeds of misery he tends to sow.

So, how much happiness this man deserves?
As virtue scarce to me seems his chief good,
Nor yet any a vice mankind unnerves,
And lost is he in a familiar wood.

In uttering lies man his own self be,
And yet, the lies when pinch, man's a misfit,
Things utterly going wrong he's at sea,
In perfect fit man still forgets his feet!

He too forgets him if life's fulfilling,
In dilemma: to be or not to be,
If to swim this ocean of misery,
Whenso life looks futile of a meaning.

An idle nurse man seems to every vice,
A sure mother of all the ignorance,
Of all melancholy, of loaded dice,
He hopes still, ignorance is bliss at once.

So then, what's happiness? An enigma,
And as futile is it to ask: what's time,
Something I know, and still in dilemma,
Who's known happiness? Who has time's prime rhyme?

And relative happiness, much like time,
In pain we know time seems to stand nigh still,
In happiness it takes to wing sublime,
And yet it's what dwells far beyond the hill!

And man makes his happiness hard to kiss,
How? By inflating passions' appetite,
Or else his joys are here and hard to miss,
Offload that load ye long and do feel light.

Know, happiness hardly dwells in having,
It lies in a content inner being,
A mind readily appreciating,
And heart in a perennial state of spring.

To wretched man bliss scarce be in being,
Nor happy he's on way to becoming.

1. Refers to Sartre

Ode | 06.11.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Happiness: When You Be

When you be a cool cat so calm,
She dances at will on your palm;
The day robbed you are of that peace,
You'll get the last of goodbye kiss.
Remember still, these cats so cool
Trained are at no graduate school.

Reflections | 04.08.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Happy Despite It All

Hard to say what things doth one happy make,
Easier, what no happiness may fetch,
Like not else simple things happy times etch,
A top prize may not, nor a choicest cake.
The mind if opts henceforth happy to be,
Sunshine 'bove, earth below, a happy bite,
A man modest, sun or rain, feels happy,
Not because, ah happy he feels despite.

And hay, happiness is no hill station
That a man's so eager sooner to reach—
A journey that has no destination,
Whatso that maketh passing moments rich!
Whereso, howso he be, happy he's still,
Be it valley, or crest of a tall hill.

India ranks the fourth happiest country in the world after England, Canada and Sweden. It has been ranked among first ten for long (survey among 30 countries) . It is hard to believe that India ranks so high despite not being well developed and rich. What keeps our happiness quotient ticking? This short piece attempts to answer.

Sonnets, Happenings | 01.01.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Happy I Am As I Am

Haply playing flute on a river bank,
He hardly saw the king's man approaching,
Even as close he came and showed his rank:
We are here with a message from the king.

Among the fated few ye shall soon be,
O sire, as kingdom's minister in prime,
With royal honours of the royalty,
We've come to invite; let's be there in time.

He showed emotions the least, nor did he
Stop playing, nor was a tune off its time,
The notes floated as if waves `pon calm sea,
Message repeated, same sounded the chime.

Seated still on a smallish slab of stone,
And music getting over, he began
Feeding fish with care as motherly known,
Then said like a suddenly woke up man:

Do see that turtle in a shallow pit,
How happy he's amidst all-reigning mud!
Filled with joy, worried he seems not a bit,
Innocent he looks to me like a bud.

He never tries to be what he is not,
Nor be one up with rivals, no false air.
Now, think of studded tortoise king has got
At royal court— for years it has been there.

You know, the king shows of that mark of old.
Tell now this live turtle to come to court,
Tempt to gild him with precious stones and gold,
Tell: people will marvel at him at the fort.

Tell me then, to what would he want to cling—
To get gilded in gold, or live as he's,
He'd rather be his own sovereign king,
Care free to roam, do what his heart pleases.

A turtle if knows as does every beast—
What's good for him, what's not, I know no less,
To plunge unto turbid waters the least,
And barter bliss for royal strife and stress.

Look at the banks of these happy waters,
Look at the trees swaying in happy breeze,
Look too at those fish-feasting sea otters,
As happy they're as every free life is.

The joys of gazing at them from this stone,
Doubt I'd ever get on a royal chair.
As Lao Tzu's worthy disciple, known
He was in China for spiritual flair.

Maddened by its might power always feels right,
Always keen to grab, ever more to have,
Power cries: give me more till it goes to grave;
And trusted least it gains girth, loses height.

Power's not like an early dawn's purest dew,
Ye shall have joy or power, God did once say,
The twain can't on a common axis sway,
Power tends to void every humane virtue.

Man's prone to pride atop a tall tower,
And more so still if chaired in Stately power.
Say thanks to king, I feel happy as am,
I know naught to deal with royal emblem.

Musings | 02.07.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Hard Your Place To Fill

I doubt, God thought of Mother's matchless love,
As some said He can't be every which where,
Nor yet because He's far and high above,
And hardly would have justice done, and fair.
Few things God made man ever can replace:
Birth, life, death, rains— among many of worth,
Stands Mother's Love atop with heaven's grace,
Even gods grieve, not blessed are they with birth.
Of punctuations, her love's a period!
Or else, perhaps an exclamation mark,
All else but also ran second and third,
Sole luminance, the source she's of their spark,
Inimitable if there's not a thing,
Mother's Love, I'd say never is 'a thing'!

Sonnets | 22.03.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Hate Once Told Love

Hate once told love: No poles apart,
As close are we as is our heart;
Love doubted, oh that close?
Yea, as are thorn and rose;
To be close and far off still is fine art.

Love said, keep some distance,
And take love to distance!
The twain's no fervent foes,
Buddies, bone-to-skin close,
Sans thorn rose is no rose,
Nor love, if hate's no close.

Reflections | 01.07.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

He Came When

The city is decked up like a bride,
Riverfront roars, squalor on the hide,
For, mega billions lure,
Safe borders to endure,
Asmita? In question was self pride.

I was in Ahmedabad on the day Chinese dignitaries came.
The city was virtually under siege. Traffic was blocked,
people were barred on many roads, and even to peep from
balconies, as alleged. There were huge screens blocking the
view of squalor— of poor people in huts. The riverfront was
vacated save VIPs. And Gujarati papers talked of asmita,
meaning fond pride!

- Happenings | 14.09.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

He Left Me As Me

His magnet pulled me,
Gravity as if grabbed me,
But left me as me!

This one is among four Haikus on Guru.

Haikus | 09.07.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

He Showed Me In Me

What I failed to see
He showed me the me in me,
And what was not me.

This one is among four Haikus on Guru.

Haikus | 10.07.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

He That Roams, Grows

Let's go roam head and heart,
To meet a millionaire
Of mind; meet, soon to part;

The air outside, beckoning fair,
Whilst it wafts— what to deliver?
Wise worlds of wayfarers that dare;

Let's soar, let's struggle, endeavour,
New friendship to savour, and food
For thought— each with its own flavour;

What use this soulful solitude?
To what end these inner blues?
Time on return there's to brood;

Life's moments beckon to muse,
To dwell on laments, nor sorrows,
On vibrant hearts' varied hues;

Let not the day turn to morrow,
No one can stretch time, nor borrow,
They that roam rhyme, and grow.

Inspired by a Gujarati piece by Niranjana Bhagat

Inspirations | 02.03.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Head And Heart Both

Let rocky dead intellect go its way,
Logic of do's and don'ts, let them all lie,
The rules of grammar gathered yesterday,
Metres and feet are best forgotten nigh.
Flow from aside, o'er them, and go ahead,
The melody gets born O from noise,
Listening not but to the inner voice,
You flow ahead, by heart over head led.
In purest form, in its simplest so far,
Like a perennial river flows a poem,
None of a starry string, a lone star,
One that pretends to be no studded gem!

Gone ahead as said, this is what got made—
A product still of heart as much as head!

Flow of a river, and that of a poem are talked about here. Intellect contributed by head is like rocks and stones blocking the flow of a river. So are the do's and don'ts, and the like. But when the river flows ahead over and aside these obstacles, music is born from what ere was noise.

A poem is always a product of heart to start with in my experience. The heart may have reasons unknown to head, but a stage comes when the later slowly takes over. After all a poem has to be a poem, and presentable as well. Yet, creativity comes from the chaos created by heart, the Gangotri¹ of all poems!

Gangotri¹: A glacier in Himalayas from where the great river Ganges originates.

- Sonnets | 10.08.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Health, Should Ye Be Such A Beast!

Health, thou hast ways to make me look east
When to west lie ways I can't resist,
Make me haply to feast
On what I should the least;
But O health, should ye be such a beast!

Tongue-in-cheek | 01.02.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Hearken To Your Heart's Silent Hint

To please the lady love, my heart to bare,
I tried invoking her with chiselled verse,
That purest pleasure of my pen be hers,
But left I was— stare at stark page as ere.
I sought aptest words, archaic and rare,
And tried to paint the bleakest face of woe,
Which, desperate poets apt are to toe
In a fervent appeal that she be fair;
Words came but came still scant, as if too shy
To breach her heart's high wall, bulwark bolted,
When nothing whatso worked I knew not why,
When words failed to flow from their fountain head,
When I coaxed my pen a new line to mint,
A voice whispered: hearken to your heart's hint.

The Volta is hinted at the beginning of the sestet, but its high tide occurs only at the poem-ending couplet.

Sonnets | 03.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Heart Dreams Of A Far Spring

Full moon we all embrace for what it is,
Much as we like comforts of a winter,
In new moon too we see no less promise,
Wish, what if summer's warmth in heart enter,
Even amidst wintry storms sun does shine,
Warming and reassuring earthly life,
So does in snowy frost shine silver line—
A state of mind amidst myriads of strife!

Without wintry wilderness laid dormant,
Would my garden of spring be so pleasant?
Sans bitter taste of the adversity,
Who'd cherish sweet smell of prosperity?
As snow may sing songs of a flowing string,
In wintry frost why heart dreams of far spring?

The world comes with varied colours of life. One has to take in his stride the cold of winter together with the heat of summer and learn to see the positive that we choose not to see. And then, rise above all likes and dislikes.

Sonnets | 02.12.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Heaven Hails A Happy Man

Let people pause and ponder that they can,
Freed from mind's prison, from what-if's pall,
Know, heaven hails a happy man.

Right things do happen to man, when
He hearkens to soul's silent call,
When people ponder, know they can.

Do take a panoramic pan,
View that the world's no hospice hall,
The world too hails a happy man.

Sweeten O man if salty gets your pan,
Stop posturing once and for all,
And pause to ponder that ye can.

So, all that man has to do then—
To shatter a separating wall
And be together as happy men.

This done, be a free bird again
Be where night ends, dawn's domain calls
And haply feel that ye sure can,
Heaven hails such a happy man.

This poem hails affirmation of faith in the instinctive and contemplative, uncomplicated life of man. It repudiates indirectly highly intellectual and too rational an approach to life.

Villanelles | 10.10.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Heaven's Uncanny Treason

Like a chameleon's camouflage that can
Many a shade of his surroundings fake
And still can't save his self from a sly snake,
To me seems moral make-up of a man.
Man, much in love with the disguise he's made,
Clad as he's in gossamer veils, vile make-
Ups and masks, scarce can rid his feigned façade,
And can't any a less revealing make.

I wish he'd not bitten that baited Fruit
Of Temptation in the Garden of Eden,
I wish he'd remained an innocent brute,
Walked not the trap God made luring even!
If Heaven has no uncanny reason
To mislead men, what is it but treason!

This piece wonders aloud on the theme of Temptation, forbidden fruit, and Maya's play. Why should God, like police, simply watch us committing crime, and once the ill deed is done, catch us. God too perhaps is no better. He waits till the Judgement Day!

Sonnets | 03.12.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Hedonic Hotspots

Wanting ever the more than need,
Cornering every craven toy,
Coveting, pandering to greed,
Man's indulged more, less to enjoy,
Chasing false leads more and more,
A while overwhelming desire
Fuels a raging forest fire,
And parched he pans on river shore.

With fewer brain spots of pleasure
Than for fuelling raging fire,
Nature has used an erasure,
Upon a streetcar called desire,
Man darts off to more stations on drive
O than in contentment can arrive.

A clear case of coveting more
Hedonic hotspots in mad chase,
Getting more, enjoying no more,
Oh amidst bountiful man's blasé!

To what spiritual wisdom knew,
Science has now endorsed its view.

A scientific study shows that wanting and liking are separate spots in brain controlled by different circuits. Only when these urges occur in sync the impact on brain is powerful. But there is a catch. Brain has fewer mechanisms for pleasure than for desire. Hence humans are susceptible to wanting more than they can actually enjoy. Science is now beginning to understand the Indic thought spiritually and philosophically divined long ago, that desires which always frustrate man are not good and should be reduced to feel good. Not wanting too much is the key to happiness. This poem has four stanzas, progressively reducing in size— from eight, to six, to four, to two— the hedonic spots for desire must gradually reduce to match those to enjoy.

Happenings | 01.04.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Hello Winter

Two friends in fair clime of warm sun
Talked of climes and moods in their lands—
Of weather weathered frost-bit hands.
One talked of worst of a cold season:
The frost when made it so frigid,
Soon as spoken words in freeze died,
And unto knots of snow be-tied
They remained unheard until freed—
The spring post-winter did when wake,
It thawed, audible words to make.

The other thought of countering
This tail of tale much too wagging,
And gave his version of chilled wisdom—
Whatso to his mind chose to come:
Winter's freeze is a passing storm,
Best remedy for which I've seen—
Be a kind word warming the scene,
And enough all winter to warm,
Winter does show its extreme freeze
O to those sans warm memories!

Tongue-in-cheek | 05.12.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Her Fond Memories Frozen

I recall still those two large probing eyes
Upon somewhat lean-looking oval face
That should have stolen looks at me the least,
Considering this solemn study place—
This temple of reading stacked up with tomes,
Her eyes perhaps pretended whilst to read,
Unlike a sea of other engrossed heads,
I was (as we oft are) led by her lead.

May be a thing about me was askance,
I first thought, for, she must have seen a few
More moons than me, and did look so at once—
As girls more than boys do, goes grandma view;
Was she engrossed in deep thoughts, looking blanks?
May be or not, but sure she drew me in,
I know of youths that but with eyes play planks,
And wordless speak these eager hearts so keen.

And if her blank look happened to catch me,
I may still take it as a random chance,
It might perhaps my heart's weakness well be,
Or destiny's well-choreographed a dance,
May be I was upon that lonely shore
Just when that pearl-laden boat landed there,
Strayed to my shore—an act of aimless oar,
No one would know, nor would I ever care.

But she came to my shore at a wrong time
Amidst flurry of chores the year when ends,
And hurried glances were all we could steal,
Destiny's hand revealed we just were friends,
Our friendship never got to sink enough,
God alone knows, moments melted alive,
My defeated spirit fair witness was,
The hour of reckoning did when arrive.

Perhaps a false hope was still hanging on,
Tenuous threads weaken being slender,
And I began to think of a right way

And wrong, as I delved on it to ponder.
I wondered if it was heart's fluttering,
Or of mind that caused almost a ship-wrack
Upon our life's very first hopeful shore,
And hoped happy moments might still come back.

And flashes of that fond love often fire
A silver-tongued morning's eloquent dream,
Radiant flames of heart-felt young desire
Leap to burn bright and yet turn ashes grim,
Triggering my piled up pride to perish,
Shored up swollen honours dash to dwindle,
A thread of hope still flows, off-flow as fish,
That, a dawn's dream may my heart rekindle.

And it was not at all a casual look,
As proved her pair of deeply probing eyes,
Nor was the look all blank, nor yet random,
Nor yet a girlie plank, nor was surprise,
Said she, notso happens without a cause
Nothing walks in like guest at an odd hour,
Today it is still deeply buried past,
Some things are lost in life yon recover.

Some moments often fleet by in a click,
Leaving the heart to brood, for them to long
In a world of 'what if' ere wisdom dawns;
Memories of youth ring like a vague song,
And ere long all things weaken from their prime,
Take a magnetic tape, take disc, record,
And memories are writ on sands of time,
But never those that touch soul's deepest cord.

And our lives aught unfold as Destiny
Dances in a well-choreographed dance;
The director above, unseen decides,
And we actors know nothing in advance.
We dwell on what we lived for all our life,
We all in life have an eternal muse,
If we care to listen her voice is rife,
A poet's not alone that owes her dues.

I count my blessings for fond memories
Of her, for having gained at all her heart,
She too might be brooding, she loved and lost,
And here are we pulled by our fate apart;
It were not us perhaps stealing glances,
But our fate conspiring to pull away,
Leaving behind a few moments in freeze,
O to hope hereafter to have more say.

Musings | 02.08.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Her Vegetable Vendor

Her vegetable vendor, a nice man,
Who she can spot from a long waiting mile,
Known for his welcoming weighty a smile
That says, 'good to please, pamper my old fan'.

And then begin the bids, rounds of bargains.
This done, returned are tomatoes too ripe,
Brinjals less brown and onions not her type,
Designed to let her feel she always gains.

Ready he is to exchange whatso be,
But she likes him not for his willing face,
Nor ever for his easy business grace,
She hardly notices his rehearsed glee,

Sweet chatter, soft words, nor his ready smile
That seemingly— not in truth— lets her win,
Without showing his mien all so mean,
Chameleons as camouflage cunning guile!

I suspect, he makes good each bargained price,
Perhaps his weights no high probity spell,
But such alluring be his charming shell,
They forget false weights, and a loaded dice,

And what's designed to make good a morning
That seems to last all day, gaining a ring
Of a facile little win-win success,
Or so from goodly distance do I guess.

Tongue-in-cheek | 02.05.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Her Words

Her words barely out
From lips' lovely pout,
And there's not a doubt!

Haiku | 09.09.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Here's That Poem, Dear Readers

Go out to wide world, do your own battle,
Never nod agreement if ye should not,
No one in compromise need settle,
World would remain wherever it has sought.
Love, worry not to soil your spotless shirt,
To dance your heart out no one needs a coach,
Love, as if you have never once been hurt,
Love. as if no one is out there to watch.
Get up and pen your very own poem,
Pen, worry not if world would ever read,
Go to carve out your own little emblem,
Say what be said, the world may or not heed.

So here's that little poem, dear readers,
He that hath started knows no reverse gears.

Sonnets | 01.12.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Him A Yogi We Call

A man's mind mastered and well-led,
When but in his Self is seated,
Free from longings and cravings all,
Him a yogi can we then call.

yadaa vi-niyatam chittam
aatmani eva avatishthate|
nisprah sarva-kaamebhyah
yukta iti uchyate tadaa||Geeta 6.18 ||

Mind is hard to control and it need not be. It has to be mastered and well-led. At core a mind is nothing but flow of thoughts and emotions (vrtti pravaahah) . Disassociate with these thoughts and watch them as a witness without passing judgment.

Translations | 52.01.2019 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Hole In Moral Ozone

A hole in earth's ozone layer—
A worry well worth worrying
That soon may get this globe greyer,
Yet, there're things more irritating:
Take holes in our morals' grey zone,
Whatso the men of ken may say,
Not one vexed hair greyer has grown,
Nor has one walked a wiser way.
Pen-pushers like me grown nigh greyer,
Can only say a silent prayer!

As war settles no scores of men,
As fears turn back no catastrophe,
This sonnet sings— a dung-hill hen,
O waking none that unwilling be.

Sonnets | 01.01.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Holi: Colours Of Life

Riot of rainbow colours everywhere,
Touched I'm by festival's ecstatic air.
These colours of many a shade so rife
Manifest to me unity of life.
And long as these varied colours remain
In air, life need never go back in vain.
For, hidden truth of every life's the same—
May earthly be it or other worldly,
Blood of the same body shall fall from frame,
Should but a single cell O shattered be.

Holi, the festival of colours, celebrated on 21st March this year commanded a special significance. It coincided with two other occasions: Zoroastrian (Parsis in India) New Year, and vernal equinox when day and night equal. It signifies unity of all life, and life is nothing but colours and light. The day also happens to be the International Day of the Forests. Now, forests and nature add to colours of life like nothing else.

Happenings |16.03.2019|

Aniruddha Pathak

Holistic Life In Dual World

Awareness where walks wearing illusion,
Head's not held high, nor is knowledge all free,
Truth not one whole, but suffers division,
In such a place one looks, little can see.
Where illusion's an alt ID of world,
Not wisdom, where info bytes weapons wield,
Truth's seldom whole, but be this or that bird,
A part looks whole that fetches no full yield,
Eternal does the twain dance in twilight,
Mind be-muddled under here or there lore,
And sees things as black or white, wrong or right,
Truth is whilst stuck on a far off vague shore.
Count grace, world has photons¹ that better see,
That lives whole life yon of duality.

1. Photon can be present at two places at the same time. It has incredible awareness to mutate from a wave (or energy) to particle (matter) , a quantum mystery! Mind suffers from this-or-that paradigm: wave or particle, day or night..., a puzzle incomprehensible when complete! Computer accepts 0 or 1. Human mind is not much better. On the other hand, holistic awareness is non-dual, the undifferentiated whole. This sonnet goes on a wonderment trip on the wings of these facts.

Sonnets | 01.05.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Home Anywhere

Here's him who anywhere feels at home,
Prison he feels were walls,
Freedom, if the wall falls,
He took off all across dome to roam
And felt home whereso roamed— even Rome.
Learned: bricks make house, not home,
And saw all over dome
That heart `tis that makes home,
Hearth is made whilst from loam.

Reflections | 05.09.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Honey Bee And Champa Blossoms

O Champa blossom do tell me:
Thou hast assets four of romance,
Face, its charm, beauty's form, fragrance,
Which one keeps at bay bees from thee?

Radha is chaste like Champa's charm,
Bee a sworn Krishna's devotee,
Her beauty how can it harm?
How can it harm his deity?

It is an ancient poetic belief that honey bees never go near Champa blossoms. What is it that keeps them away? One can only guess, or say, 'God only knows'. This ditty takes a trip of imagination. Radha is Lord Krishna's love interest, and honey bees are His devotees. How can a honey bee harm her (Champa representing Radha) ?

Musings |10.02.16|

Aniruddha Pathak

Hope

The aged night's bare to her bone,
Sooner shall sun rise in full fervour,
And dewdrops would be gone from lawn,
The day would too, frown nor yet favour,
Its diurnal duty duly done,
When would your love shall show as ere?

The dusk as well, her grey hues shorn,
In her vain little endeavour
To outshine the dawn as never...
New night when shows with charm her own,
And your love a thousand-fold grown,
Hope, you'd love me from deepest core.

Eternal does hope in my bosom run,
Let time do its worse as chased hot by sun.

Sonnets | 02.12.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Hope Is A Bird Wordless That Sings

Unlike raindrops on dusty countryside,
No lasting pathways etched are by despair,
But hope comes like a rain shower to guide,
O to give ample hints— how to go where.

With hope in heart walked have I longer miles,
And a way out from nowhere appears—
From darkling woods as from barren lost isles—
On desert stretches a path haply veers.

Much like a migrating bird on fair wings,
Hope seems to come when there's no one to call,
Silent it sings songs of eternal springs:
Worry's not my ward, far off still is fall.

In hope man casts his fishnet to net wish,
A man so poor, a begging bowl alive,
Catches oyster pearls in nets but for fish,
O from nowhere somewhere sure to arrive.

Yet, those that in abject fear would hope not,
Tying up limbs and minds in tighter ropes,
Whence, wonder I, would come a hopeful thought,
Whence would fount that rare hope yon of all hopes?

It's hope that life survives from thankless strife,
Hope, to walk aside from the edge of knife,
And hope is it O to make life so rife,
Hope me think is another name for life.

Musings (Ode)| 02.02.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Hope Lives On Peaks And Vales

Man when caveman bordered on the crudest,
Ere civil was he made, made nigh modest,
And in a painstaking long march indeed,
A seed mutated, evolving with creed,
A seed that struggled hard ere succeeding,
Many a weed losing ere mutating,
From labyrinthine dark alleys and maze,
From chaos were created newer ways.

There's no progress that would never plateau,
When heart would vacillate with go no-go,
And what for years a steady progress was,
Begins to lose out on some strange new cause,
And starts breaking many a seed-sprout chain,
Creation's womb as if bears no birth pain,
The mountain peaks begin to seek new vales,
Further downhill seem to wind all new dales.

And when hope approaches the highest peak,
Oh why we endeavour valleys to seek?

Heart it seems lives on the edge of hope; but the brooding mind delves into new depths, meandering, groping for a way out. Seeing the way much of the world is moving today, I too oft indulge in melancholic thoughts. Has man lost all hopes? I don't know but hope not. Yet, civilisation, I suspect, is a bell-shaped curve. Read also 'Hope: A bird wordless that sings'

Musings | 03.02.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Hope When Felt Chastened

Hesitant, hope whispered to New Year:
Do try and look a tad happier.
I come with no long rope,
Hard work seems the sole hope,
And can't but look as I appear.

New Year can't look better than it is, nor yet the passing one. How they would look largely depends on us. Yet, man just waits in hope with little or no hard work.

Reflections | 04.01.17 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Horse-Trading

We've long been man's noblest of friends,
Oft sacrificing life theirs to save,
Fighting for liberty and lands,
Look how he rewards us for acts brave.

We run races for him and fair,
And waver not from hard day's work
Yoked single-breast, burden to share,
Not once our duty do we shirk.

And no one need give us a bribe,
Cajole nor coax, nor hold a gun
To get honest day's haul well done,
We come from honourable tribe.

But if we were to break our leg,
We're put to sleep by mercy shot,
Like humans we demand, nor beg
For our morrows' Provident Pot!

Now watch how parliament courses,
Watch bids and boasts in no-trust race,
Oldies, veteran war-horses,
Watch, how they still keep a brave face.

No hint, put to sleep they aught be,
Yet, let them greedily to graze
In isolate pastures haply,
That their foul footprints we erase.

If your horses are far from fair,
It does not mean ye blame us all,
Nor that we fair their burden bear,
Should Peter pay for pranks of Paul?

Insult it is to us honest horses,
Undeserved honour to their dark courses!

Whenever election verdict shows no clear majority, horse trading is often

resorted to. This piece shows how horses, the real ones, feel let down by such usage.

Satire | 10.07.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

How Can Man Be Naïve?

I watch the bee strive,
Careful not to harm her hive,
How can man be naïve?

Haiku | 01.04.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

How Can We

You on mountain crest,
Me bottom abreast,
How to build love's nest?

Haiku | 16.11.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

How Good, Legal Edifice?

What with tonnes of evidence on the floor,
Riots of words, piles of foolscap pages,
The lady still losing sight of her shore,
And trials trudging on take up ages.

The Hammer of justice strikes in decades—
If at all, ever hesitant to strike,
The fervour when into oblivion fades,
When, to have won or lost look nigh alike.

The face of justice— vain apology,
Ladyship lost in spate of evidence,
Shaking up our fast-melting confidence,
Last words sounding like mournful elegy!

What with delays, defaulting dates that stare
At poor plaintiff, justice as if purblind,
In tall concern pretending still to care,
Though callous to the core, cloaked to look kind.

What with the chair focussed, nor always just,
Corruption cutting into deepest core,
What with legal chariot far from robust,
Lady honesty thrown from bolted door!

What with her face flaunting still false prestige,
Rights reserved to honour vaguest pride still,
And breach of false privilege laying siege,
Poor doubting toms had better not cavil.

With such scenes how far would the Justice get?
Not far if its weak frame is let to stat.

1. Fool's: Foolscap pages of evidence and judgment—a pun.

Satire | 03.07.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

How I Felt Seeing My Son

Curious and anxious in some hopes of heaven,
Felt I seeing the face of my first joy,
Half hoping to see daughter, much less son,
I entered spring in steps, heart in some buoy,
And scanned the feeble face of infancy,
Peering at the four pounds, packaged thrill wrapped—
A long awaited bliss, rare ecstasy
Was in arms, and felt fatherhood on tap.
Yet found little imprint of hers, nor mines,
There are things too far for a man to see,
Still harder to see subtle tell-tale signs,
Yet, every drop has an imprint of sea.
‘They come like that and no less darling still’,
I heard her say, and felt a guilty chill.

-Sonnets | 05.06.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

How I Lost My Innocence

A child when with fewer answers I had,
And more of question on my mind's grey plates,
Mysteries multiplied like a wild fad,
Tell Me Why and How my more loyal mates.
Teenager when, a defiant one still,
A counter question I soon learnt to add,
'Why, tell me' was added on to my pad,
And handy nigh with my elders to deal!

Adult, the ball when landed in my court,
'O why me', a die-hard trait came to be—
A conception I had to soon abort,
But not still this wonder seed: 'why not me'.
I hope this tree takes roots, a solid stem,
Hope, branches spread and prosper—each of them.

Sonnets | 10.07.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

How I Wish They Miss Me

On this day one year back he'd died,
The emptiness, now that he's not with us,
Nigh seems to sound somewhat conspicuous,
His memories now new pens guide;
His honest involvement not so ere billed,
How his trademark was in poetic field.
Many a young pen that has seen him
Wonder-stuck like a fond dream,
Now meditate on his rare style—
He, one alone, stands like a far off isle.
We've seen him making the whole crowd
One with his poetry so proud,
Seen him elapse oft in utter silence,
And struggle too for words at once;
We've seen him sealing his tall stature
In an envelope, audience in a rapture;
Today his fragrance is right here,
Gone has the flower sans peer.

..... And how things are

One year has gone by since he died,
The silence of his pen few seem to have sighed,
Emptiness nor is there a void,
And many a new style has been alloyed,
The poetry field in this sense
Seems worse the least in his absence,
(As some would like to call
Never verse is at all):
He seemed a solitary isle,
No one missing his literary smile;
In his time he monopolised the crowd,
But his mouth no doubt was a tad loud;
No single flower has e'er ruled the world,
Nor has any a singing bird— my word.

A poet imagines how he would be remembered after his death; what people would say, say, after one year. The first stanza deals with this. Reality dawning on him, he then

pens down the second stanza.

- Musings | 03.08.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Human Is It To Humour

Lesser chimps bow down to alpha hunks tail,
A filly doe fawns over horny stags,
Show willing hinds to the dominant male,
Poor is pitted to please podgy pay-bags.
Man, an attired ape flaunting bigger brain,
What pains he piles pleasing all power and pelf!
A smarmy spoon that knows little restrain
In matters that would dwarf his puny self.

If a man no whit more than a proud toad
Pretends to be an alpha lion king,
He knows more than enough it's pretty odd,
He's a cat caught cringing in circus ring.
If bowing to hefty weights be human,
Humouring lofty heights' no less common.

Sonnets | 02.06.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Human To Err In Love

With one mind she wove and wove,
But still with human frailty,
Leaving out a few fatigue-fed flaws,
But she went on still with all love,
The skies afar in sympathy,
The child in lap her sole cause.
And love shining aplenty,
Heavens nodded from above.

Her mind delving deep in child
The work-errors got multiplied,
Overdue work getting further piled,
Yet, heavens keenly espied.
For, mothers world-over may err
As loving hearts have for long,
It's human in love to err,
Heaven hails it as no wrong.

Musings | 01.11.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Humour

Unable to stomp him to oblivion,
She stings and hurts the wound is where open,
Yea, humour a revenge is of an ant
Over the might of a thick-skinned giant.

Not an act it seems so incongruous
As to steal a silly cold smirk from us—
One gets stung feeling while cosy and cool,
The stinger getting riled by ridicule!

If punning is lowest form of fine wit,
And a semantic zip fastener, it
Oft is seen unseemly while seamless whole,
Like a chasm between the north-south pole!

True humour Gestalt is amidst all human arts,
Where whole more humorous is than the sum of parts,
And where jest often by truth is fully revealed,
While hidden lies, like sleeping dogs, hardly get grilled.
Hard comes humour that stress nor strain creates,
It needs no hammer still to straighten hates,
Should there be a punch line, humour's fair-half,
And a safety valve disguised as good laugh!

But laughter, wry or dry, oft with pain's fraught,
As life comes, as comes man, like a mixed pot
On boil— an odd mixture of laugh and cry,
As life's punch line leaves us all high and dry!

In a Byzantine thankless road to humour,
I hope my pen can heal, not hit like hammer!

Aniruddha Pathak

Humour's Not For Half-Wits

To funny gags, doggy tales of old mould,
We wax worthy as if of vintage wines,
Comic jokes and yarns nearing their punch lines,
Seem like a see-thru dress though made of gold.
Wit is rare art, best enjoyed if alive,
There's no alibi for not being there,
It's no tail wagging a wag acting naïve,
Like sex scene, what unfolds in time is fair.

I'd much rather for well-bred humour die,
That dies today a slow tortuous death,
Yet, slapstick raucous farce jostles, and vie
For space with humour, tired and short of breath.
Humour's hardly for half-wit raw rookies—
Oven-like that makes freshly baked cookies.

Sonnets | 01.04.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

I Am Gifted II

One's born, seeds lifted, inherited;
The 'ther with a lot from life sifted,
It's not how much you quote,
How much your own of note,
Every man if not else is gifted!

Tongue-in-cheek | 03.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

I Can't Repay Thine Debt, But...

Can't square thine debt, me a mere begging bowl,
I choose therefore indebted to remain.
The bounties of thine kingdom are no small,
What can I give? If given what ye gain?
I choose thence to sing in glory thine praise,
Me, forever in want, desires in heart,
A grateful toast in thanks is all I raise,
Pray, help me lighten my life's loaded cart.
Thine child, help me ever grateful remain,
And amidst plenitude somewhat less blasé,
Grateful for every pleasure post of pain,
Be thou indulgent to my wanton ways.

I opt then to remain ever in debt,
Be thine son, if prodigal and ingrate.

Sonnets | 01.06.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

I Hope To Harvest

Somnolent truth waking as if in strife,
The dawn breaks into light from dark,
Birds welcome it from nearby park,
And in my life's sky, red-blue rife,
A freshly tender green leaf sprouts.
I hope to harvest soon ripe shoots
If my hope wakes from night-long mute,
And in my heart takes up firm roots,
Should my sleepy heart finds its voice
To be in touch with love-tinged joys,
I hope to harvest ripened fruits.

Musings | 18.02.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

I Keep The Rest To Kiss

Peering `pon that piano's passive plate,
How I covet to be that plucky piece
That silken soft thine fingers get to kiss,
O dancing at sprightly yet gentle gait,
Whilst my lips starve, and eyes left but to stare,
And wait for once in lifetime blue-moon chance,
A flitting hope to steal a furtive glance
In glee at keys— my black beast and bugbear!

And no, I scarce can paint my attitude
Fair, a duel between a hound and hare—
A life-less wood, howso seasoned and good,
More blest than lips— leaves me to grin and bear.
Let that wood blush in its rosy red bliss,
Keep her fingers, if I the rest can kiss.

This piece draws no mean inspiration from Shakespeare's Sonnet 128. Let imitation at best be still imitation, but it is my way of paying tribute to the Bard. I could not quite match his subtlety in painting the scene. But then, I can only be me!

Sonnets | 15.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

I Laid My Heart Bare

I laid my heart bare
At starry strings there,
But unmoved, blank did they stare!

Haikus | 02.04.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

I Like It Dear When You're Sad

I like it dear when you are sad, she said,
I feel sadness has beauty of its own,
Its charm's out of this world unlike when glad,
For, sadness, dwelling deep, touches one's bone,
Glad tidings seem like waves but on surface,
Of depth shorn, superficial and shallow,
A happy life bare do they live on face,
And lack oceanic depths of miles below.
Giddy goes the glad, sad shines in silence
Of nights that over all the light prevails;
Light lives a leased life, comes, goes all at once,
All happiness from something serious ails.
'Sad bad is' an over-used attitude,
Look at serene Buddha in beatitude!

Sad or bad be the states of mind and body, an ego state. In this piece, 'she' represents the other half. Call her the better half; but she's the other self, the atman and the witness. If one watches sadness as a witness, its beauty can be experienced with its eternal depth. The sonnet has a tongue-in-cheek mood that comes alive when it cites Buddha's smile.

Sonnets | 08.01.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

I Like My Old Age To Be Mellow

Thou art to soul as sleep is to my strife,
The cheeks look when no more rosy nor full,
Lips no more red, knees busy nor supple,
The flesh when falters, wrinkles be when rife,
In a feeble frame grey forgetting mind,
And will unable to stand firm behind.

Bite me if ye wish like a harsh winter,
But come, Death, like a lingering night's sleep,
Or be thou golden yellow soft summer,
For a tired soul that lived full, well and deep,
To whom life is like a day's work well done,
Like night's rest well-earned to face morrow's sun.

In glimmering sunset's withering glow,
I'd then like my old age to be mellow.

Sonnets | 03.01.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

I Like The Waning Moon

I care a little less for waxing moon—
Greedy, gaining rounder girth all the while,
Who, seems to me nigh proud at midnight's noon,
And boastful to world of his plundered pile;
I like waning moon wearing off his boon.
Gaining, getting I feel one never grows,
My heart and soul go for the giver moon;
In giving off, the seeds of growth one sows.

On giving up all he gets to be new,
Gains from Sun, be a giver once again,
In no time all her silver to retain,
Yet, boastful once again of borrowed hue!
It's waning moon that sacrifices weft
To give and give till not whatso is left.

Sonnets | 06.11.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

I Love Thee Not For What Thou Art

I love thee not for what thou art,
I love thee for what I become
When ye decide closer to come,
The old me when hastens to part.

- Quatrains | 04.01.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

I Love You As You Are

No one is nor art thou without some flaws,
But each thine flaw, dear, endearingly irks,
It strange seems; I dare say without a pause,
I'm yet to see two old friends with no quirks.

A mortal man faultless still? Holy bull! ,
A perfect mind and heart in perfect flesh,
Ideal like a statue icily dull,
Lifeless perfection seems a virtual trash.

If a thing of art has to be alive,
Forget the fault of faultless offering,
If there's no crack nor yet an opening,
Whence ye think a ray of light would arrive?

I love you dear as ye ever have been,
To think of perfect you, to me is mean.

Sonnets | 07.08.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

I Love You Not For What You Are

I love you not for what you are—
For what I in your love become
When you decide closer to come;
When I am in your presence,
I'm in touch with my essence,
And the old me recedes far.
I love you not for what you are,
Nor admire like a far-off star,
Your charm has long cherishing touch
That gives me good, but gets off much.

Musings | 04.01.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

I Marvel How Touch...

I marvel how touch touches deep down heart,
The rest of senses never can it match,
Time wears off wounds, turns wrinkles into wart,
Touch reaches deep a lasting mark to etch.

Take the feel of mother's hand on forehead,
A garland of love seldom can feel cold,
The feel of first-born in father's arm-fold,
And feelings linger on lifetime ahead.

And yet, touch is no child of naked skin,
Nor yet is it beastly in her raw rage,
Akin is it to spirit's pilgrimage,
It springs from emotions welling within.

Yet of no use to a feel-not inert,
No melody can bestir a mute soul,
Not else can strangers touch raw nerves, cause hurt,
A loving hand on shoulder scores rare goal.

A grave mistake, grown-ups' error so gross
To vilify the touch of flesh as sin—
Sense of touch can well hold a sacred Cross,
Too thick age gets to know the truth of skin.

The same way a man embraces his wife
He hugs his daughter, and sister beside,
Or child, innocence in a rising tide,
Grow mind and intellect of mischief rife.

Should I feel down and out in days ahead,
I need words, flowers nor fragrant blossom,
Give me a tender hug, a warm bosom,
And I've no use for a thousand words said.

When barest of a touch more than suffice,
Wary I am of an invading face,
A forceful foothold in my personal space,
Touch too cold to me is; warmer feels ice.

Give me clouds in summer, brightest rainbows,
A soulful melody, smile of a child,
Butterflies and flowers fresh from meadows,
They touch my inner soul ever so mild!

Musings | 02.09.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

I Miss You More In Death

To me no more alive still,
To me dead, waiting in state,
O let me this to you tell:
Had you just whispered, O wait,
I'd have returned still from death,
Alive lives in you my faith.
If you'd beckoned me to wait,
I would sure have over stayed,
And returned from land of dead,
Escaping from fated gate;
Try still, open this dark hood
Of death, of my solitude,
Come to me like a warm spring,
Let bygone be graved for good,
Hearken, our hearts as one sing,
Even dead I would return,
O new page in life to turn.

It's one thing losing one's life-breath,
Another, in life to lose faith,
And it is this very faith
That I miss you more in death.

Musings | 10.04.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

I Once Asked My Ego What Makes It Go

I once asked my ego what makes it go,
What with vain-glory vanity and pride:
It's not I that's on a vainglorious ride,
Nor is arrogance my fuel, ye know,
Nor vanity the vehicle I use,
Nor I, me, mine be my identity,
Air of pride ne'er does within me suffuse;
What I can't stand is soul's false vanity—
Boasting to be the true person behind,
But my claim is humble and down to earth,
Unlike him, I am my own unique kind,
Discerning few do know my real worth,
I do stand for reason and sanity,
Confuse me not with id, nor super I.

Freud gave the terms id, ego, and super ego, which someone interpreted as it, the I, and beyond I. Here in this light-hearted piece, ego points an accusing finger at id, and super ego, while pulling soul's leg. The mood of the poem is tongue-in-cheek.

- Sonnets | 01.09.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

I Recall, My Love

And I recall still all right
That silvery moonlight
When we first met that night,
Recall our love at first sight,
And super moon's super light
Has never `gain been as bright;
I recall, now that we fight,
Moon's silver, love at first sight,
And everything of that night,
And wonder if things turn right
Again, rekindled as bright!
Be it a blue moon one night,
Or super moon, closer quite,
Had our first-sight love been right.

- Musings | 05.08.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

I Remember That Farewell Night

Placed on a plastic plate my farewell cake
Slid by, my colleagues waiting, soon to leave,
Polite li'le words vouched, more for goodness' sake,
I still remember that eventless eve

When eased I was unto my life's late eve
Called retirement, an edge of precipice,
A web of old memories to re-live,
Between being bagful and bare with blight,
Warm words when felt like frosted cubes of ice.

When cake tasted bitter with sweet icing,
Cold drinks warmed by hype and hypocrisy,
A pomp-enwrapped packet when lay waiting,
The eve to end— packed as to look pricey,

A toothless tiger was waiting to fade,
After thankless long weeks of cajoling
To try win over an unwilling head,
And countless calls O aimed at arm-twisting.

When virtues were extolled alien to ears:
That, I would be missed for long time that comes—
By all, colleagues and peers and superiors—
Ho-hum that failed to add up to the sums.

My value was when mouthed— ah not a pause,
I cut at last the cake amidst applause;
Yea, I remember well my farewell plight,
When I slipped into my life's looming night—

An edge of precipice called retirement,
When overnight I felt like force nigh spent!

To be fair to the company I worked for, my farewell function was nowhere dull as this piece might suggest. But the truth is: I do not like farewells, soaked as they are in hypocrisy. I tried to avoid this one as much as I had many before, but failed. And a routine had to be gone through!

Tongue-in-cheek | 02.02.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

I See Him When

Not with these, with the eye that dormant lies,
I've seen God in souls struggling to rise;
Whenever I see me from me apart,
I see him mute, mere witness in my heart;
Oft standing alone a tree in desert,
I see when mind's mirror is cleansed of dirt;
In mother's selfless love do I see him,
In dreams she dreams that none cares to redeem;
In a poor man's precious last piece of bread
That he feeds a hungry dog, heart and head;
Few grains to ants, plenty to elephant,
I oft see God in man's measured judgment;
On same plant, thorns growing along with rose,
I not just see but know, he alone knows.

Reflections | 12.05.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

I Wonder Why

Grouse and gripes fly high
Raging storms were to blow nigh,
Why not when they die?

Haiku | 03.03.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

I've No Promises To Keep

Son showeth arriving at the shore,
And daughter-in-law well at the door,
Hundred days are done in
And good days nowhere seen,
Dreams are dreams, delivered ne'er before.

Aniruddha Pathak

If A Man's Childlike Naïve

If a man be human that he aught be,
Let his grit be garnished with child's good grace,
Thanks be to innocent heart, he's happy,
That he still wears a child's fluid little face.
Nice if man's creative, nicer if naïve
As to protect that playful little child
From a venomous wilful world so wild,
And keep that child in him for long alive.

Let man enjoy play more than a game won,
The sun toils hard and still retains his smile,
The child within set free lets this happen,
Let a man lose his stern face on lone isle,
Life is not made of stuff that heavy weighs,
No grouse is great enough to grieve for days.

Sonnets | 01.10.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Autumn's Chill, Can Spring Be Far

An evening it was ere full moon,
Sky milky white, a dash of grey,
The hint of an isolate ray
Announced, moon shall greet the night soon,
Most trees around were almost bare,
Autumn chill loomed all over there.

His heart was hardly there in walk,
Hers felt, futile it was to talk,
Both looked for a break or breather,
In circles walked as did their mind,
Tying up stray thoughts together,
The head whilst seemed not quite inclined.

Feeling soft footsteps `pon gravel
They walked as if not their own walk—
Unhurried as inaudible,
So was their wordless silent talk;
Oft times a few moment's power
Power lifetime's love, as oft might sour!

Yet, when home, this time hand in hand,
The moon was nearing night's high noon
As if to bless them with a boon,
Each had rediscovered old friend;
If autumn chill is here, can spring be far?
And yet, some chills are good, winked a far star.

Musings | 04.11.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Bane Of Joys Be Blasé

Listening to joyous jig that sayeth:
Like life, the joys on earth mundane are made,
As all things born alive sooner get dead,
O Dance of Life, ye too shall lose thine breath.
Man's bliss designed neither long nor yet rife,
I wonder if man wary be of spring,
Monsoon might come, clouds of sorrows to bring,
No matter what, in sorrows sink man's life.

And moments of joy harder get to hail,
If fleeting springs are deemed seasons unfair,
As darkling clouds of despair always tail,
It's sad, but man's given O to despair.
Let mundane me then small passing joys chase,
Not ecstasies, should boon of joys turn blasé'!

Sonnets | 04.10.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Bodies Of Their Own Heal

I

Two scores of ripe years ere, remember I,
At shower, shaving mirror, shaping hair,
Bending elbow when turned annoying nigh,
I wonder when, how my hurt hushed in there
Unknown to me, as seasons oft set in
Early or late, till one day forced are we
To tune into the change never so keen;
But more than pain, the illness annoyed me.

For, the medic I met, cool as was I,
But more sure, called it a tennis elbow,
Me in protest, not having played the game,

I laughed a suppress'd laugh, respectfully,
The doc unmoved as e'er, letting me know:
Call it any a name, would pain the same.

II

Prescribes he a pain pacifying drug.
Not kind to drugging messengers of pain,
And a believer in root cause, I shrug,
The pain, not being un-seasonal rain,
Persists, slowly gaining intensity,
The devil in doc feels vindicated,
Looking kind, stern-eyed still, he nods at me,
The counsel my own leaves me defeated!

O'er-ruled, a rebel on knees, out elbowed,
Bowed to submission, folding my left sleeve,
I look as if explanation was owed,

He looked up a stern verdict to give:
There's no escape the seed's once duly sowed,
Whatso disease decides you shall receive.

III

In was called nursing help, led like a cow
To an in-house slay house, I all but thought,
The wise me cursing the rebel me now,
And yet followed— in worse of worries wrought;
Thinking of thermal waves— the least an hour
A day; relief if there be oh, could worse
Be than the pain, headache should it hover,
I learn with it to live —in silence nurse.

And when they thought changing course, it was time
To what if on wisdom on wane or wax,
But docs have reasons if or not in rhyme,

'I need take a goodly look at your X-
Ray'; I eyed my arm, poor thing, caught in crime,
As if it were the bleeding knife or axe.

IV

'No sign of malign growth', the doc declared
Swanning into the spot I waited in,
Enough hints he favoured me as he aired,
'Ah, what a kindly heart heaving within'
I thought, his dire demeanour notwithstanding;
'However', his looks darkening somewhat,
'See on left some growth in a soft ring,
'I've reason to pin it in doubt than naught'.

I see naught else but my upper-arm bone,
Humerus as is called, but I'd like to
Say funny, the fun having too far gone!

But felt, silence vouches a good virtue
To one on wrong side of stick, painful bone;
I weighed in his weighty words in sharp hue.

V

'Need a few more searching tests to be sure,
'But what we see seems serious enough still',
I knew, grin or grimace, I aught endure,

Yet unsure quite what of greater evil
Was: ailment or treatment of my elbow!
A vision of an endless dark tunnel
Flashes in mind; dark of course, no less dull,
Yon of all pain, something churned in my maw.

'Take a course of killer tabs to start with,
'While your elbow's under my careful eyes',
He said, tinkering bone like a blacksmith.

But pregnant with pain my swelling does rise,
Unknown liquid within like my close kith,
Guesses galore and a gag of surmise!

VI

'We'll aspirate the liquid', he thence said,
'If liquid goes, I hope the swelling too';
My skin dulled he worked— large needle in aid,
And felt as if Everest looked dwarf in view.
A few days and liquid returns to base,
Returns the swelling too as it ere was,
No respite from inhospitable chase,
I wondered if karmas would catch my cause.

All through, pain but a minor irritant
Was, I lived normal life as did before,
If only I had avoided it all.

What though with all docs and drugs, my tenant
Of elbow cosy did stay put indoor—
In a comfy little cyst-made soft wall!

VII

My Healer, looking graver than e'er ere,
His cocky flair deserting never once,
Swirls his chair round— thro' large window to stare,
As if to get inspired by Providence;
More dumb than mute, I curse my accursed fate.
'I feel happy it has to be left hand',
He declares; my mouth wide op— ajar gate,

'May amputate it if we cannot mend'!

'Irritating a bit, though it takes long,
'Tuber, a sure fire, easy does get cured,
'Soft tissue or bone; cancer I hope not it is'.

He attuned it out like a movie song,
Consoled me; assuming I was assured,
There comes cost estimate— his expertise.

VIII

Not hitting his wisdom home, I ask him:
'Please, let me know it all— doctor to patient',
Pleading as if guilty, now penitent,
Into nightmare had turned a dreary dream;
'Suspect a graveyard of local infection,
'A cyst has enveloped it like a fort,
'Ah, look at Nature's marvellous li'le action—
'A compromise settlement out-of-court'!

To cut it short, pain visiting again,
The cyst was cut asunder to the roots,
And yet, tests when came, came with not a clue.

Not all in vain still, for, gone was the pain,
Gone was the cause, me left with bitter fruits—
A safeguard root treatment— tabs and pricks due!

I wonder should knowledge help or hinder,
In death, if not, burn bright like dry tinder.

IX

I oft feel, if he that treated me, knew
The mystery that human body is,
That it takes two hundred muscles, not few,
To take but one baby step with some ease;
That, body's veins when stretched end to end nigh,
A pair of belts round earth's bosom is made;
That, cells in a myriad of deluge when die,
An equal sum in even time gets bred.

Yet, nigh li'le is known of the universe
That lies within— as we know outer space,
And of ailing body? Oh, far too worse;

Ignorance still has pushed ahead apace.
Socrates knew, 'he lone hath thinking mind
That knows: knowledge known shall e'er lag behind'.

And so, if we can let sleeping dogs lie,
Should we not let bodies heal—of drugs dry?

This is a sequence of nine sonnets constituting one single poem. But the last line of the preceding sonnet is not the first line of the next sonnet; nor is the first line of the first sonnet, the last line of the last sonnet; as is often the case. The first seven sonnets are composed of an octave each, followed by a pair of terza rima, that can be viewed as a sestet. The last two sonnets (the eighth and the ninth) have an extra couplet concluding the underlying feelings.

- Sonnets | 03.11.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Borders Bound No Nations

Imagine if borders sealed no nations,
Nor yet were there narrow honours to guard,
And men were free from nationalist notions
Which as the time passed were cemented hard;
Why, imagine there was no religion,
Edicts, decrees, diktats nor any codes,
Humanity, one whole hoary legion,
And one common code ran across all modes.

Borderless as live birds bound by no chains,
As man lived ere he lost his innocence,
As birds migrate freely to warm terrains,
Needing passport, visa, nor yet licence;
No flag to fight for, kill or to die for,
And peace prevailed on planet free from war.

Sonnets | 02.02.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Cherries Had A Skin Of Glass

If it came with a skin bright like glass,
This world that goes for gloss,
That gives value a toss,
Haply would eat even lowly grass.
Choice grinds up man's worst greed,
One, choice-less goes for need,
Man's no time for a peep,
Why beauty is skin deep,
Gold impels brass to base metal's class.

This piece is in anapaest meter.

Tongue-in-cheek | 09.07.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Death's Change Of Dress

If death's change of dress,
Man still feels helpless,
What dress, still a guess!

Haiku | 17.12.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Fair Lady Should Lose

When eagle eyes some old skeletons find,
Putting tall chairs of fairness in a bind,
Upsetting long cosy fraternal peace,
A war-cry called against judicial chair,
Doubting if fair lady weighs justice fair,
It's bound to rob us of Bohemian bliss.

Of sixteen arbiters of fair justice,
Each an occupant of exalted chair,
No more than six making a perfect square,
Half, notorious to abuse their office,
Two getting benefits of doubt of sort,
There crumbles 'las the last judicial fort!

Imagine half of a coin's counterfeit,
Half of a song's rhythm running faulty,
Off scale unfolding half of melody;
So be but six chairs found faultlessly fit
Bearing the brunt of an honest burden,
The two eagles whilst watch in glee the fun!

Contempt of court a potent privilege,
Let truth be grey or white, faulty or fair,
And guarded by the chairs with wounded rage,
Impeaching chairs whilst has gone thin and rare,
Let's thank whatso whistles that bare and dare,
If only truth should get a lion's share.

If fortress of fairness far be from fairs,
If fingers aimed be at exalted chars,
If guardians of laws conspire laws to break—
If far from legal be the course of law,
If sweet deals should flavour Fair Lady's cake,
If last bastion of hope inspires no awe!

I shudder; fail to ponder on what if,
The blind lady need look back at her brief.

A father and son pair of advocates had alleged that eight of the sixteen judges of

the Supreme Court were definitely corrupt, and six were definitely honest, while in the case the remaining two a definite opinion cannot be expressed. We do not know the truth, but perceptions if not motivated tell a lot. And the highest chairs should be above all doubt. For, in life perception is all there is. This piece sounds a bit satirical in tone, but it is more a pathetic cry.

Happenings | 03.10.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Got, O Give And Go

Now that you've got, O give and go,
Bare ribs and bones you see whenso,
Spare bread crumbs, no more, ere you go,
Alms, nor aid— give as if you owe.

Before wiping beads of your sweat,
Remember to dab alien tears,
Take one lamp off your sunny gate,
Watch it fight neighbour's darkest fears.

Your chosen way whilst go, whatso,
See if salubrious songs ye sing,
Cool shadow to the scorched can bring,
If you have got, O give and go.

When at sunset ye sing of dawn,
Sing it in tune or none whatso,
Make it heard long after you've gone,
Give something with you ere ye go.

Caught is the sea when in a storm,
Death staring ship-wracked in the face,
Be Pole Star, rescue pilot home,
Lead them to safety, steady pace.

Be no pedestal, nor palace,
Nor yet a diamond stand-alone,
Plough an un-furrowed farm in grace,
Be manure— made with your own bone.

Now that you've got, O give and go,
Quiet, quack-less, a kindly feat,
Resting not even to wipe brow,
Nor sweat beads of reward, sour-sweet.

Musings | 02.08.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Heart Heaves For None

First, there's loss of tone
Ere gets dead like stone,
Pumping blood, not else!

If heart for no'ne heaves,
It hails nor for no one ails,
Survives, never lives.

Man is increasingly getting governed by head, less and less by heart. What if human heart turns one day to stone? What is not used ossifies.

Haikus | 08.05.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Hounded A Hushed-Up Pup

If ye feel hounded— a hushed-up pup,
Or feel, no love in conjugal cup,
Here's an ace among tips:
Admit if wrong, seal lips,
If right still, it does pay to shut up.

This is a limerick set in anapaest meter and writ in tongue-in-cheek style. Yet, take it seriously, I warn.

Tongue-in-cheek |06.08.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If I Can Be

If I be what I am and be e'er so,
My care's concerns retiring sans ado,
Like wayward memories awashed by wild
Waves, wipe out can I life's whispering woes,
Be oblivious of all, a new-born child,
And be not what I'm not, care nor a cause.

If I can toss guilty dreams like teen love—
Cherished a little while, and onward move
On to destinations of dreams anew,
And can treat my sordid shadows in scorn,
Letting them chase a while, and lose sans clue,
Like night-old cares dying by early morn.

If so, let vast shiploads of my grey dreams
Wrack in stormy seas, on rocks as wild streams,
To be flotsam to drift to unknown lands;
Let me re-live my fond childhood backwards—
Amid raw nature, lonely stars as friends,
And live as if there's no care in all worlds.

- Musings | 03.12.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If I Can't

If I can't hold happy now till morrow,
Nor can its seed search in the days be-gone,
Hauling it out from Time's trackless hollow,
How can I see it stand still on its own?

If I can't dig out bliss from dusty grey,
Nor know to stretch its life in endless space,
I'd be lost staring at time's dancing face
Fleeting at light's speed, wishing it would stay.

An if I know to delve into bright sun
Setting slowly, in joy as in sorrow,
I can't but carry on with the burden
Of that vague, vague whether-or-not morrow.

But if I care not for that weighty past,
And make light of the morrow's vague promise,
And dare either impostor for what he's,
I can make every moment endless vast.

Go 'head, dive unto this fathomless now,
The seed and sprout of life, Lao-tse's1 Tao!

- Musings | 03.10.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If I Cannot

If I can't bridge hearts walking extra mile,
Let me the least, try walking half a mile,
Let me wait half-way with inviting smile,
Try never getting stranded as if on an isle.

Life is worth living thanks that half a mile,
It is that half a mile that man's still wise;
Imagine, there's in life no compromise—
Life's journey would take many a more mile.

For Nature knows the value of a compromise:
A fierce cyclone when goes out of hand,
It flattens first tall trees too stiff to bend,
Blades of grass, humble, know where wisdom lies.

And Nature asks for no values to compromise,
But to value the voice of compromise;
It teaches some tenets of harmony,
Perish if not, repenting in self agony.

And by not walking up that extra mile,
Nor in compromise walking half a mile,
I know, I've learnt hard lessons late in life,
With brave smile, walking on the edge of knife.

-Musings | 02.08.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If I Can't Hold Now

If I can't hold NOW until the morrow,
Nor can find its seedlings in days ere gone,
Nor can trace them from time's trackless hollow,
I scarce can make it stand still on its own.

If I can't dig out bliss from dusty grey,
Nor know to stretch its life in endless space,
I'd be left staring at time's ebbing face
Fleeting at speed of light and wish it'd stay.

If I know not to delve on a bright sun
Setting slowly in joy as in sorrow,
I can't but carry on with the burden
O of that vague, whether-or-not morrow.

If I care a whit for that weighty past,
And make light of the morrow's vague promise,
And dare either impostor for what 'tis,
Easy I can make passing moments vast.

So, let me delve in this fathomless now,
The sole moments of wow, Lao-tse's Tao!

Musings | 03.10.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If I Have

Awareness if I have of an artist's
Backed by perceptive heart of a poet,
A mind loving harmony that insists
On freshness of dew-drops, wings of a jet
That on imaginative thoughts soar wild
On capricious tour on mere quirk of whim,
A spur-of-spot wonder, candour of child,
Fantasy to dwell in the world of dream...
If so, let me post life's first private page
Whilst I'm well into my second childhood,
That I can turn to at mellow old age,
And hope it helps soften my solitude.
'If I', ah what a splendid little bird!
What if there was no 'what if' in this world?

Sonnets | 02.07.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Joys Were Not There

If joys were not there,
And life desert bare,
Who would for the next breath care?

Based on an Upanishad

Haikus | 02.01.2018 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Knowledge Fence Builds

If knowledge fence builds
In the mind's green fields,
Can it still fetch yields?

Haikus | 01.05.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Law Is An Ass

Lament not that the law is an ass,
Think, how to make it a little less,
Try and make mules move fast,
Dump old habits of past,
Pick up race horses of proven pace.

If the law proves an ass make it a bigger ass. If justice takes too long add more courts, more people, more, more. If laws have loopholes, add more clauses, make them more complicated. No, no, no, make things SIMPLE, STRAIGHT, SHORT, and SPEEDY— turn the ass into assss!

Reflections | 05.04.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Life Is Like A Well

If life's like a well,
Trying to fill it not gels,
More is emptied more it swells,

- Haikus | 15.08.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Life Were Born Laughing

A newly born begins life with a cry,
And keeps crying, lamenting all her life,
And lo, crying has been her way well nigh,
For sure her life sinks further, rife with strife.
A little harsher get times and tears swell
From eyes, a little pain and she sheds tears,
Small illness and Death as if rings door bell,
And she starts counting her life's rest of years.
Smile has deserted her lament-full life,
Bearing a load of sorrows on her head,
She has pain to share with all, share her strife,
Sorry thoughts always share her sickly bed.

What if babes were born with a laugh instead?
For, not cry, laugh seems a fair breathing aid.

Sonnets | 12.07.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Lost He Has Him

Place in sun, powered seat,
And world at his feet,
What good if lost he has him?

- Haikus | 06.08.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Man Forgets To Live

If man keeps count of his lifetime's breath—
Live by years, not how and in good faith,
In past lures and their lust,
In tired dreams' empty trust,
To years he'd no life give,
And might forget to live,
What good if he dieth or liveth?

Reflections | 11.02.2017|

Aniruddha Pathak

If Man Had Remained Ape

At human history's preamble,
Grave error of Nature, I oft wonder,
Perhaps evolution's grim gamble,
Or should I even say: gravest blunder?

Flora flourished much before fauna's reign,
Last came man to master and manoeuvre,
Things went well till his greed grew no greater,
Things worsened till to end in acid rain.

And in an over-riding greed to grow,
In futile bid to raise his signature,
He sacrificed his children's safe morrow,
In making his selfish day, marred Nature.

The green heritage of millions of years,
This man of grey cells, but far little sense,
Gambled away in greedy endeavours,
After flood flowed, he thinks of building fence.

Had he remained an ape—whom he had tailed,
I doubt if he had the mother earth failed.

Reflections | 02.06.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Mind A Dancer Is On Stage

I see my mind as I see vast seaside,
And thoughts like random waves fading away,
They rise, recede like waxing-waning tide,
Yet some, like weeds survive their welcome stay.

Oft, like an empty stage flooded with light,
Amidst it all, there survives pure silence,
Like a rain-washed shore in deep penitence,
The dancer left, leaving delight filled blight!

But left lone on rain-washed shore in silence,
If mind a dancer is upon life stage,
And I but a witness, a silent sage,
If so, what use this idle contrite sense?

And if body-mind be vehicle in use,
What use being in command without cues?

The poet's pen wonders here: if mind is like a dancer on life's stage, and the real I (atman) is merely a witness, it is akin to a situation wherein He's commanding the reins without cues.

Musings | 04.01.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If No Penny's Left For Poor Leaf

Two pennies left, all of day to weather,
When I bought a loaf of bread with the one
And a lily with the left out other,
A tender leaf silently sulked in air
And dared to ask a kind li'le thought to spare
O for leaves that make this Earth a heaven.

Bread to nourish me all,
Lily for my dear soul,
But to nourish all life,
The greens got to be rife.

Musings | 05.11.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Only One Learns

Ah history lessons oft taught but breached,
Few are found keen to learn, get enriched,
Fewer still fair winners,
More losers, more sinners,
For, bridges aught be built before reached.

Aniruddha Pathak

If Only We Feel The Soul

And raised was when the tombstone,
A Christian was, nor Muslim,
A human kind— her or him—
A skeletal barest bone!
Is that why tombstones bear name?
If only we feel the soul,
Equal shall we go as came,
And world would be seamless whole.

Musings | 02.02.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Only You Can Ever See

Naught whatso common you have with me?
A great deal, me love, if you so see.
What we both, as many, know as I,
In fair faith oft called no more than i,
In truth be square root of minus one,
Which, shorn of arithmetic passion,
To me an unreal grey thought is,
An idea borrowed smart on long lease!

We both, comes when our time
To go, in state sublime,
Decomposed mortal flesh,
To be a pile of ash,
Or be one with grave dust,
With all—raw feelings, passion and lust,
In time sub-atomic nought at all—
What once 'nothing common' ye did call!

And sooner comes when a moment nigh,
The mind does when with memories die,
Me and mine remaining though as ere,
The subtle, barest of causal bare,
Remains the radiant, all aware,
And rarest if you may of the rare!
There thou art me love the same as me,
But if in hope ye can that way see.

- Musings | 02.04.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Soul A Circle Were

If soul a circle were
Whose fringes lie nowhere
And centre somewhere in us,
If death moves this centre
From this body to another,
From change of place, of breath,
Whatso given one's faith,
It's change but of locus.

Man's not afraid of death,
Afraid he's of locus.

Musings | 27.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Swallow Ye Can't Words

If swallow you cannot an ill word
That curdles and turns up to be curd,
Growing acrid and sour
By every passing hour,
Spell it out sotto voce and unheard.

Swallowing ill words has upset no stomach, advises ancient wisdom; but it may upset mental health. Beware then every time you open your mouth. If you find swallowing too hard, this limerick shows a better way.

Tongue-in-cheek | 07.03.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If The Soul Were To Sink

Imagine a dust peck in the eye,
Pricking from the shoes a spiky nail,
Mosquitoes bite, flies fluttering by,
You soon twist every irritant's tail.
Imagine slightest of body pain—
Power snaps out in a scorching summer,
The flesh feels feverish, mind in strain,
In peevish rankle you show temper.

Now let's see, soul's made in shame to sink,
Nor alarm, annoyance, nor yet ire,
Nor as if your house is caught in fire,
Your ego would not bother to blink.
In matters 'tween body and the soul,
I wonder why soul's a distant goal.

Set in nine syllabic anapaest meter

Sonnets | 01.07.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If This World Were Not...

Sans bottomless suck as gravity,
If this world were not such a sweet suck,
Won't its lures fall, water as off duck?
That it not falls be man's destiny.
And this life's been a dream— virtual,
If this world were not so illusive,
Who would dream therein ever to live?
The dreams dreamt perhaps far more real.
Still, in this river of sure return,
Whilst he feels life on earth might be vain,
Haply still he takes a return train,
And cares not still return tag to earn.
Letting all the muck get on his nerve,
He feels still much better to deserve.

That these conflicts and contradictions of world called Maya continue to confuse an average seeker is not in doubt. What is not clear is how he reacts to them. This piece reflects the state of mind of such a seeker. The sonnet is set in anapaest meter.

Sonnets | 02.03.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Thou Art What Makes Me, Me

Listen to this plea O my soul,
Spectator mute, and witness sole,
Let no pretender score a goal,
To rein in ego's reign's thine role,
So assert thyself, come to fore
From a well hidden remote shore,
Be in touch with the now and here,
Away from the clutches of mind,
Behave not as though thou art blind,
Lift up thine self will as to steer
This ship of life safe from ego's will,
How long as witness wait ye will?
An humble prayer this, my soul,
If thou art what makes me, me,
I wonder what use this plea.

The real face of a person is the atman. What we generally call I (self) be the ego aligned with body and mind, and the world around that we call our own. When body dies atman only survives and takes up another body. Yet, this atman is a mute witness of the machinations of ego, the pretender. Why can't it assert itself and be in charge of its own journey?

Musings | 05.01.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Wishes Had Wings

Wishes wing their way in thinnest air,
And chase wildest dreams, fair or unfair,
Were they horses, not cars,
Would reach frontiers of stars,
But till man reaches a dreamland fair—
A race of turtle and cocksure hare,
We must breathe poisoned air, grin and bear.

Air-fuelled car has caught TATA fancy, I read the news line and my mind took off to that distant land and fell back to today's times in a moment. Sure, wishes are like self-lit forest fires. Like electricity they travel instantly on thin wires if not in air.

Happenings | 02.02.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Ye Cannot A Caterpillar Be

If ye cannot a caterpillar be
And change your old garment whilst still alive,
Nor deem death as a gift of grace for free—
What use in an all new dress to arrive?
Caterpillars do their creator trust,
And cling none longer to the skin of old.
Man alone seems mortally afraid— dust
To be, getting recast in a new mould
And ridding sloth of a worm, life in vain,
With verve and wings as butterfly to dare,
To soar the skies yon of all fear and pain,
And go places that ere out of reach were.
And look at man, cosy in crumpled skin,
Nor do they love old, nor new life begin.

Sonnets | 03.08.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If Ye Love Me In Fear

To love in fear is to go reverse gear,
If such be thine love dear, I might well doubt
You love— the twain is no one to one peer,
And pray, make not that pout a beauty's clout.
Love and fear, birds, never together roost,
Fear of God far is from loving Him, dear,
Seldom can fear a disguise of love wear,
Nor faith nor trust such love can ever boost.

But dear, I do love God and there's no fear,
Freedom He gives to love any deity,
And He loves me no less; is my point clear?
This freedom, freedom is from fear, ye see.
Try and give this freedom freely to move,
And find me free from fear—me and my love.

Sonnets | 07.07.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

If You Follow My Poem's Flight

If you follow my poem's flight,
Pray, hold it under no search light,
Worse, under prying microscope,
Nor keen discreet ears, I do hope.
Let not your mind's curious mouse
Set loose, probing thru all its house,
Nor walk into its private rooms
Nor dig out my fragile hope's tombs,
Nor look for undue nuances
On words used between its two lines—
Poems mature slow like good wines,
Else, its delicate heart may cease.

And O look not for a secret switch
To illumine its dark precincts,
If need be, curb all your instincts,
No light, the switch shows up false itch.
Nor too much dig into the line,
Nor find fault with given design,
Search not so hard, what's left unsaid
More crucial is than what is said;
Nor, dear reader, try to hammer
It down, nor humiliate my piece—
A mother loves her child as is,
A privilege is it of her!

Pray, tie it not down, nor torture,
Nor analyse it part by part,
Not of statistical nature,
It's a piece of personal art—
Product of heart more than of head,
A bird free to sing her fond song
That can be right, nor ever wrong,
Nor yet, I plead, give it a grade.
Be wary then whenso you read,
It helps these dos and don'ts to heed,
When you choose my poem to read—
Poem to me, to you a weed!

So pray, spare your critical dart,
It has a delicate li'le heart.

Musings | 06.07.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

I'm At Sea On Thine Shore

Perilous, yet no less serene,
Cunningly calm, boisterous still,
Powerful red, and still blue or green,
Animated by thine own will,
Thine imprint's read in every age,
Mysterious in mythology,
Impervious in all ideology:
King Sagar thou wert of sage image,
Leviathan thou wert Isomade,
Scylla, Kaley of many a head;
Yet, when I come at thee to gaze,
I muse amidst thine vaporous haze:
God meant man on its shores to contemplate,
Why oceans on this Earth predominate.

Sea is celebrated in various cultures in varied ways as shown in this piece. It also appeals to people in various ways. It makes man to muse and contemplate whenever he is on sea shore.

Musings | 09.01.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

I'm Gifted I

A man said, I'm gifted,
So are all, a voice said.
Every man comes gifted
With gifts inherited,
Point is: what have you done with your head?

Tongue-in-cheek | 01.11.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

I'm In This World

Here in this world treading my lonely trail,
Falling, failing, in many a mistake,
Like a baker, try better breads to bake,
In market place I'm, never yet for sale;
My heart has tonnes of love for all who care,
My mind though a small pond, thinks like large lake,
Like ocean I try take a vast intake,
Keep a safe distance whilst same world I share;
I keep suffering moments of weakness
With many a happy moments of joy,
Likes and dislikes, high hopes, and hopelessness,
A child in me lets me enjoy my toy,
Who thinks there's no world than this; every act
Ends here; and no one knows the supreme fact.

Sonnets | 03.12.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

I'm Like That Only

Man's not designed perfect to be—
He may strive lesser flawed to be;
Every nut can't be king almond,
Nor can every coal a diamond.
Keeping this in mind, and well,
I'm like that only, I tell.

Nature's not, nor tries to be so,
And there perhaps her beauty lies,
The order of Cosmos is chaos
That endless evolves, gathers gloss;
Nor is science exact, we know,
Imperfections prod men to rise.

Take one, bodily imperfect,
But endowed with keen intellect
To compensate for core defect;
Balance is Nature's known secret.
A man's loved less for what he is,
In spite of the limits of his!

Perfection, where's that utopia?
There's mediocre via media;
Man with a fault or two is made
That, he strives to evolve and rise,
A lifetime he has to earn grade,
Yet, it ends not when in death dies.

Take silicon,
It's more useful when far from pure—
When doped is it with arsenic;
Take Boron,
A marvel electronic,
Holes make it semiconductor more.

Man is not made perfect
In God's creative act
That he rise above his odds,
That he's a defective jade,

But with potential unlimited,
O to surpass heavenly gods.

How odd,
Man should try to be god!
But wait, this is no easy goal,
Lifetimes many it takes there to reach,
So evolves an immortal soul,
And karmic action all so rich!

I am not perfect,
No one is in fact.
It's too odd in this world
To be a perfect bird,
And he's like that only,
So saying, she loves me.

Tongue-in-cheek | 02.12.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

I'm Silent Awareness

I think and so am I,
A thinker said of 'I'.
Soon as a thought arises,
It consumes itself and dies;
Ere it arose, there was silence,
Soon as dies there is silence;
I was silence before,
I still am as before;
In ocean called Eternity,
Thought's a wave ever so tiny.
I'm no I as I think a thought,
I am I thanks to my silence;
The thought waves never cease,
Yet, all along the ocean is,
Eternal awareness as is.

Not ocean, waves may sink,
Mind-muddled stray thoughts stink,
I'm not I, for, I think,
Pretender thinks he's pink.
I need body, nor dress,
I'm silent awareness.

Indic philosophy differentiates between the ego that has a link with the mind-body axis, and the real I— the atman. The latter is a witness and an enabler. Ego is not the real I, but only a pretender. In 'I think and so am I' the 'I' in question is not the real I but the pretender ego.

Musings | 05.01.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Impostor In A Mirror

Ears may look pretty real, but can't hear,
Rare if words whispered be so silent,
From world of feelings he steers quite clear,
Impostor he is and arrogant.
Perhaps man glad be finding him there,
In doldrums be when life who shows dream,
A way-lost would like his wayward theme—
He's a hound in hot chase of life's hare.
Rare be men that the yours truly meet,
A witness that stays close and around,
In touch, but hastily to retreat,
Perchance such a one's not his pet ground.
Man much rather mired be in mirage
O than face verity's awkward rage!

Sonnets 06.10.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

In A Jiffy

Ye might be feather light, lean, leafy,
Can't still kiss a spot in a jiffy,
Unless a bird be quite
That flies faster than light;
Jiffy's that mind's birdie and iffy.

In physics and chemistry a jiffy is equal to about 33.3504 picoseconds. Now, to reach anywhere in a jiffy one must travel one centimetre faster than the speed of light. Can you?

Humour | 11.03.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

In A Lonely Man's Life

A kitten from somewhere when came
In a house of one living lone,
And resigned to have no one else,
Happy but with the skin his own;

Enough he felt he had of all,
Content in caring his bone bare,
Reconciled living all alone,
It's late in life new souls to care.

So annoyed, so angry was he
A cat, of all, should share his house,
And uninvited too at that,
A house that had no room for spouse!

He tried to push out this gate-crashing guest,
Shooed at it with no influence,
Even aimed a stick at the pest,
Kind old man! She took no offence.

Instead, she even responded
With a feline feminine call—
Meow, meow, with a bent head
That'd melt even a hardy wall.

Feeling in him a strange li'le tick
That he thought was for long frozen,
Prompt, he withdrew the warning stick,
Old knots had begun to loosen.

Casually she came closer still,
Heavens, he even liked her act,
She meowed once more with some will
That had a sure telling effect.

This made him to feel for their ilk,
Poor thing, she's in need of my love,
He felt compelled to give some milk,
And a routine was set in groove.

Sure, soon in his esteem she rose,
Helped melt his long frost attitude,
Soon enough she was someone close,
Ere he knew he felt somewhat good.

But ways of heart strange often seem,
To him all whose life ruled by head,
Comes a day as if like a dream,
Heart asserts when though with some dread.

Bold, one day she brought in a mouse
At home of vegetarian stout,
Feeling repulsed, all grudge and grouse,
But where's the heart to throw her out?

Reflections | 14.01.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

In A New Raft Of Life

Perchance is death a deep unaware sleep
Bestowed to help forget what all had been,
And soul that must depart a date to keep,
Should soon, with a baggage of debt unseen,
Summoned when to heavenly firmament,
Divinity where sits in sole Judgment—
Day of reckoning to review progress—
Correcting course, Day of Judgment for some,
Soul standing trial, soul the sole witness—
And then return, back to a solar dome,
To pick up karmic thread whence it had left,
In a new life-raft sailing all alone—
To weave his life's fabric, warp with the weft,
A life set sail by destiny unknown.

Baggage of debt: With the body dead, soul must leave alone. But it has to carry the Karmic baggage, good and bad, subtle memories and sublime impressions in the unconscious deep awareness which accompanies the soul on rebirth, in a new raft of life— to weave a new karmic fabric.

Sonnets | 06.10.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

In Cave Once Again

Seems, man has come far from caves,
God particle has been found,
And comes now gravity waves,
Mastered he has most of waves—
Wind and tide and water waves,
And matter's energy waves,
Till some new wave is around,
What else, what else, this man raves.

Well, is there anything left?
World has wide warp weft and heft,
Many mysteries abound,
Things plenty wait to be found.
Yet, man may be deft, not wise,
And danger lurks beyond eyes.
History may take full round,
Fire might need be again found.

He might put up a front brave,
He might still be back to cave!

Unless man is wise on what to pursue and what not, there are lurking dangers—nuclear weapons, artificial intelligence, robotics, gene engineering and many more. Seize the day O man.

Reflections | 05.02.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

In Death Equal Made

Cinders from no holy tree may leave proof—
How hoary upon earth was once their spell,
Nor dust would demur if it came from roof
Of hallowed church, or stray chunk ere it fell;
Or if the dust was blown off a tiny
Burst of breeze or by a world-wind in spate,
No warden would vouch for its pedigree,
Nor would a priest predict its sublime fate.

Hushed up lie all dusty graves stony mute,
As might the ash of a funeral pyre—
If it peeled off a prince in regal suit,
Or off a pauper that died a death dire;
For, death cometh equal in gasping breath,
Levelling all— if not in life, in death!

Sonnets | 01.11.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

In Dust Equal Made

Alive, they never saw eye to eye—
By egos so misled,
In death now, side by side do they lie,
Not in life if alas, now when die,
And in dust equal made!

A tall leader dies. His rival died some time back and had received a grand memorial in a prime place. In their political feud they never saw eye to eye. The followers fought to get similar burial place for their leader.

Happenings | 08.08.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

In Giving Ye Gain

An apple's beautiful and red
And gains what it readily gives,
As it's ready the red to shed,
It's in giving that one receives.

If man with myriad gifts is blest,
It's good a few things are denied,
No good 'tis to be gift-relied,
O share, cherish Nature's rich chest.

Man's blest every moment with choice:
To grumble, greedily complain,
Or grateful feel for gifted joys,
The bounty's all free— sun or rain.

Tainted, suffused with selfish I,
Cleaving and cloyed seldom love is
If it can breathe nor freely fly,
Love clutches not, knows to release.

The world fleeting shall always pass
As moves on a passing season,
As grey clouds come to kiss green grass,
And green turns grey under hot sun.

Pray change, give up and give O man,
Learn to let Nature's bequeathed joys,
A child grows to give up her toys,
If only attitude you can.

It's hard to give up as one knows,
So, platitudes be all I pen,
And sermons as fore do I fan,
He shares who silent shares— like rose.

So be an apple to be red,
Ready the very red to shed,
He only gets, ready that gives,
It's in giving that one receives.

Musings | 07.10.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

In Love With Own Self

Self as his sole focus,
And his name, Narcissus,
Man from ancient Pompeii,
He was one and only,
But today, one of two among us!

Tongue-in-cheek | 49.02.2019 |

Aniruddha Pathak

In Mischief He Made Man's Mind

A bubble born maketh for no event,
Like that bubble in ocean be this life—
Space and time's randomly rendered moment
And of myriad possibilities rife,
If only I can see in waves the sea,
See common clay, in all pots and potter,
See lotus not else than muddy water,
Only thence reality do I see.

Let what happens be, not is good nor bad,
It's cleaving that creates likes and dislikes,
Notso in world's made joyous, nor yet sad,
It's clinging that a note dissonant strikes.
But man cannot but cleave and feel inclined,
God played a game when in mischief made mind.

Sonnets | 04.12.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

In Parental Nest

Way lost in grandeur of the ancient past,
On profound epics poets created,
Portraits of culture, hoisting scrolls on mast,
That left you drowned and from getting started.
I know of not one nation, east or west,
That chosen has to live on what has been,
As an old fledgling in parental nest,
There awaits when unexplored fields so green.

Long have ye parroted paeans by rote,
Walked only ways ere walked, not on paths new,
Enough myths of ancient glory to gloat,
Time to hone up your own history's hue!
Be the sea-gull that flies high, spanning earth,
Not one marooned, marvelling heaven's worth.

There are those that like to live in the reflected glory of the past. And their tribe seems to be on the rise. Granted, the country was great in the ancient past. But what has it done of late? Countries small and big, far and near have left us behind.

This elegy in sonnet form is a lamentation by Mother India.

Sonnets | 06.07.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

In Patience Poor Change Waits

The year gone holds out ah a mirror
That reflects well the human error.
But man gives him a dope—
Camouflaged as thin hope,
That in part softens up frost terror.
He waits much as change waits,
The New Year gives him dates,
And this goes on as if forever.

As per Indic philosophy years are have no special significance. One year has 365 days; from where to count is a matter of convenience. Man knows right from the bath mirror what errors, mistakes, and wrongs he has committed. He knows he needs to do something. But does he ever change? He only gives him a long rope, a new hope, and moves on. The cycle repeats. He keeps fooling himself. I wonder why resolutions to do something or to change should wait till the New Year.

Reflections | 03.01.17 |

Aniruddha Pathak

In Search Of Cementing Force

Ponderous pious words that they pick,
Please, but wishy-washy words are weak,
Talks, talks, nary a will,
Nor caring to walk still,
Bare, bare BRICKS, where's cement there to stick?

BRICS: Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. With the four wary of big brother China (GDP of more than the combined sum of the remaining four) , BRICS has not been able to make a marked progress ever since 2008. The group perhaps is in search of a cementing force.

Happenings | 07.04.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

In Search Of Dignity

Two hallowed heads strived for a legal edge,
Heard the case— horse as if trailing the cart,
Took time to think well— head over the heart,
Spirit of law bowed still to letters' rage.

Sympathised with the plea and not yet still:
'We allow a passive mercy killing,
But active we can't'— its unfair sibling,
And final word shall but be the chair's will.

Wise words take a slow walk to arrive,
Fair words therefore are worth a goodly wait,
A tune many a white wig loves to drive,
And mercy did wait for her date with fate.

Yet, passive killing scarce can be mercy,
It's too cruel, heartlessly inhumane,
It rather adds, not allays patient's pain;
Pity the justice can't quite that way see.

Murder in mind, red handed if one's caught,
Proved and punished, he might hanged be till dead,
Yet, this our legal revenge be red-hot,
No, mercy killing's sin—murder in bed.

And look at words of wisdom from the Chair:
Her friend cannot closeness to victim claim,
Few visits make no friends, words too weighed were,
Poor she, made to carry the cross called blame!

Poor mercy in the court room was decried,
Hearing that life is bare breathing of breath,
Justice felt good— life triumphed over death,
Much ere she had, her dignity had died.

Poor nurse condemned— to live barest of bone,
In state that was no life, nor was it death,
In a state much maligned, in twilight zone,
And lady justice had lost goodly faith.

The Supreme Court Bench deliberated on the petition by a sympathetic heart for mercy killing of a nurse in Hospital, a victim wronged by a hospital hand. The much awaited verdict on euthanasia is now out: The court may allow passive killing case by case; but active killing is a strict no, no. Yet to me active seems so much kind and humane to the patient while passive killing is like torturing the patient slowly, and seems somewhat cruel. In this petition head has triumphed over heart. Life that is no life has triumphed over death. And dignity has died. Read also, 'And the death lingers (11.02.11) '.

Happenings | 04.03.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

In Search Of Happiness

Let providence if pleased, bless
Me, help spot my happiness,
Show me a map— an image
Upon my life's nearest blank page;
Let it explain from where to start,
How to proceed whence to depart,
Tell me what colour the place is painted,
Let door number as well indicated.

Whereso the place be in the world,
High heavens, yon where stars are lit,
Open-eyed I'd rush rapid feet,
I may grow wings of a large bird.
And if not heaven the high seas,
I'll set sails, waiting for no breeze,
Let it be long nautical miles,
Sails, nor wings, leap isles to isles,
To spot the house of happiness,
Should providence pleased be to bless.

How far we all go in search of happiness! We assume that happiness is far off and is not easy to reach. Yet, the essential nature of man is infinite bliss. All we have to do is dust our exterior, and happiness is there. Man is like a mirror that reflects happiness but for the fine dusty layer on the surface. Alas, we find it harder to search within.

Musings | 03.07.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

In Search Of Soul

He migrated as many did,
Material wealth as the sole goal,
And earned a lot dough indeed,
But what he thought diamond, turned coal,
And at the end of all the roam,
Alas, he had to return home,
Back home in search of his lost soul!
He might have returned rich,
Lifestyle on lofty pitch,
But where there once was soul, there's hole!

Reflections | 12.03.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

In Tea-Cup As If Wasted Storm

A man that weighed function over form
Went to a doctor his nose to norm,
To doc to his job rose
And fixed him doggy nose
That breathed full, and he felt nicely warm,
So, no use barking at
The doc who was a vet,
In tea-cup as if a wasted storm!

Humour | 12.01.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

In The Court Of Thorns

Standing, her face grim,
Decked prone all the dice,
Rose virtual victim

In the court of thorns,
Virtue vied with Vice,
He wins who has horns.

Haikus |34.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

In The Lap Of Storms

Slumped off we never sit, nor breathe easy,
On reaching home shores nor in content coo,
Nor crow we struggled hard at stormy sea,
Just that we shed sour sweat, goals to pursue.
And on kissing the goal, in fair tides rise,
Like naught else joys of success are in world,
Yet, resting in peace we doubt if be wise,
For, made are we of clay as yet un-stirred;
To pray for things to ease is not our mark,
Nor compromises with hardship to make,
We look the storm in face and call its lark,
In troubled waters, devils do we rake.
It's not in us to breathe hollow at home,
Strange joys jostle us in the lap of storm.

- Sonnets | 03.09.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

In The Orchestra Called World

Wondrous this world as created,
A rare piece of work not ere made,
Chaos on face hiding its harmony,
Waves on surface, at peace deep sea,
Ah a pre-writ orchestral symphony,
A rhapsody set in sweet melody.

Where everyone plays all so fair—
Seated in a pre assigned chair,
Guides the sole master conductor,
Earth, water, fire and air,
Sun and moon, stars are there,
Everyone as own instructor!

Every bee, each tree, beast and bird,
All as if by strange tunes be-stirred,
Each one tries tuned in to remain,
Not one sounds weird, none in vain,
To harmonies set all apply,
On whims, nor fancy's wings they fly.

A section still nigh out of tune,
In winter playing tunes of June,
Oh harming universal harmony,
Wayward odd waves in a calm sea;
And your guess is as good as mine:
Earthlings off the harmonic line!

Musings | 07.02.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

In Touch With Nature

A sun-set can I see, nor the moon-rise,
Nor, with a sun-rise, moons melting from eyes,
Nor in these tall towers a smiling star,
The blinding lights my eyesight do when mar,
Seeing hundred feet far be when much too far,
When trees are felled daily by a dozen,
When only bird I see is poor pigeon,
How in touch with Nature can I then be?
When I must look down, watch where I walk by,
How can I marvel at the open sky?
Save me from tripping o'er an unpaved stone
On roads, many a pothole-manhole prone;
When stumbling blocks all over here bemoan,
How much of Mother Nature can I see?

Tongue-in-cheek | 10.03.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

In Wilderness Rivers Cry

For years have we nurtured mankind,
In return man has but us mined.
With feelings if your heart does move,
Is not it time to show some love?
You see well, choose not to be blind,
He who's asleep can we well wake,
Not him pretending, wide awake,
One, never lost is hard to find.

We both are bodies water-lined,
The mankind is our very kind.
In wilderness still seems this cry,
Heedless, mindless as you walk by,
Beware O man time still seems fine,
Not, rivers when turn into brine.

Reflections | 06.08.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Inflation

When prices rose six percent or nigh
The mantriji¹ felt mighty good;
And when twice as high
He felt the figure to fall as should;
When piercing roof four times high
He hoped, ho-hummed, hapless, shy;
Asked his chief babu², posing wise,
Should we shift to a monthly rise?

-
1. Mantriji¹: Means 'minister' as addressed by his minions.
 2. Chief babu²: Chief bureaucrat/secretary.
-

-Tongue-in-cheek | 03.01.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Inspiration

Seldom comes like a boon from skies blue,
Nor yet comes without a hint or clue
Though quiet comes sans time,
When no jingles may chime,
Silent comes like dawn's droplets of dew.
Welcome its solitude,
The lady has her mood;
Get drenched, never drowned under its hue.

Yet, Lady Muse when came,
Alas, what a strange dame!
Looked at me— Hitler as would a Jew!

Humour | 03.12.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Inviting Hills

O to tune in to good times of childhood—
To re-live gone-by years, not just to brood,
To lighten dust-laden baggage's dead tare,
To unburden mind of deadwood afloat,
To fast-forward to dusky days of old,
To turn over life's leaf now withered brown,
To try see if it looks green once again,
There's not like reliving school memories.

So, let me leap back all of six decades
On my mind's time-travel machine
To arrive at the days of middle school,
Let not my old age misunderstand me,
The happy me, I've nothing to complain,
But let me just take a random re-look,
Heed to hidden hints here, a hard guess there,
To reinvest in childhood's restive days,
The right age all life to be in—
Be it the first childhood, or the second,
For, when the 'first' is far beyond my reach,
Wise it is to enjoy the second itch.

So, here I go unwrapping days from warts
From my fleeting past's event-filled raw years—
The coolest time of life that warms all hearts;
And I remember three schools and three cheers,
Three times three harmless mirth, and time so cool,
I recall here my second change of school—

To a sleepy town, to a far off date,
Nestled 'tween two hills, on a dusty road
Patched up and tarred to cover up pot-holes,
A school retaining still her princely charm
In a small town of an old princely state,
A hilly terrain of Aravalli range,
The hills posing no mean tempting challenge
To adventure seeking few boys and girls
That always looked for joys of thrills sans lulls.

More than hills, tempting fruit trees beckoned us
When its fruits were in season and copious,
Yet, more luring than fruits was the challenge
To complete the task in limited time
Of school recess, bare hands whatso the clime,
But there was something in it that was strange—
Perhaps, coming tops was no lesser bet,
For, the raw fruits, once plucked, must be buried
To ripen, for, ripe ones were hard to get;
It mattered least marts were flooded with fruits,
But such is the lure of venture-filled loots!

I was one of the ace climbers of sorts—
Whatso scriptures say, we did fox for fruits,
Life does beckon with such tempting resorts
When man cannot forget fruits for the roots
While weary still of what-if of the life,
A venture it was strewn with stumbles rife.
When wisdom dwells far off to weigh you down,
Innocence when rule, be heavenly bliss,
When care and concerns of life look like clown,
That life shows all its charm so hard to miss.
It's when today looks like pathless wonder
To which all past and morrows surrender!

I'd any day love climbing verdant hills
Wooded with lush trees all so inviting,
Fruits or not, let there be rainbows, and frills
Of looking back at things left in making;
If we manage, be a child all age,
Let old age rage the worst of its rage.

The school that the poem talks about is one of the schools I studied. The town is an erstwhile princely state. The fruits referred to Timbhers (not timber) , greenish hard husk when raw, getting a brownie tinge when ripe with juicy sweet pulp inside, bearing a tomato-like greenish crest as if it be the king of fruits. Yea, to us then it was. I've never seen this fruit again all my life except once when I visited Mt Abu.

Reminiscing | 11.10.08 |

Ishaa-Vaasyam

Abode of Lord be this all, by Him lit,
All, whatso moves and not;
Renounced only shouldst thou eat,
He relishes that shares and gives,
He that renounces receives;
O greed thou naught,
Whose wealth ye think be this?
Heaven's, whose, if not His?

And yet man does covet,
Vulture-like greeds— to grab and get;
Grabbing aplenty, scarce to give,
Un-renounced, hoping to receive;
And plundering Mother Earth,
Espying all that was worth;
Polluting pristine waters,
Bottling to sell in pots and potters;
Even air that over his head spreads,
Easy that can't be sold, he degrades.

Thinks selfish, this foolish man,
On dunghill as if a crackling hen:
My private backyard be this world—
All that I've grabbed so far,
And all yon me on a far star—
Be mine to enjoy; me, me, it's my word.

The first Para paraphrases what Isha Upanishad's first verse said. But man covets and greeds like a vulture still.

Reflections | 11.08.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

It Is Death Life Is Life

If man were to rewrite life's mortal code,
Conquering age, banishing death for good,
If he bears bent-back life's back-breaking load,
Would life ever smile for such deathless hood?

Machines howso smart have not conscious been,
Myriads of mirrors in an infinite
Hall of heavens seeing each to each keen,
Radiating awareness? I doubt quite.

Any way, what dies is flesh, not the soul,
What gain garnishing a garment gone old?
What gain getting mileage from a tired mould?
Soul straddles lone remaining immortal.

And what use adding years to listless life?
If ye can't add life to years, add more cheers;
Ask Yayati of old that borrowed years,
Ashvatthama, whose life was long, not rife.

One can generations of lives foresee
Of old and weak pushing years, pleading death,
Praying for a new garment and fresh breath,
For euthanasia's last prick in mercy!

It's lust for life, living for a long length—
Should we add years to life or life to years?
The body dies not, age still appears,
Height, not heft where lies humanity's strength.

The Mother Earth, for long weakened in womb,
Bare can bear burden of a deathless strain,
And for all that won't die is there spare room?
Not death, let man master disease and pain.

And aught thou know O man: 'tis Death life's sweet,
Death's friend, never in death is thine defeat!

It is predicted that the advances in computer science, artificial intelligence (AI) ,

genetics, and biotechnology when put together may enable mankind in foreseeable future to banish death altogether making man immortal. More breakthroughs in science and technology are now made in one hour— what was possible in hundred years a century ago. Yet, where's the need? What do we achieve by becoming immortal? Death is a boon, no bane; it is death that life is so sweet.

Happenings | 01.03.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

It Is Faith That Logic Bends

No power me seems can one-two equal make,
Nor e'er can fit a square in a circle,
Nor even God can rules of logic break,
Ignorance oft gets born a miracle.
Cosmic laws bend together when to sing,
The whole of cosmic will working behind,
Makes perhaps an omnipotent being
That we call God of an omniscient mind;
Naught whatso could have this world different made,
And it scarce can but be the way it is,
It has come to mankind on a long lease,
As-is where-is bestowed but as an aid.
 And ways of God, divine or what men dread,
 Are not paved with logic that's mortal made.

- Sonnets | 03.01.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

It Is Mind, If You Mind Not

Ere, when life was a lowly yeast,
There was a mind, nor yet a thought,
It acted just as Nature taught.
And then it was born as a beast,
With some mind but no reasoned thought,
And scarce could rise above its lot.
But now, born a human being—
Human for sure, humane the least,
The brain is sure still evolving,
And heart a mere valve under breast,
Pumping blood with little feelings
And oblivious of sufferings,
God thought, man would grow beyond mind,
But fettered, he's hardly declined.

Musings | 03.11.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

It Made Me Twist In Bed

My mind could well from a million alts choose:
Say, marvel beauty of the moonless sky,
Re-live that meandering nature cruise,
Sweet fragrance from her lithe self wafting by,
Re-live those bluebell blossoms of late springs;
I could have dwelt at her demurring dimples
Which, seem to show deeper dents when she sings,
Which, rob sleep; I could have delved on her ample
Bosom— or thought any thought of the time;
But worries weighed in, crowding out my joys.
Wonder how human heads hold on to grime
More than on pleasant dreams, life's bliss and buoys;
Making me twist in bed— for the nth time,
My tired mind reasoned with no good a rhyme.

Sonnets | 01.02.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

It Shines Forth Rare

Moments of me-nor-mine shine rare,
This truth when dawns the dawn shines rare.
At lightning, look at clouds, sun, rain,
Rare doth shine season's magic there.
Bird or two, sprouts but few— no more,
Grey twigs stand rare, strikingly bare.
Swim deep or shallows, matters less,
Rare expertise shows when you dare.
Rainbows in riots may abound,
Plenitude of plain white shines rare.
Let walls confine and corners cramp,
Homely plain décor still shines rare.
Grudges, getting, greed of gaining,
Rat-race ends, life when shines as never ere.

Based on a Gujarati poem by Lakshmi Dobaria

Ghazal | 03.09.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

It's Strife That Life Is Rife

Allures of lotus if from loam arise,
From scorching heat come cool showers as rain,
If every joy springs forth from pits of pain,
Sorrows and strife are sent to us to size.
Charm there's, nor venture in life sans challenge,
If road ahead nigh straight and smooth is laid,
If life ever shines bright hues of orange,
Bewitching if comes all beauties as maid,
If beds of rose are laid in life, no plight,
If thorns on rose plants are damned to exile,
Black ever banished if life's always bright,
All pleasure-no pain would make life sterile.
Crib not O Mind, if problems keep cropping,
Thank fate if strife whets dull will from rusting.

Sonnets | 03.04.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

It's Time And Space You Choose

A drop of rain chooses to fall in sea,
Another opts to fall on lotus leaf,
To shine forth under sun for a life brief,
But some are lost amid millions many.
One more drop opted for a blade of grass
In early dawn to become pearly dew,
And to capture early dawn's crimson hue,
Some fell in dust to die engraved en masse.

Like a cherished trophy looks, though modest,
A scaly trunk that aloof, lonely stands
Amidst barren desert's scorching dry lands,
Huge banyans look lost in wooded forest.
Not what you are— it's time and space you choose,
I wonder as one left all life to muse.

Sonnets | 01.03.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Jades From Jacinth And Gems

Like mapping a stranger from not a scratch,
When from a given menu you've to get':
A latest pair of shoes and socks that match,
An elegantly designed suit, a set
Of cuff-links that propagate packaged myth,
All of which pronounce peripheral him,
Dive unto deep lone lets what lies beneath,
It takes patience surfaces ere the cream.
The same perhaps is true for a poem,
Yet, how many the patience have to reach
Up to hail heart from all hollow ho hum,
Who likes deep down of sea from fancied beach?
And even there from amongst pearls of them,
It's hard judging jades from jacinth of gem.

This sonnet is born of a dilemma: There are millions of poems to choose from. No doubt there are jacinth and gems among them. But there too are jades as are artificial stones. And there is too little time, too brief an attention span, and competing diversions galore.

- Sonnets | 02.06.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Journey

Mundane journeys come to end
When we arrive and land,
But journey goes on, my friend—
That of this mortal land—
Let what matter in the end
Be journey's very end,
At highest crest when we stand.

Reflections | 06.09.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Joy And Sorrows

Nourishing as does moon with its silver,
Joy and sorrows move on an even keel,
Though poles apart live on same moving wheel,
Singing odd songs, birds be of same feather.
Days and nights are in never ending chase,
A day is day because there's a dark night,
And darkness is born when there is no light,
One scarce without the other ever stays.
Life is filled with pairs like opposite poles,
A river can't flow on one bank alone,
Nor can a grinding stone grind single prone,
Ah dance of duals that keeps world one whole.
If a coin can't be cast with single side,
Happiness, sans sorrows, is groom-less bride.

Sonnets | 02.06.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Joy Is The Way

Slow and serene when I walked at the jheel¹,
Wearing on my visage a pleasant smile,
Relaxed to core and deep-set ease to feel,
For, weary thoughts I'd left behind a mile.

Seed of joy there's and bliss, of peace and love,
That, a perennial source in all us be.
Man, hampered, cramped and always on the move,
The blue skies move him not, nor buoyant sea,
Not leisured walk, but he chooses to run
For reason nor rhyme, when a peaceful pause
May put him in touch with inner heaven,
Yet, he chooses to chase what never was.

Too bad it dawns to him on a late day—
That there's no way to joy, joy is the way.

1. Jheel¹: Hindi, for a shallow, sprawling lake.

Sonnets | 03.08.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Just An Extra Inch

In sports, as in life, just an extra inch
That makes winners from chafe of faltered fate,
That, in the face of death would never flinch,
Or else be runners-up winnowed at gate.
Alas, this odd inch is never for free;
A sapling needs a surfeit of good care
That its will's not wilted, nor yet its dare,
In course the sapling grows a giant tree.

By knowing well the game nor being there,
No player of sports can good sportsman be,
But by dogged discipline, devil's dare,
Will to win, grace to lose, and let it be,
A winner once knows, win he always won't,
A loss from blue shall never ever daunt.

Sonnets | 09.04.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Just As I Like

How would the weather turn out today?
When I asked a shepherd boy one day,
'Just the kind I would like',
His words came, me to strike,
'I love whatso way the weather may'.

Reflections | 06.09.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Justice For Generation Next

Justice, that once moved in months, rare in years,
Took a short slumber if not sleep in snores,
Now goes for grey decades if not full scores
To gather enough steam to get in gears,
And when delivered in endless long text,
It looks as if for generation next!

Reflections | 05.06.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Justice Is A Maid So Prude

A Corolla came speeding, half asleep,
Right on pavement— a family's sole home
Under the sky's wide open dome,
And killed a few right in their sleep.

There was much that the media said
On the pitfalls of partying,
Of too much drinking,
As on drunken driving,

On dangers of heedless speeding,
But li'le was said in victim's aid.
In today's times truth is a helpless maid,
Not fair that flies on legal wings.

And much was said and argued
In favour and against,
But justice is a maid so prude
That truth must be red-handed best.

So after much was said, □
The issue was threadbare laid,
When all that came went home,
Few thought of the hapless few
Sleeping under open dome,
And none alas had a clue.

Happenings | 02.11.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Karma

Dispute none any I've O with you,
Nor with Books, but with their blinkered view
That seems to have bestirred,
Blurred vision of this world;
Had this world been worth nigh,
What for be it and why?

Our holy books are fond of saying, this world is vain; this samsara is asara, vidya Vs avidya, and stuff like that. Because of this perhaps our country neglected life here. Karma was considered inferior; our work culture suffered; and work was worship only in words, not in action.

Reflections | 21.11.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Karmic Tax

Finishing tax returns one late night,
Preparing I was to have sound sleep,
And I heard a strange voice, stranger sight,
My eye-lids were heavy and sunk deep.
Chitragupta, he said with heavy breath,
I knew him as a book-keeper there—
Pearly Gate's no-appeal court at Death,
Enquired he: have ye paid tax, and fair?
In advance—and tax paid off at source,
Deducted duly from salary,
I replied feeling proud, yes of course.
No my friend, my books look contrary.
No, my tax cannot be outstanding,
I offered a tad irritated,
Here, do check my papers, everything,
Have I missed a tax on any head?

For a night-long daily peaceful sleep,
Ye aught pay by helping someone sleep;
For golden sun, dew drops every dawn,
Help spread light in someone's darkling life,
Providence has fragrant flowers grown,
Should not ye soften up someone's strife?
If haply in this life ye do live,
Isn't it debt O ye oblivious head?
Learned man art thou and aught ye give,
Think of debts outstanding, still unpaid.
Think of obligations unfulfilled,
Pay, a bridge for better life to build.

You've taken things given and granted,
In my books tagged are they bold and red,
Remember, naught so is owned by thee—
Rain is not, nor is sun—naught comes free,
Pay in time, penalty to avoid,
And we charge a surcharge, a cess too,
Long a free supply of fruits' enjoyed,
Sowing seeds, nor doing labour due,
Sow new seeds, better still sacrifice,

Else, loaded shall get thine Karmic dice,
Sacrifice is self-paid advance tax,
Pay up ere deadlines go past the max.

So saying he bang-closed his huge book,
I woke up rubbing my heavy eyes,
Mirror showed me a tax-dodger's look,
Penitent the dream made me, and wise.

Reflections | 01.01.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Keep No Monkey At Bay

A learned man in his discourse once said:
Fear and fight sin or save from sin your skin;
A mendicant, long silent protested:
Stop this slaughter of sense, sink in your sin.
The learned man, debunking from discourse
Mused: Ah what a mantra: Sink unto sin!
And asked: I've got the cart, pray, where's the horse?
This, this: Seek thy solace from what has been,
Beware ne'er yet to think of old monkey.
Yet, hard it is to keep monkeys at bay,
More one tries to miss more mischief they play;
The man much tried, and hit `pon this prized key:
 Fight nor fear sin, nor run `way from the scene,
 Let witness watch from wings— involved, nor keen.

Yet, not whatso alas is easy in life— letting the witness, your
atman to watch! All man can do is to try, I too. Perhaps, it is
easier than keeping the monkey at bay. The witness here
refers to one's atman.

- Sonnets | 05.02.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Kiss

Wise indeed are the ways of a jackal
That never seems short on options at call,
Easier, straighter seem the ways of cat,
She once admonished the wise jackal, caught
Fishing in hot waters where he should not:
'Keep it simple, Stupid, don't complicate'.

The jackal then asked the cat one fine day:
How easy from danger you get away?
There's but one way of which I so far know—
I climb up nearest tree fast as I go.
How about you? Cat asked, O wisest friend,
I've hundred ways and counting, there's no end;

I've the options; to escape is the goal,
I can into the nearby bushes hide,
Under a rock or behind, that beside,
I'd work my way to hide in a dark hole,
Run faster, sprint to leave danger behind,
Many a trick I've in my fertile mind....

And once a tiger did indeed when come,
The wise jackal whilst on options pondered,
Caught was precious time when it squandered.
By climbing up the tree the cat was home.
More is the choice, greater conflict create,
And caught are you right on the escape gate.

Simple's always sought by a happy man,
Varied are alts and choice, less be the time
To weigh them and wise be; though it's no crime,
Array of tricks is a catch-22 can.
We live in a world with many a choice,
Each sings its own tune with a varied voice.

So let your cat within keep it simple,
Let no jackal with vain choices cripple.

If I should add, keep it simple also works well in wedded life.

KISS (Keep It Simple, Stupid)and make amends, and never do thou complicate.

Reflections | 03.04.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Kiss Me O Death

Bless me O Death, will you?
If for moments but a few,
Bear for me this burden of poverty,
If for moments but a few,

Kiss me O Death will you?
Save me from this misery's blue,
Alive, I must this burden bear,
In death do me from despair spare.

.....

In hope he went to burial ground
To look for Death there around,
But, divining out his mission,
Death turned into a skeleton.

If life be a storehouse of strife,
Death sure far better seems than life.

Musings | 12.08.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Kissing Market's Bottom

Buying at rock bottom each bloke craves—
If they be have-nots or hefty haves,
Yet buy low high to sell
Not easy is to tell,
Bare but few get lucky— bold and braves.

Share markets rise and fall without any one getting wiser. But the game is still to get to the bottom to buy and to the crest to sell—a funny game of licking bottoms to an outsider like me.

Tongue-in-cheek | 04.03.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Know Good-Before Date, O Guest

He's the will, heart to serve, host is kind,
How long still O dear guest should you stay?
Honoured guest, your welcome is well-lined,
Reason still is it to overstay?
Time you know leaves things too stale behind,
So leave bags and baggage, why delay?
Good as God be the guest, host's faith blind,
O let not his welcome still decay,
Dateless¹ should all return, keep in mind,
Pray, taxing one's patience does not pay.
Taken care of, doted and well dined,
Ye aught know still your good-before day.

1. In Sanskrit the word for guest is atithi, one without date. Death is also an atithi. A guest visits one unknown date, and would leave no one knows when. Most of us are frightened of death, and do everything at our disposal to extend our stay on earth, if just to linger around. I always wonder why. Man, as guest here, should rather return at the earliest opportunity, and come back with new garments, new goal, and invigorated.

Ghazals, as genre, are made popular by Urdu poetry. They do not render so easily in English. This one is an attempt.

- Ghazals | 03.05.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Know Truth Dear, Don't Believe

Disbelief dear, always root-dwelling cause,
Disrupted it has things, see history:
Buddha had question what old belief was,
Martin Luther had, Roman church's glory,
Came Meera's love from the spheres far above,
Not by convention was coloured her creed,
The mundane world could scarce grasp her true love,
Nor she succumbed to ways of worldly heed.

So, pay no heed to tales tailored on me,
Sham stories to credulous hearts are told,
You know well not to guess on ghosts in glee,
You hold a fair head `pon a heart of gold.

A wondrous life together can we live,
But if you know my love, not just believe.

A man's love interest had heard some tales about him. Yet, there was no bleeding proof, nor red hands. He tries here in this sonnet to convince her not to believe in tails of tales, mere hearsay, and trust him for what she knows, and has experienced of him— his love.

Sonnets | 25.03.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Knowledge Builds Fences

It's knowledge that fences builds
In my mind's vast fields
Whence I reap my yield.

- Haikus | 01.05.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Lal Ded

Mystical be thine Sufi poetry,
Of no one faith thou truly art,
And O thou warm hearted yogi,
To all faiths bleeds thine feeling heart.
Be they mystics of Mohammed,
Of Christ or by Krishna led,
Or by a spectrum of faiths made,
They all belong to Kashmir's plural head,
By varied hues of hearts motivated,
Not for no reason art thou called Lal Ded.

The 14th century Kashmiri mystique, Sufi poet Lal Ded— she has been Kashmir's best known spiritual and literary figure venerated by Hindus as well as Muslims and others. She has for long eluded claims of religious monopolists. Yet, since 1980s things have somewhat changed by militancy in the region. A book has been published by Penguin Classics, 'I, Lalla, The Poems of Lal Ded', translated by Ranjit Hoskote.

Lalla's poems are called vaakhs, derived from the Sanskrit vaak or vaach, meaning speech or words (vaakya meaning sentence) . This piece is penned in her honour.

Happenings | 01.07.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Lamps Long Extinguished

Man bequeathed with lamps and lanterns—
Light of Vedas, Upanishads,
Of Bibles, Korans, Dhammapads,
Many a religion he learns,
Which, as lamps, long are extinguished,
He walks in dark, falls, gets anguished.

As warning signals are lamps used,
Not spreading light on paths to walk,
But as clutches, quarrelsome talk,
He's perplexed if falls, nigh confused,
Refuses still to open eyes,
Oh to blame light, but not be wise.

Religion's a way to be spiritual,
It's beckon of light, rites nor ritual!

Reflections | 19.11.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Learn To Share O Bleeding Hearts

A long row of border pillars, all mean,
Wound thro' thickets and farms on sandy track,
White-washed, each bearing a number in black,
Like suture-marks on earth's unfolding skin!

But none of them planted are to unite,
Dividing lives they upraise red ripples,
Dissecting land that was ere seamless quite,
But culture, common tongue once fused peoples.

As was its fate, underneath a pillar
A sprawling Peepal did spread wings in space,
A tree born off a single bird dropping;
Perhaps it could stand no more stone's grey face!

And yet, the bird sauntered there O from where?
Harvested, whose seeds it happened to eat?
None could tell, nor any a soul did care,
With disdain do birds man-made borders beat.

Nourished by common soil the tree grew well,
Mocking at stone pillars from kindred dust—
And man-made marks sacrificing for life
O stood witness to split borders unjust.

No soldier that watched borders had the heart
To sack the sapling, much less a grown hunk;
None thought of replacing back the pillar,
Many scrawled their stray thoughts on its vast trunk.

The Peepal tree flourished, the tree of life,
Which, as the scriptures say aught severed be;
Poor stone-pillar post, getting sacrificed,
It stood teaching tenets of unity.

It still stands cooling borders on each side,
And tempers too that restless in mind dwell,
We know, trees tie up when borders divide,
Mother earth too wants that peace should prevail.

What learned men failed to do a bird did,
Winged feathers for no ink-made borders care;
The bird, a true angel of peace indeed,
Ah ensured, bleeding hearts must learn to share.

This piece takes off from true happenings on Indo-Pak border at Suchetgarh. In an allegoric reference, Peepal tree represents a mundane world of desires as per Indic philosophy (Bhagavad-Gita # 15.3) .

Happenings | 04.02.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Lemon Is Lime, Nor Orange

Faces feign, flaunt many a mask strange,
Countless veils, copiously cunning range,
In mighty error still
Truth mirrors with a will,
Chameleons camouflage, feign a change,
One may hide behind mask—
Too tiny for the task,
But lemon can be lime, nor orange.

Most of us often wear a mask and think that we fool others. The truth however is, we are only fooling ourselves. For, we can't feign things for long. A chameleon knows his kind. And mirrors make no mistakes, nor are in errors. Face may feign, but still all in vain.

Reflections | 02.03.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Let A Bank Of Balloons Bloom

Upon tax payers a tad more trust,
On total kitty a tad less lust,
Treading light on raised cream,
And on tender young dream,
Balloons on rise— not to blow them burst.

More and more laws on black money get passed even when some sections feel uncomfortable with them. I am reminded of what WB Yeats once said: 'Tread softly because you tread on my dreams'. Adverse economic consequences apart, we should ensure that the honest tax payer is not harassed, nor yet the small fish feel apprehensive, especially as laws are laid a bit loose. In any case we need to have less thrust on legislation and more on implementation. Meanwhile we common folks can only pray.

Happenings | 04.05 15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Let A Man Himself Be

A man's born to be none but him,
Made as he's from a unique mould
Used but once, never again rolled,
In all of space and all of time,
No one is made with him to rhyme,
In a journey of his fond dream
Of many an unknown innings,
He's on own path, on his own wings.

What water can do scarce can milk,
As every man dreams different dream
No two things are same as they seem,
As cotton would differ from silk,
And there's strength nor yet weakness still,
So let a man his own self be,
He, destiny of his and will,
Let him remain as only he.

On earth, man's no more than a dot,
As earth in solar world's a speck,
Sun's huge for us, in cosmos not,
Man's born still to carve out own track.
He's the only one of his kind—
A marvel and masterpiece rare,
In body and spirit and mind,
In making him God spared no care.

If a man still not be what he should be,
And go back as is whence he came,
Remaining a speck hard to see,
He has only but him to blame.
Let him make this world with him sing,
Though world is obliged none to please,
He's him, his soul in utter ease,
Seeking a niche where he's the king.

Reflections | 04.12.04 |

Let Good Gardens Flourish

I like more seeds to service and savour,
Than fruits of someone's labour, by sweat sown,
Nor yet quotes chewed well past its fresh flavour,
I like what's grown in garden of one's own.
Yet, Muse is a rare motivating maid,
Call it a flash, insight, brainwave of head.
And men for long forbidden fruits desire,
Seeds of such fruits often go to garnish
A self-seeded dish that we all relish,
Like garden of Eden they do inspire.
And there's no sin getting by great, inspired,
It has copious works of art to us sired.

This world's a sole piece of creative art,
All else is inspired art, in full or part.

Sonnets | 03.03.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Let Heaven Sit In Judgment, Not Men

Let heaven judge the best it can,
Pick up pretenders, right from wrong,
Justice is done by man, not pen.

If truth should die ere rise again,
Who'd ever sing a rightful song?
Let heaven judge the best as can.

A child's born, grows to be young man,
Truth grows no girth, lives ever young,
Justice is done by man, not pen.

Grown ups grow to be flightless when,
Led by logic as they for long,
Let heaven judge the best it can.

If two birds were to fly as one,
Their feathers together aught hung,
Not pen, justice is done by men.

Seamless do the days and nights run,
Who knows how ends each other's song,
Let heaven sit and judge best can,
Justice is done by men, not pen.

A child an instinctive natural judge never sits in judgment of right and wrong. So is an old man in second childhood. But the youth feels proud to be rational, ruled by head rather than heart. Yet, what's right, what's wrong; when a day begins, when ends; when precisely light takes over from darkness? Between white and black there lies grey, as does between right and wrong, between truth and falsehood, and all contrasting opposites in life. There is one infinite continuum; only peoples' perspectives differ. Who are we humans to sit in judgment?

Villanelle | 11.09.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Let It And Truth Shall Reach

Teachers have little to teach,
They only help build a bridge,
Nor have gurus much to preach,
They smoothen up stubborn edge
That lets no light of truth reach.
And darkness when calls a siege,
Hiding knowledge behind ledge,
It's time this blockage to breach.
O jump in, no use to hedge,
Ocean there's full of knowledge,
From shallows to depths so rich;
God has given ye that itch.
But so much do our schools teach,
A student taught turns a midge!

Reflections | 05.08.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Let Me In My Orbit Drift

Should ye pry open my personal space,
Remember, my core privacy to spare,
Pray take me not like a child's cosy bear,
I oft like to get lost my soul to please.
Joy there's in roaming like rudderless ship,
And take the fresh breeze from whereso wafts free,
Not travel to; drift to whatso hails me,
I try, cleave to nowhere, crave no heaven.
Love me or not but leave me all alone
To let me live life in my own odd way,
To grow like wildest weeds never watered,
I love weeds that struggle on their own stem.

I would much rather you treat me like fire—
Everyone's friend, if hailed a helping hand,
But left at safe distance no matter what—
Do so, and blame me not for my mad rage.
It is when fire's respected not from far
That it's no friend keeping you warm, cosy,
It is when flowers are loved not from far,
But plucked apart, they lose their born-with charm.
So, treat me like a flower in the wild,
Or silver of the late night's crescent moon,
Enjoy its charm and sail by like a ship,
Let me walk immune to favours and frowns.

Fire nor a flower, nor I've nature's gift,
I'd still like in my odd orbit to drift.

Musings | 02.05.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Let Me Keep My Illusion

Her face for me has freshness of green lea,
Her eyes inviting, tempting to explore,
And bosom, warmth of my life oft wintry—
All-weather port beckoning me ashore;
Each acre of her fine anatomy,
Belittled and maligned as mortal flesh
That would one day be one with dust or ash,
Or face of Maya if not enemy,
All this in no core hast dimmest lamp lit,
For me, I'd rather in unlit dark live,
In search of strange solace if illusive;
Let all keep philosophy's high spirit,
 To me life is immortal as is death,
 So, let me keep, illusive if, my faith.

- Sonnets | 01.04.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Let Me Return To Mother Earth

Comes to end when my play's last scene; when ends
My pilgrimage, its last ponderous mile,
It's time when last curtain calls in a while,
When time is it to say goodbye to friends,
And when I show up for the Judgment Day,
My flesh unto earth atoms shall when merge,
All but the subtle vestiges I purge,
My sins and saner deeds when say their say—
If I deserve a term or not in hell,
If I should suffer taste of a devil's,
But when purged I'm of all sinful evils—
Pray, spare me, howso short, from heaven's spell,
For, I'd like to return to Mother Earth,
Try and show once again my tiny worth.

Sonnets | 19.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Let My Ignorant Bliss Be

And when I wake up and see
World no more exists for me,
If there's in life no Maya,
I'd wonder if maza in life aaya!

Imagine all props are out,
Realities only stare,
And life is all bottoms bare!
There goes life's wonder-filled pout.

Laugh's lost and lost is life's plot,
Hair bristle nor yet there's thrill,
Sans excitement sets in chill,
Maya when goes life gets hot.

Maya, like a video game
Of man's existence in name,
If software gets decoded,
If source code breached, secret spread,

O where would be fun ahead?
Knowledge melting limited,
Ignorant bliss no more shame,
Fun fizzles if shy feels this dame.

If children are we of God
Let this wonderful toy be,
Let this ignorant bliss be,
Peas prosper but in closed pod.

Musings | 04.11.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Let My Misty Mind Misty Remain

Let my misty mind misty remain,
Images hazy in eyes,
Let my words woolly and scattered remain.
Know not, why the time as if marooned lain,
Heart heave-less frost and season lost,
To accompany me there be whole world,
But still, let me lonely remain.

Let my misty mind misty remain,
In paths, matters of love,
Or in memories, lost let me remain,
Why this hazy shadowy as if mine feign?
Relationships misty, why is off-colour this world?
In world of dreams haply is time hurled,
But today let me upset with me remain.

Let my misty mind misty remain,
Life lonely and this pain lost within remain,
Why is the way forward lost sans clue?
And those false promises why they look true?
Let those dreams broken and scattered remain,
And let my misty mind misty remain.

English rendition of the poem

Dhua Dhua Sa Rhne Do...

- Poem by Sonali Ganguly

Aniruddha Pathak

Let Winter Rage At My Door

Like a late, late eve of a dying year,
The yellowed leaves when await a fall down
To get trodden by feet when dried dull brown,
And a few hanging on when live in fear,
I too when reach life's faltering twilight—
The age receding to sunset time, I
With forebodings of a long darkling night,
Dream no more of Northern Path of bright sky,
I'd much rather that you see the amber
Of glowing fire that in my heart still lies,
See past the fall followed by November,
All thro' chilly weather till spring doth rise.

If you my love can wait till then and more,
Let winter do her worse upon my door.

Eve of a dying year: Alludes to autumn or fall of the year, its parallel being old age of men.

Northern Path: According to Hindu belief, the soul leaves mortal remains, and proceeds on to Northern/Southern Path. North is the path of no-return (Liberation) , and south for returning to earth. Of course this depends on karmas.

Sonnets | 13.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Let's Cross The Limits Of Pain

Let's learn limits of pain to cross
And walk across the greens of comforts lain,
Far away, tossing aside convention,
To kiss unknown acres of new terrain,
Pain is the way new things are learnt,
Curiosity may have her heaven killed,
And yet, without it Eve would have stayed stilled
At Eden Garden's confining bushes,
Blissful, content, far from pregnant
With possibilities howso hellish,
So, let's tie unknown fears on a tight leash,
And ere it's time desert no sinking ship,
If not else, to see how frightening fright
Be, let's refuse lifeboat to a safe shore.

Let's at times seek no rescue flight
To see how well is lit our inner light,
And find comfort in darkling night.
And to see if our spotless soul comes clean,
It's all right at times to embrace some dirt,
And learn to live with stains on our own shirt;
Let's leave of absence to our old masks give,
Unconcerned if in open sin to live,
To let the world see the way we have been.
This is to learn crossing limits of pain,
Pleasures o'er pain have marred morality¹,
Pain it is that produces poetry.

Yet wait, this second thought,
It too sounds no less sane—
More so sprouting unsought:
The art of life it is avoiding pain².

1. Friederich Nietzsche from *The Antichrist*

2. Thomas Jefferson, 1786

Let's Make A Deal O Lord

Thou art O Lord a unique One,
Me, not but a value-less nought,
Without thee I'm a worthless dot,
And an object of abject fun;
So, I've come to thee this to plead:
Be O Good Lord my life's sole lead,
And allow me to follow thee,
Together sure I'm make we can
All multiples and powers of ten;
This way can we grow, ye and me—
Without zeros one remains one,
Sans one, zeros are next to none.
This may perhaps sound a little selfish,
But this is how my world cooks every dish.

Prayers often sound like a bucket list of wishes. And worships are for wanting.
Often they are conditional give and take—
If you grant me this O God I'll do that, and so forth. Here in this piece it has
reduced to a business deal, no less.

Sonnets | 02.03.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Liberation

You've the river crosst
And left the boat, all almost,
If on bank feel lost,
O leave that too as thine host,
Freedom's to leave every ghost.

Senryu | 17.11.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Life And Death A Dual

Life and death, a dual,
None is singular,
Is not in vain their duel?

Haikus | 02.08.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Life And Death, A Twain

Flame flutters and tide wanes without reason,
Death drops shutters as life sinks in a pit,
Day looks dull when behind dark clouds hides sun,
Night is moonless and still no stars are lit.

Life's throbbing breasts hide failing heart beneath,
As if to mask a universal truth,
Unpalatable though, death does blare teeth,
And whenso life dies all it dreams is youth.

And man returns carrying no suitcase,
As life leaves amidst unfinished hopes hemmed,
As loveliest words get frozen on face,
As liveliest poems may die un-penned.

And as some life-long goals remain un-scored,
As one-sided love remains mute, wordless,
Life is set sailed to move across un-oared,
Towards new life-term, try one more success.

As death comes two un-dotted times to dot,
To bring together two random journeys,
Sepulchral silence falls, church bells tolls not,
The air thickens as if, freezes as breeze.

Frail like kid's paper boats life collapses,
A puddle's all it takes to soak and sink,
No world wind to tilt it to drown, just breeze,
The life when hastens to reach its last brink.

Yet, much maligned death, is no enemy
Of life— on a first-name term with many,
Pleased to walk with life till eternity,
For such largesse still Death gets a penny!

To death, morrow may be the next moment,
His future tied on a tenuous thread,
He lives half-shut eyed, instant to instant,
And present spread is ready, hot and red.

A twain `tween which a lot remains common:
Life lives fearing death, death of life unknown.

Musings | 03.05.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Life And Happiness

Way back when child nigh I'd as many joys
As wonders wandered in my wanton worlds,
And joys when jingled along sundry toys,
I felt when none happier was than birds.
Came youth, and what changed hand were only toys,
Rewards of life innocent nigh no more,
Boys chasing girls, and girls giggly at boys,
Till maturity moose knocked at the door;
My earthen pot kept in kiln to ripen,
Life's realities reeling hard and keen,
Old happiness failing to enliven,
And I was nudged to kneel, to look within.
 In fond hope more fulfilling life to find;
 Isn't life leaving blasé ecstasies behind?

- Sonnets | 08.09.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Life Is A Stage

When ye retire to sleep at night's moon,
Feel as if entering a Green Room,
The play hath ended, yet the scene still on,
The dress and décor of the day still donned;
The act nor role has been done as yet,
No one has been allowed a let—
To take off sweaty dress nor easy make,
As if there may follow another take
Soon at the crack of morrow's dawn;
Be ready and suppress thine yawn,
Place thy self at His disposal,
He knows, for 'tis His proposal;
It is He who hast writ the play,
Knoweth He the end as ends the day,
He every twist knows, every turn,
Thy job's to act, and then return.

Compare

Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

-William Shakespeare

This theme, 'life is a stage; we are all actors, and He alone directs', is being utilised by many a poet for centuries. But it was first used thousands of years back in ancient India when Vedas were written perhaps spanning over centuries, and contributed by so many of our sages and seers. The above is a translation of some (shlokas/mantras) verses from Atharva Veda. Of course, the translation is not literal.

- Translations | 04.09.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Life Is A Strange Riddle

Thou art no death, life in a renewed search
Of next innings to persist once again,
Bird priming wings, in search of a new perch,
Life's melody singing the old refrain!

A lost bird in search of his twin for long—
A bird of the same flock, preening its feather,
All set for a voyage new things to weather,
O why this vainest search? What has gone wrong?

A bubble of sea water nigh restless,
Life struggles, longs its true lineage to trace,
To merge unto her infinite sameness,
Die bubble's life, other drops to embrace.

To most us still life is a strange riddle,
Amid two unknowns, mysterious middle!

Indic scriptures are filled with philosophies on life and death. Death is just a shadow, for, light is not far. Yet, it is a grave shadow all the same, and the pun is intended. It enables the soul a new vehicle to move on with new life; a new garment, for, the old is worn out. It's like a setting sun, sure to rise again. The metaphors are endless. We still grieve for life no less. It's not easy to transcend Maya.

Sonnets | 04.01.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Life Is But A Beginning

Birth marks beginnings,
Death, yet another innings;
Yet, life to life clings.

Haiku, we know, marks 'the beginning'. Haiku poets say, 'we only begin, we never end.' What the poet begins, the reader may try to complete by setting his imagination to sail. Life too, like a Haiku poem, has only a beginning. For, who has seen the end?

Haikus | 04.03.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Life Is Depth, Not Length

Something has long been signalling men to slow down,
To explore lasting peace welling from deep within,
Stepping aside for a while to drown mundane din,
O to reclaim his face from what looks like a frown.

To enjoy soft caress left by the kiss of time,
To tune in to soul's rhythm, and heart's soulful been¹,
Enriching it with what be vague but still sublime,
Relax— to be in touch with the real thee serene.

But man rushes thro life of many a long mile
To arrive by surrendering soul's precious bliss,
Remaining still a stranger as if on an isle,
A migrant like a warm-weather-seeking ibis!

The soul nor has eyes to see nor yet nose to smell,
Nor sense of touch, of speech, nor has ears that can hear,
Tongue, nor ever taste, it casts still a lasting spell—
Man still can be in touch if drives in a slow gear.

In man's needless hurry soul feels harried and lost,
If only he takes time to be ever present,
And have a tryst with the life's unwinding moment,
Condemned if not, spend life with that wannabe ghost.

Man hardly knows, life scarce is mere length he's alive,
That, life is depth to be explored more than long drive;
He aught know destiny's well is well-provided,
Let him guard his life's buckets are not shallow-fed.

But man well knows pretty all this and more,
And still keeps doing what he did to fore.

1. Been: A musical string instrument known as Veena

Life Lived Fullest

If only life dares us new heights to scale,
For joys to jive in— each like a conquest
Of unknown crests as if Mt Everest,
That, life like a kite free from strings would sail.

Where's thrill in a risk-starved scare-less soft ride?
Where's joy in scaling a tamed li'le hillock?
In a high sea drama rehearsed on dock,
Nor yet romance there's in a bargained bride.

Comes a seafarer's thrill in risking life,
Greeting challenges as were a tame bull,
Only but he lives life packed brimming full,
Hanging on hardy he sails stormy strife.

And one that watches in fear his life breath,
Hardly lives, and dies a measly mean death.

Time comes when man reflects on the life lived way back in the past, and wonders what if he had lived it another way. Man tends to secure a cocooned life made safer and sure, devoid of risk and rough ride after initially opting for challenges. Yet again he's left thinking about the rare joys of life missed out—if only 'I had taken that road less trodden'!

Sonnets | 01.01.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Life Lived In Memories

Greyed get greeneries,
Life's lived when in memories—
In dreams, reveries!

Past seems a safe harbour for, we have been there. Memories become man's
refuge, and he forget to live the now and here of life.

Haiku | 01.05.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Life Traces No Straight Line

Ill fate I might it call, lame luck or chance,
Others, the law of seeds springing up sprouts,
And yet others, destiny's dappled dance,
But when a cause causes it has no doubts.
And karma clings to catch up with the life,
Dishing out platefuls of pickled fortune,
Or life of frustration, of sour fruits rife,
Darkling rainy clouds or sunshine of June;
Life learning to live with the Providence,
Which, like a river flows as is meant to—
To meet ocean— how making little sense,
And destiny leaves blueprint, nor a clue.
Life too traces no straight line curves in space,
And yet, not an atom seems out of place.

Imagine if things changed as everyone desired, his wishes and wants, caprice and fancy, the chaos and the confusion would have long consumed all the cosmos. Remember, even chaos has at its core some method in madness.

Sonnets | 05.11.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Life, A Canvas Of Karmic Art

Life's a large canvas of karmic art,
People on its vast face try and sketch—
Be it a thinking head, feeling heart,
Some sketch with all the care, or raw flare,
And some with vacant blank eyes just stare,
None's allowed to erase, nor yet scratch,
But paint, paint whole life in fits and start,
Destiny all this in its mind etch,
And people endeavour
Till this life's labour's done,
And approval by heaven,
When journey's run its run,
The clock has struck last hour,
The curtain calls, the dream is done.

Musings | 04.09.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Life, A Loan Lent In Trust

Life is a loan lent to us in good trust,
Not to be frittered `way in lures and lust.
Now is the time, before be done— back to dust,
To pay the due with interest as must,
Helping those, higher are whose needs, and just,
Love those rendered by human greed unjust.

Fortunate be those well past wants, and worst,
Lucky to pass by the needy, and first,
They may not cross again needy man's nest,
And able be to quench their parching thirst,
To help those who by destiny are curst,
And aid those by society left to rust.

For, life's a loan lent to us in good trust,
To be paid back ere we are done to dust.

Sonnets | 09.12.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Life's Beautiful If We See

Many a thing he saw seemed new,
Each leaf filled with fresh new wonder,
Every cloud an envoy of rain,
This new world sure made him ponder.

Commonplace seemed far from mundane,
But filled him with untold new joy,
To wish, he were a child again,
Again a wide-eyed little boy!

And sure wide-eyed he was of late,
Not so old that ages and dies,
World beautiful looked once again,
Are these the same or renewed eyes?

If only life's beauties we see,
But we look, just, no more to see.

Musings | 15.03.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Life's Needless Clutters

Saddest hour of gloomiest day
My happy heart had ever known,
A low tide, it came with promise,
No sooner came than it had gone.

Tide did I say? Yea, in my heart,
And both of waxing waning kind,
One that comes and clears all the muck
That the other has left behind.

Yet, whatso life may to me bring,
Sad or glad tidings, joy or gloom,
If not tossed up in time, gets stored,
Needless does it clutters up room.

If happy hearts hopeful life lead
There's room for pleasure nor yet pain,
Like tides let them come and recede,
Notso in life for long remain.

The saddest day's most poignant hour
My cheerful eyes had ever seen
Came, furnished a fleeting picture
And vague it vanished nigh unseen.

The sad day's miserable hour
Of which my ears had ever heard,
No lasting impress could bestir,
In time its sound bytes have now blurred.

What about my mind's memories?
They met much similar a fate—
The same fate met by my worries,
With oblivious death they'd their date.

Well done O heart, you've done me proud,
Life comes no gloom to inherit,
Let miseries no mind's space crowd,
Life is not to pile up spirit.

Musings | 04.07.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Life's No Landing Port

Life's not a landing port for sure,
Its journey goes on shore to shore,
Man learns from failure to failure.

A bitter cure be each failure,
A sure remedy to endure,
Life's no landing port, just a lure.

Failures are ports success to ensure,
Each success must pass through that shore,
Man learns much more from a failure.

Every time failure knocks man's door,
It pushes it ajar nigh more
That success can enter hence to fore.

And slowly does man know for sure,
He need no hard journeys abjure,
That life is a launching port more.

Failures no more his fingers burn,
Nor to this teacher need he turn,
From journeys he's enough to learn.

This is no traditional Villanelle. It takes liberties with its set format. And yet gives enough evidence that it is one. All the first five tercets have the same rhyme. The last one introduces one more. The repeated lines too come with some change. And the last stanza too is a tercet, not a quatrain.

Villanelle | 06.02.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Life's No Life If Lived No Full

What grace O wafting breeze,
Ye live and die, what ease!
O thou bubbling sea wave,
O bubble, entombed grave,
Ye live life on a lease,
Live no less still, O brave.

Life's not to live on hedge,
But to live on knife's edge,
Live full on resigned bliss,
Kiss-like brief, no amiss,
Notso to take to heart,
To kiss good bye, depart.

Life's no life, lived no full,
Learn this rule from life's school.

Musings | 01.09.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Life's No Life Sans Desires

Futile as is to fight a raging fire
With tiny tools that may only stoke it,
So methinks is fighting flaming desire
With notso better than a basic kit!
Better is it to enjoy passion's heat,
Bask in its warmth than from fire to retreat.

Fine, but few know of life's furious fires,
And feeling first-hand is what this life is,
It helps knowing the nature of desires,
Some are not for saints, yet make pleasant breeze.
To push them in dark holes may look sublime,
But stimulants they are to kill life's strife,
To pamper some seems to me no big crime,
Stem all desires and lo, life is no life.

Sonnets | 06.04.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Life's No Touch Screen

Half closed eyes and unheeded plea,
Safe on the banks and seeking ease,
Looking at things seldom to see,
Man hopes to enjoy still high seas;
In shallow waters whilst he swims,
Choicest pearls he wishes to catch,
Mid-sea adventures whilst he dreams,
Lacks will to wait till oysters hatch.
Life is not like mobile's touch screen,
One click and pops up all the view,
One has to choose from a menu
That shows shades of grey along green.
The sweat bids shed may salty be,
That fruits of labour are tasty.

Reflections | 09.12.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Life's Tenets Two

This life of moments but two,
Has time-tested tenets two:
Do blossom like a flower,
Your fragrance whilst ye shower,
Work for an act of honour!

Reflections |20.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Like A Caterpillar

Like a caterpillar is born a man,
Atop on a life-ladder and apart,
Higher to go from here, play destined part,
And try, be a butterfly if he can;
Born captive he's to beastly nature,
He aught strive hard, rise from his stature.
Yet, how many would— from life's blinding lures?
From cosy raw comforts of a cocoon,
Weak of will one strives, nor ever endures,
Nursing but creature cares he lives in vain,
Too timid to embrace bane before boon,
Or condemned be oh cocoon to remain.
Those that dare cut confines of a cocoon,
If wing-born they'd see the morrow's bright noon.

Holy books tell us that only human life enables one to evolve and move further in higher journey. Yet, is not from a caterpillar to cocoon to butterfly a journey to evolve higher?

Sonnets | 03.08 07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Like Butterfly Happiness Is

Like butterfly happiness is:
Chase not, be just a beholder,
And it perches on your shoulder;
Chase it, away it always flies;

- Quatrains | 03.04.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Like Weather She Changed

Her smile to me looked a beacon of grace
That hinted that her heart was always home,
Her visage alluded of a warm face
That readily gave me a warm welcome,
Which, ever stayed put whenso I went there—
A welcome guest to get special sunshine—
Daytime or night, sun or rain, dull or fine,
Her house warmed my feelings, not just the air.
Her smile was forever fresh as sunrise,
And made me feel like visiting again,
Dawn be or dusk, the same inviting eyes,
Notso gave me hints of impending rain.
And she changed like weather as weathers do,
But unlike seasons she gave not a clue.

Sonnets | 01.01.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Limitless In Limited All

Limitless and tall,
Limited he's not at all,
Should man feel so small?

Yathaa pinde, tathaa brahmande (Sanskrit)
As is within all us,
So is in universe.

Haikus | 13.07.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Listening Within

The chatter around put on the mute,
I hailed heart to listen to soul's lute,
Creative spikes to spurt,
Mind mindful and alert,
More present, systems to get reboot;
And then heard a voice curt,
Don't daisies rise from dirt?
Let winds blow from every unknown route,
Let thousand sprouts from all around shoot.
From chaos is born calm,
Chaos has its own charm.

Tongue-in-cheek | 07.02.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Lit-Fests, Pit-Fests, Spat-Fests

Diwali dawns as noise soars at night,
Lit-fests too no more are about light,
When cool controversy
Spells success, scarce courtesy,
And decibels when dance to delight.

Last year, Jaipur Literary Festival was marred by banishment of Salman Rushdie. The recent Mumbai lit-fest was taken over by the spat between Girish Karnad (shall we say, canard?) and Naipaul. Times of India, planning their own now, might perhaps be looking for a suitable controversy to ensure festival's success. Strange, but there's nothing like A Million Mutinies for success!

- Happenings | 05.11.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Little In Life Is Fair

Though grey, good to have hair,
And better to lose hair than thine head,
To eat bread— plain, notso on it spread,
Little in life is fair,
Better a bald head than to be dead!

Alas, life often gets reduced to a choice between a devil and deep sea.

Tongue-in-cheek | 01.04.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Living A Borrowed Alien Dream

If only I lived up to my measure,
And stopped living a borrowed alien dream,
Yet, an alien word has been my pleasure
That has put me in a plight all so grim.

And as old habits get morphed to fads quirky,
Whereas to start with I was plain curious,
Not unto, I look vaguely around me,
And ere long curious me gets devious,

Looking over my neighbour's shoulder,
Ere I knew it became a die-hard habit,
Hesitant first, then a bit bolder,
And soon I am no more even discreet.

So often I now feel compelled to brood:
Oh where hast gone my self-image?
In alien eyes why must I appear good?
Where can I find my life's lost page?

Have I for good lost my inner sage?
What others must be thinking about me?
How to rise in esteem that my own be?
Oh what a struggle to find lost image!

But this went on till very self got lost,
World's no fair, I begin to frown,
And left I'm to counting the cost!
Alien values, views tie me down.

My own self mattering nigh little,
My low self esteem no more subtle,
A day dawns, me I no more seem,
Man of vigour verve nor yet vim!

Reflections | 01.05.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Lonely, Lost Hearts

To be fair, no greetings failed to arrive,
Nor customary call on Mothers' Day;
A family album on a lean day
Kept isolated memories alive,
As did their once-in-a-blue-moon visit
That leaner waned as time passed bit by bit.

Their Spartan place that the kids made crowded,
Suddenly seemed spacious one lonely eve,
And needless luxury for the aged;
Parents know, children have their life to live—
That, today's youth forever is on drive,
Why can't old bones happy feel to survive?

Happiness of silver years seems in mould.
When do fledglings to nestling homes return?
Nor birds nor beasts are known to care for old,
The old for no return-favour should yearn;
Yet, children take parental grace given,
Oblivious, they'd one day see setting sun.

Time has come, humans do from Nature learn,
And learn to give freedom to the loved one,
Love for love's sake, hoping for no return,
Sun scorches to a slow death in heaven,
High time that the old solitude savour,
Love's no love wanting a returned favour.

Alas, people kind's always prone to fall,
And man has to hearken to heart and head,
O to live on hope of an odd phone call,
A greeting card, a rare visit if made,
'It's good to know they remember us still',
Yet, doubt is better than a bitter pill.

And lonely hearts live on tenuous hope,
Though often staring blank at rainless clouds,
Frustration tied down with a mental rope,
Wrapt with old memories like dead man's shrouds,

A hope is better than frustrating proof,
Good to dream than woken by leaking roof.

To live lonely, uncared for but at home
Be better than furniture to become
O under a far off and alien dome.

Written on Fathers' Day (17th June)

Musings | 02.06.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Long Search, Life's No Resting Perch

What if today's seedling morrow
Sees no dawn of the coming day?
From an unfolding yesterday,
If life same fate were to borrow?

What if, buds blossoming today,
Had lived on— changeless and deathless?
What if the seed remained sprout-less?
And saplings fruitless die like hay?

As naught whatso lives forever,
Life lives by dying constant death,
Life's life, for, in death bestows faith—
Life's an ever-changing river.

A bird `tis in perennial search,
It's destiny looking for perch.

Sonnets | 12.09.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Loo Before You Leap

His temple lobbies warned: look ere leap,
But felt, 'Loo Before' was good belief,
Closer is cleanliness
To godliness, I guess,
'Bottom up' is my policy brief.

The new PM's Independence Day speech was marked
by two block-buster announcements: Kicking out the
Planning Commission, and kicking in the toilets first
policy— loo before man leaps on to other agenda!

- Happenings | 07.08.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Lost Within Family

No wonder amidst all he still felt lost,
His father in his last parental role,
To town when went his son's birth proof to post.
Fractured childhood does take a heavy toll:
For one, his father far too old had been—
Old enough his grandpa perhaps to be;
His step mom not many a moon had seen,
And looked like elder sister nigh at sea;
His sis old enough was his mom to be;
Confused kith and kinship not his plight's end,
He, his very strange self, a pod-lost pea,
Could not claim to be his half brother's friend!
So lost was he, an alien amidst home,
A Roman felt foreigner right in Rome!

Sonnets | 04.02.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Love

Mask, nor hands in glove,
Bare bed beneath, blues above,
Belief but in love!

Haikus | 09.02.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Love Is Not Clasp Love

He stood thinking by the receding roar
Of a frothing, surfing tired shore,
Reflecting on her good-bye kiss in air,
That had fragrance of her unspoken
Love; but her vacant un-looking stare,
With his far too loud goodnight broken,
Caused him to wonder if he should deem:
His happy days with her were just dream.

Dream—lingering long on crossroads of dilemma
That had been his life's unfolding drama;
Worried, his hope might fade away
Soon, much like this receding low tide,
That, departing, leaves a hollow beside,
Catching him unawares midway,
He wondered if life that on face does seem
Mighty real, is a virtual dream.

He waited while the sun upon his dream
Set, and grey of his grieving eyes looked grim,
He gathered some dry golden sand
From a dune that he had ere made,
Holding it tight in fisted hand,
Watching it slipping from his clasp instead;
The truth while gleaned well within grasp:
'Love is not love if one must clasp! '

-Musings | 01.09.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Love Longs For More

And research now says love's addictive,
All we knew, it was quite productive.
And as vouches love lore,
One wants it more and more,
And there's no anti-dote effective.

Falling in love can give you the same sort of kick as taking a drug like cocaine, and is as addictive, says Dr John Marsden, Head, National Addiction Centre, London. When people are smitten by love, brain releases dopamine. It gives the same high as cocaine. Attraction and lust are like a drug. They leave you just wanting more.

Happenings | 05.01.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Love My Labour Of Love

Mourn no more when by death am I outrun,
When I leave this vain world swarming with woes,
Let me go as goes a passing season,
Try say goodbye to my soul as it goes.
Quiet a leaf's born, gets brown on its way,
Man alone seems needlessly noisiest
When born one uneventful solar day;
Let me not go like a grumbling guest—
And so if ye happen to read these lines,
Life-less when I lie to disintegrate,
Let there be left none of those telltale signs,
Let lingering memories dissipate;
If choose ye must between me and my pen,
Love the labour of my love if ye can.

This sonnet talks about how its creator wishes to die— like a passing season that goes, no fuss. If at all, love and remember his poems, more than him.

Disintegrate: Indic philosophy says: universe is made of five fundamental elements, as are mortal bodies: earth, water, air, fire, and space. On death bodies disintegrate back to these five elements.

Sonnets | 12.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Love, But Leave Space

Wide enough a room craves fair romance,
As every neighbour craves love and fence,
Let love be river, no stagnant pond,
Apart stand two banks each to each fond.
This way have heaven's winds blown long hence.

Fill mutual cups but drink from your own,
Let lovers spend some time all alone,
Though prone, stand alone strings of a lute,
Quivering in sync or all so mute,
Each in harmony plays role its own.

Together, but breathe no close to heart,
Pillars of a temple stand apart,
Oak, Cypress that so taller are made,
Seldom can grow in each other's shade,
Stay apart and still play assigned part.

Original by Kahlil Gibran, translation in anapaest meter, limerick in construction

Reflections | 05.03.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Love's Last Flickering Flame

Is there any soul radiating more
Than of a youthful love long holding hands,
Vibrant love if not hearts, on unknown shore
Of sea that's life, in search of newer lands?

Perhaps, the sight of old man and woman
Upon a shore, the tide waiting to die,
A lifetime of journey's end is when nigh,
Happy to walk together as they can;
The hands are old and gnarled, yet clasping firm,
Faces wrinkl'd yet bright and radiant,
Hearts beating slow and pulse unsure, infirm,
North going still devotion's gradient!
A child's love, as of youth, can often selfish be,
Old love's a river losing self, embracing sea.

Another unusual sonnet, the first four lines, a quatrain, ask a question; and then a Volta happens; all the remaining ten lines seek an answer. The ending couplet is a foot longer.

- Sonnets | 09.12.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Love's No One-Way Street

Fed by fertile tales of love well-leaven,
And fermented to sway young minds too far,
As childhood fantasies tad flavoured are,
I once thought: love was a rare gift given;
And spent all of nascent innocent age—
Early fair years of wide-eyed youthful life—
Nurturing, nursing this fairy image—
That love flowed only from alien breasts rife.

Yet, others too of same beliefs were blest,
And as I grew was chastened, if not wise,
When too late was to know: truth elsewhere lies,
That love's no one-way street, nor Cupid's darts,
Nor does it blossom as a springtime art,
Love emanates from both the human hearts.

Sonnets | 01.02.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Luck Is No Fortuitous Lot

Luck is not God when lifts from a lot,
When a horse is hailed, harness is hot,
Opportune time when knocks,
Straightened, all stumbling blocks,
Man's ready, dotted is every dot.

But in pulling up socks,
The fittest time when knocks,
Oh amidst alibis am I caught—
And alas, my iron's not yet hot,
Luck is what a man locks.

Reflections | 03.01.2018 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Lynching

Ten self-moralists from earth
Lynched an alleged vile man
And felt the act was well its worth;
Felt a Saint watching the fun:
No doubt, vile are all the ten,
There's doubt about the lynched one.

Lynching has been in news of late, and it is disturbing. Public has no business to judge, assume others as culprit, and then hand over summary punishment. It is the job of police and the court. This piece has come about from this discomfort.

Happenings | 04.08.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Madhavas On River Mahi

I well remember Madhavas¹ still,
A water-hole to unwind in sweltering June,
From crusty book-fields to dusty farm-fields,
To do-nothings from morn-to-noon!

And how we arrived in a bullock cart,
Moving in matching tune with speed of night,
All of eight odd miles from my town,
And reached nigh when dawn was kissing the night.

I was one amid a cart-load
Of kids; adults when felt sleepy,
And mine hijacked by stars and planets,
Who too seemed excited like me.

The pair of oxen when called each to each,
The cart-man when cleared his coughy throat,
The stars too tired when went to sleep,
We reached— wrapped in a dusty coat.

Soon when I heard a strange bird singing
Close by, proclaiming the reign of dawn,
A few more who then called confirming,
In a symphony welcoming new morn.

Once there I first meet my friend Mahi²
That charmed my forebears to choose this village,
Flowing bank to bank every season,
Some memories do get froze in image.

The river was why my village was,
Whose life along its waters flowed,
From pre-bath chores and all thereafter,
And swimming till sun to its zenith strode.

And felling of choicest mangoes
My month-long pass-time was,
Men guarding fields the only foes,
And roaming lush fields, ah its own cause.

When one month passed like one short turn,
Day, but a song `tween sun-rise and sun-set;
And soon it was time to return
To tired routine by elders set, no let.

A lot gets lost when from tired mind,
How I remember Madhavas1 for so long?
We oft live leaving a lot far behind
Yet, deeply-etched freeze childhood's cherished song.

Madhavas1: In the hills of west-central Gujarat.

Mahi2: Also known as Mahi Saagar, one of the
biggest, perennial rivers in Gujarat.

- Nostalgia | 03.09.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Make Most Of It O Man

Sixty million odd years back from this day—
We like to call that strike disastrous
That hit the Earth at its age Cretaceous,
Sixty million is too far to us lay,
But a mere blink, a cosmic yesterday!

Poor dinosaurs had had no chance on Earth,
It changed man's history, our fate's morrow,
Wiped out the whip-lash when all life of worth,
But mankind did a new chapter borrow
From Fate, and dug a gigantic furrow.

So, humans must hail saviour asteroid
To end a saurian rule, rough as was tough,
And human history was writ from void;
Yet, man's failed to learn from Nature enough,
Would it, one distant morrow, call man's bluff?

Remember, man, ye were late at the shore,
And be the destiny's man-dinosaur!

Manasaur1: A man dinosaur that might suffer the same fate of dinosaurs. An asteroid had recently a close encounter with the Earth and the mankind narrowly missed a major catastrophe, reminding of an event, eons back, when dinosaurs were wiped out. What if, in a repetition, mankind were to be eliminated?

Happenings | 11.04.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Make To-Days Look Like Trips To Mall

If desert's dry sands stretch all life,
Sail across the sea, take a stroll.
If joys flood, pockets prone to spill,
Recall sorrows, some grief and gall.
Ask moonless dark night how she feels
Shooting stars when shoot tongue-in-jowl.
Such be the truth of every life—
It lives until fate comes to call.
Balloon's bloated air be all joys,
And grief oh an over-done doll!
Long miles to make and falling short,
Try stretching limits, small and tall.
Why worry for morrows at all,
Make to-days look like trips to mall.

Ghazals | 03.11.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Man Alone His Own Kind Slays

The guiles of spiders designed are to fetch
Poor, unsuspecting prey, but not own kind;
And leopards hunt alone with scheming mind;
Whoso be the beast, a lion pride would latch
On any prey, even too big to catch;
Wild beasts kill but to fill a hungry maw,
While felling life follow this wildlife law:
Slay to survive or get slain if no match.

Beasts seldom slay kindred souls of same kind,
Nor is hunting to them a pass-time game
Of trophy, wall-display, nor photo frame.
Man alone to this law of life seems blind—
One that in greed no fellow beast would spare,
Friend or foe; no foul to him too unfair.

- Sonnets | 08.11.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Man Alone Mourns Death

As drops and trickles from the face of sea
Evaporate, rise pregnant clouds to be,
To get reborn as rain, be drops again—
A few of them falling `pon the same sea,
Some in vales, some on hilltops, and to drain
Down as rivers, streams, rivulets to be,
And some getting smothered by hungry dust,
A moment's life on earth— soon as born, bust!

A bird's dropping drops amid dust on earth,
And a seed therein begins to give birth,
Sprouting soon to become a young sapling,
In time to be a plant, tree of wide girth,
Towering above all, tall and sprawling,
In springs to sing life songs, fructifying
And bearing a ripe seed in a long chain,
O happy to sprout time and time again.

And a soul traces much the same voyage,
Endless from birth to birth, and death to death,
And moving on to take a fresh new breath,
To evolve and purer be of image;
Quiet does a rain drop evaporate,
Quiet does Nature newer things create,
Human life cries for first breath, as for death,
Wonder why man alone seems to lose faith!

Musings | 11.02.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Man In Two Minds

The commons often crave the hoary,
Those in stars as life ordinary,
The choice is very own,
Room it has none to groan,
O dither, nor yet choose to worry,
Should ye choose, warm the chair,
Keep it for someone spare,
No, ye can't now choose to be sorry.

After becoming country's Prime Minister, it's not fair to miss one's freedom and carefree life in the open. Else, ye want to eat the apple and have it too. Yet, indications were contrary and hence this ditty. And it so happened, throughout his tenure of two terms this man gave the impression of being in two minds.

Happenings | 01.06.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Man Since Cave

It's too cool here and for long,
Let's warm it up a wee bit.
And too dull for my liking,
Someone said adding to that,
Let's liven it up a bit.
Third one: and slow, is not it?
Let's accelerate a bit.

Man got him tools and machines
Forged in heat and made with noise,
Slowly he pushed farther still,
And made noise part of his life,
And life slowly turned to strife.

He now finds it far too warm,
Noisy even by his norm,
Too fast-paced for his own good,
As truth by nature is rude,
And though he's loathe to confess,
What he paid for whims and mood,
He now loves to call progress,
The price he pays for success.

Though he puts up a front brave,
Men might soon crave for the cave.

Reflections | 03.02.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Man So Vain

When all Nature is
So modest and plain,
I wonder why man is vain.

Haiku | 13.02.2017|

Aniruddha Pathak

Man That Hath Too Much Mind...

I've not one flower with a drawn face seen,
Nor yet bird calling an unhappy tune,
Nor oak worried, vague on losing her green,
A dolphin depressed, nor despairing moon,
A reindeer delving on his self esteem,
A polar bear that can't take it easy,
Nor a wild cat worried of her fond dream;
No, they live life as it unfolds to be.

And seen I've cats practising peaceful Zen,
Ducks meditating while floating in ease;
He that has too much mind seems only man,
Who, never once at peace be whatso is,
Violated who has, poisoned Ma Earth,
Polluting still, and plundering her worth.

- Sonnets | 03.04.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Man, A Beggar Boy

When he came to this world
Born was he a free bird—
Worry nor yet a let,
Easy my needs were met.

To his wish, world to greet
God gave him eyes and feet,
To his wish, world to hear
A pair that he hear clear.

And hungry he scarce went—
Mother's milk that He sent;
His food when gained a width,
His mouth grew pearly teeth.

As he grew, learned to nag,
What ere was his bare need
Grew greater into greed,
Prayers were means to beg.

His fond wishes were wants,
Wants grew as wanton weeds,
Dreams, den of daunting haunts—
A greedy pauper's pleads.

Oh sent to celebrate joy,
Here is he a beggar boy!

Reflections | 09.09.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Man, A Door-Knob In Chair

Man-made aids making life lazier,
Guys and girls no wiser get than were.
Intellect grey to brown,
Memory going down, □
And man's more a door-knob stuck in chair.
Stress getting laid on ease,
With gadgets, tools of his,
Muscles wear and brain's grey gets nigh bare.

Research shows that human intelligence is falling since 19th century, and artificial intelligence and robots would soon surpass humans. Man believed for long that he was smarter than his ancestors. But it seems it is no longer true. Mental abilities have undergone significant decline since the Victorian era. It seems genes no longer drive intelligence.

Happenings | 09.07.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Man, A Mere Dot

Vast is world without,
Vast, the space within,
Man's caught in between.

Haikus | 03.04.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Man, A Musk Deer

Chasing things all life man's like a musk deer,
What's his and near is never to him dear,
Nor he knows: source of happiness is him,
Nor knows, mirage 'tis to chase a vague dream;
Man's filled with bliss to the brim,
Scratch a little let him,
And happiness shall rise like cream.

Reflections | 02.10.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Man, No Destiny's Star

World in palm's hollow
Casting odd hallow,
Should man chase morrow?

Likes, dislikes follow,
Tweets and chatter flow,
No farther to go.

In touch with vague far
Man's searches here are,
Nowhere he's destiny's star.

In this digital age man seems to see no farther than his palm.

Haikus | 02.05.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Man, One Beast Upon Earth

For long naughty has been called Mickey Mouse,
Cats, clever, cute, cool and nice around house,
Hares are careless dumb to lose easy race,
Tortoise, wise for winning though of slow pace,
And left alone with their cobwebs in dark,
Spiders are painted with shades somewhat stark.

Heavens, why is a fox fabled so sly?
And poor donkey given a grey go-bye,
Should peacocks be painted pompous and proud?
Frogs, in welcome of rains, croaky and loud,
Why are cocks fighting, always aggressive?
Sheep and deer whilst are painted as passive.

Man takes him way ahead of all the pack,
With an all-knowing smirk, mischief-filled mirth,
To be brightest, biggest star in the deck,
If only he reflects on his true worth.
For, heaven knows what useful role he serves,
If only he divines what he deserves.

Tongue-in-cheek | 02.01.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Man, The Moon, And Rabbit

Man might seem sinless white at core,
Like the moon's innocent rabbit,
Yet, like new moon, what matters more
Be the unknown, dark and unlit.
Beware, rapid this rabbit breeds,
That leaves far behind all the creeds.

Reflections | 05.09.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Man, Thou Hast Not Much Time

Man, meagre time hast thou to mend thine ways,
And no more than a handful of genes more,
To bid thine blinkers bye and open eyes
To see, closed shut be thine destiny's door.
Thou hast li'le role to play ere curtain's call,
Act O dense head, you've had enough of hint,
Or get consigned to life's dustbin— extinct,
Nor art thou stronger sex nor yet art tall.

Beware, from Y to why is but a step—
From being a gender fixating male,
The race may be running its last tired lap,
Nature seems out to drive her last of nail.
If not red, the sign is warning orange,
Miss it and Nature might seek her revenge.

The Y chromosome (the determinant of male sex) made up of 1400 genes earlier has been reduced to only 45 genes (three percent) and is still depleting. In the next five million years it would be defunct as dodo.

Sonnets | 01.07.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Manhood Market, Limp Again

To manhood market oh always imp,
Keeping its sales graphs stiff is no SIMP.
Came the Blue and sales showed,
And me-too-clones followed,
Many a cook maketh market limp!

After an initial flourish, just like the way this remedy pill works, sales graphs of all the ED (Erectile Dysfunction)pills went limp (Viagra called Blue, Penegra, Manforce (Mankind) , Caverta, and all) .

Happenings | 02.07.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Man's Like An Umbrella

Like an umbrella—
Wet on surface, dry within
Man of late has been.

Haiku | 07.07.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Man's Still Stuck With Heft

When God this world made,
Height or heft, two alts were left,
Man's still stuck with heft.

Haikus | 04.03.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Many A Head, Same Indian Heart

If I'm an Indian, scarce had I a choice,
Yet having been one, sure adds to my joys,
Had the good lord asked me, I'd have opted
For a more affluent land, less crowded,
Less governed, garrulous less, less gloated,
Freer and open more, less bigoted;

And I can't say if proud I'm one to be:
I scarce can credit take for what went ere,
Nor am I proud of what's happening now;
And on balance, balance-sheet's far from fair,
Nor can else be— surviving on somehow—
A shaky ship mid-sea, moored on mercy.

No, I intend to settle not abroad,
And feel no less relaxed here in my home,
I may dislike many a thing nigh odd,
There's naught whatso still like under this dome,
This is where I was born, here I belong,
Here I intend to die singing this song.

There's something deep rooted in this my land,
There might soils be of shine, glitzy and grand,
Where for the head of mine may feel inclined,
So would my hungry maw; led by heart, yet,
In whatso way repaying my due debt,
To my dung-hill I hasten to rewind.

My prayer and belief, colour and creed,
Bye-products are of the same Indian breed,
And so I've Indian kinship no less still,
Religion and rearing notwithstanding,
And deep sense of brotherhood do I feel,
In melody my own the same song sing.

A quarrelling and cantankerous lot,
One might say, but that is the Indian pot,
A calamity might it often take
To unite us; yet, all bubbles' behind,

There flows what an Indian ocean does make,
Beneath myriads of heads and caps, one mind!

On 15th August, Independence Day

- Musings | 09.08.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Many Die Starved Of Love

The unkindest of human dread
That can oft hit a man of earth
Scarce of flesh be, nor is blood red,
Which, he's learnt not to live in dearth.
Faults of flesh can well be treated,
If not cured, alleviated;
But none has a hospital made
To cure the pain of loneliness,
None has medicines invented
For despair, as for hopelessness;
Many a man may die for bread—
A mere morsel, a roof above—
More die of hearts not beating red,
And die starv'd of a little love!

This sonnet takes a slightly unusual design.
It has tetra-chords of eight/nine syllables
instead of the usual penta-meter. The lines
are iambic.

- Sonnets | 08.12.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Mars Stands For No Wars

O warrior bro of brooding blood-red eyes,
Men here think of a Martian heritage,
Bleeding my bosom with wars on the rage,
O cut war bravado down to thine size.

We look from far and our thoughts take a flight,
May be it's soil, not else, ye look nigh red,
No war monger art thou, it's our false dread,
Let's know thee better to set all this right.

Ye inspire us Olympian heights to reach,
Ye shall be first we visit, verify
That ye have more than waging wars to preach,
And Martian wars, oh what a wanton lie.

We hope to know if ye can life sustain,
Meanwhile I hope these hopes are not in vain.

The poem is for children. Mt Olympus on Mars is a symbol of height, being many times taller than Earth's tallest peak, Mt Everest.

Musings | 04.08.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Mask, Sunless In Life To Bask

Man it is not, it is mask
To camouflage every task,
In every act to add life,
The acts of life to make rife,
Sunless when in life to bask,
In wonder oh when I ask:
What would man do without mask?

Reflections | 01.08.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Masks Of Hypocrisy

To feign rather than face the fat cat,
To help hide unholy hind carpet,
And to choose the easy
Masking hypocrisy—
Why we shy away from personal debt.

A disturbing documentary was made on the mindset of rapists.
This case had drawn a country-wide attention. A lot was said, but little was done.
Sure, the defence lawyers and family members remain belligerent and
unrepentant. But in a knee-jerk response government banned it, as it is always
wont to do. Some politicians and police made irresponsible statements. Yes,
democracy lets all opinions a space. But things can't be swept under carpet for
all the time. A line has to be drawn. Don't we owe the victims a debt?

Happenings | 01.03.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

May Nature Give Us Long Rope

You may soar in skies far-off set,
Walk on the Moon's rugged surface,
Or move around any a planet—
But still nigh but at a snail's pace,
You may know of the distant stars,
May choose to settle down on Mars,
You may create heaven on Earth,
But still you are a pigmy's worth—
Helpless, pitted with Nature's might,
A babe still, lost in utter plight.

If world were a huge train,
And Nature an engine on run,
Passengers we all in some strain,
Pray, what's our destined station?
Tickets given, but not in hand,
We, destiny dependent,
Travelling, but not knowing where,
Getting dropped anywhere
With prayer: may God bless,
Passengers yes, are we helpless.

Yet, if we go with Nature,
Knowing well of our stature,
There still is some rosy hope,
May Nature give us long rope.

Musings | 14.12.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Maya Masking As Mother

She gave more and more toys to her cry-child,
Without a look it wailed ever more still,
Grew restless, disconsolate, wanton, wild,
And as mothers do, she knew what was ill.
So doth Maya— the Mother amorphous,
She piles in people's paths pageants of toys
Hoping that we be wise and virtuous,
That, we ferret out jeers faking as joys;
Her love, illusion-clad, is what we see,
As light transcends darkness, and truth entwined
In clouds of ignorance, water of sea
Hidden hind waves; we see life's glues that bind;
Only when tallest of ceilings you tame,
You know: ceilings and roofs are all the same.

Sonnets | 07.01.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Me And My Bend-Aid Mends

Beware if things get easy of deed,
That's the way to get dull and stupid.
Get busy with both hands,
Roadblocks oft can be friends,
Rolling stones can gather moss with speed.
And so to gather speed,
A few roadblocks I freed
To cause my fall indeed,
Oh me, and my stupid bend-aid mends!

Tongue-in-cheek | 01.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Me And My Vain Emblem

I let go none of my vain emblem
That for long I wear hiding what I'm,
So the man that I be
No one would get to see,
Nor will I ever know who I am.
Yet, were I to meet him in a lift,
Should I doff my vain hat or just lift,
And with this dilemma dour I drift.

Reflections | 05.02.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Mea Culpa

The scriptures warn: beware of destiny¹,
But, deep down I'm what driving desire is,
As is desire so my 'will' gets to be,
Shaped by the will be my deeds— me to please,
Deeds, destiny's greenest pasture and lea,
Rejoice I still should fate bring me fair cheers,
Bemoaning should the same fate bring me tears,
Yet, fortune nor fate, man 'lone is mighty,
'I' should foretell how my life I should lead,
Not stars whose own destiny dwells unknown,
None of whom knows from what soil's made its bone.
An if fortune favours the seed called deed,
 Each of my destined moment born as now,
 To my thoughts, to my acts of past should bow.

1. As said in Brihad@ra%yaka Upanishad

- Sonnets | 01.05.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Meditation On Maundy Thursday1

When little you own to live for and far,
Your righteousness when for far little counts,
Knocked down, battered, much bruised when you are,
When your wasted shadow forever haunts;
When rites, rituals are robbed of magic,
Pilgrimage, nor piety when appease,
Tedious worship when loses all logic,
Divine grace lingers, though on last lease;
Keen when you are to off-load your old self,
To fill life's vacuum with divine presence,
Dying to leave behind all power and pelf,
And fill your heart with unending silence;
Ready are you to embrace divine bliss,
O to fill life with fullness that you miss.

Written on 18th April 2004, a Maundy Thursday, one of the sacred triduum—the three holy days forming the Christian spiritual calendar: Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Mark

Sonnets | 10.04.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Memories

An awful crowd in my solitude,
Memories rushing while I brood,
And touch me ere passing on like a girl in rush,
But soon to be flood, bank to bank,
And when I think of going across the bridge,
I find it far from easy,
The flood pushing me back,
And I never could quite know,
A crowd of one can be so overwhelming.

... ..

But now memories seem like
The ash on an unguent stick,
Essence eased out of the bottle,
But can it light up my lamp?
If so, can I fragrance get from such light?

- Musings | 04.09.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Memory Saved In Blood

Nor there queries were when they met,
Nor yet answers ever to get,
Nor easier was it a task,
Too little being there to ask,
When four eyes became two, one fate,
Two rows of teeth when smiled in spate,
Memory of lifetime was set
In digits, bits, nor yet in byte,
Saved was it in warm blood in flight,
Never easy to erase,
Memories forever in chase,
What mattered was: they met!

Musings | 08.02.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Mercy Killing, Ethics Or Economics

Silent my heart goes to souls long in strife,
To those in ailing beds, to drooping chins,
Linked to lifeless wires breathing borrowed life—
All that try, be God from mere mute machines!

Life in coma may or not human feel,
But those in care seem humble pie to pick,
Oh worst ever to feel more than the sick,
Sick do suffer; those in care no less still.

Poor patients know not they're a living corn,
In dead beds to nameless numbers they turn
In treatment shops whose mission is to earn,
The loved ones not in tune with goings on!

And hospitals do have what's one way lanes—
Intensive care a black-hole all so mean,
Under care of an unfeeling machine,
The concerned only priming through glass panes!

Nurses come and go taking copious notes,
Whilst machines keep beating robotic beat,
Pump in blood, but no life as human treat,
Doctors debate and give quotable quotes.

Intensive care's now going extensive,
Expensive besides as measured by bills,
While pockets pinch wounded go weary wills,
What price is life? None knows till its last heave.

To fate does rest when medical mercy,
On chance, not choice the game may end one day,
Machines are when switched off, life left to pray,
Patient impatient to end agony!

Yet, mercy killing no bird of ethics,
It sings elegies on economics!

This is one more in the series on Euthanasia. The way mercy killing has to be

undertaken, it has become a contradiction in terms. Very little mercy remains there. It may sound ethical for others, but for the close ones it boils down to sheer economics, hardly a legal subject!

Musings | 02.04.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Mere Two Yards Of Land

Make him foe or friend,
Mere two yards of land,
No more, Death would lend.

Haiku | 08.06.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Merits, Not Myth

Putting on a pedestal tall,
There was time an ego played wall,
From stature tall it did when stall,
This friendly voice beckoned to call:

Let merits much at front show, never myth,
Then talk about your name and fame,
Hardly has your pen sprouted milky teeth,
It's no shame to know one's true frame.

It has helped that pen show some spark,
Its light at least reaches a nearby park!

Reflections | 05.12.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Mind The Mother Of All Mess

My hands clutching tight years gone by and dead,
I mull old memories, do day-dreaming,
Hold eager hands cupped to catch those ahead,
That time I've none for the moments fleeting.
And lost am I farming the fields of yore,
Absorbed in thoughts of harvesting the yield,
Time I've to nourish seeds, nor yet water,
Nor I cherish green moments in the field.

Yet, moments dead and days gone make bad dream,
Morrows make no more than a vague vision,
Today, well-lived, can make the day gone by
A dream of joy to cherish forever!
I've heard this sure and often times before,
And still find me farming my fields of yore.

Sonnets | 06.03.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Mind Your Karmic Pot

The mortal remains when void get of cause,
The soul for the Day of Judgment would rise,
The mind, concerned, re-lives the life that was
In vain, as is its wont, when death defies,
Recall O Mind, all that ye did and not,
The soul seems to tell apprehensive mind,
Remember to carry your karmic pot,
Prepare to leave, leaving all things behind.

A rich fragrance as wafts through pregnant airs,
The flesh is whilst consumed by raging fires,
The soul subtle impressions with it bears—
Intense of longings and deep-set desires,
To weave anew life's every warp and weft,
And labour all over again whence left!

Sonnets | 02.10.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Mind, The Mother Of All Mess

Let me love whatso season in passage,
And think of no soothingly sweet winter
At the height of a sweltering summer,
A fond novel is read but page by page,
Let me not mix in season's air my mood,
But cherish its flowers, the fruits so good.

'Tis winter's cold that the spring is pleasant,
Mind's like a wild horse fleeting spot to spot,
Wanting it warm when cold, and cold when hot;
Thank hot sun that rains are not reluctant;
And failure that future success tastes sweet,
Adversity, that better times we greet.

No season's born better than another,
Things are good nor bad, mind is their mother.

Sonnets | 07.03.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Minds, Men And Reason!

After decades of wedded history,
You know dear, truth has dawned on me:

Easier giving shoulder to a hill,
To move it, hoist it at one's whimsy will;
But hard, too hard to change the mind
Of one that has made up his mind!

If moved, a hill stays moved, minds never will.
And men dye-hard, stay dyed in one season,
Anything else to them seems like treason.
If one were to work hard with a mute wall,

It may pay off one day no small,
It may respond with return call,
If reasoned, it may see the reason,
Not men, out to commit their treason.

Sonnets | 02.05.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Mirror: Massaging Man's Ego

A mirror I'm in an office rest room
To treat prides that punctured and pierced are,
Egos do I massage— bloated vacuum,
Restore back health of a swollen red star.

They pour 'pon me their woes with heavy hearts:
Take this frustrated back office junior
Trying to straighten his career's spare parts,
And dream that one day he'd shine as senior—

Stuck am I for years in this gutter grade—
The most deserving guy of all around,
But none can stop me from going ahead,
As a mirror I cannot but resound.

Braggs then a guy forever a loser:
Tell me old friend, am I not every inch
A winner best of daring deals to clinch?
No heart I've to dampen this amuser.

And next: what a talk I gave, what an ace!
The delegates were floored to float in sea,
Look at my charm writ all over smart face,
No doubt I'd say; it's clear for all to see.

A trainee talked of a book his boss gave,
Wait till one day I write a better one
And get reviews from all around so rave,
And he looked for a nodding reflection.

Whew, too many egos in vain to pander,
Many a myth and boast far too bloated
Like a balloon when punctured, deflated,
There ticked a timid heart behind, too tender.

I wonder oft if I do fair duty
As mirror, not revealing true image,
But I've a heart too that feels empathy,
And learnt I've, it helps if I camouflage.

Imaginations | 07.07.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Mirrors To Muse

The frame— forehead to feet, hungered for height,
Flat nose and bulging forward big-set eyes,
And features would flare no feminine flight,
What fancy were mirrors to man so wise?
And he'd laugh at this intriguing query—
It makes skewed sense to stare at such a face.
Yet, everyone in a mirror should see—
Handsome or no, fetching or lacking grace!

To him an ugly face did help to brood:
Ah this god's field! How with gold can I gild;
And food for thought to those blest with looks good:
I've a good field, what about matching yield?
These thoughts helped Socrates ponder and see,
His life was lessons in philosophy.

Sonnets | 01.06.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Miss No Bull For The Eye

I once hit my aim whilst still dark,
That hit bull's head though not the eye,
I did my best to hit the mark,
Bull's eye's fine, good enough near nigh.

And I dwelt on the wow of how
And why of action of a throw,
Doing what need be done, and now,
There's little merit in morrow.

Had I awaited morning's light,
Waited for bull to be in sight,
Worried if my aim would be right,
Would the bull have waited all night?

And then I saw the golden rule:
For the sake of eye miss no bull.

We needless wait in life for non-existent perfection and loose valuable time achieving little for our wait. Take our justice system; take policy decisions at the helm. A less than perfect thing today is far better than a little more perfect one on a vague morrow.

Sonnets | 02.11.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Missing You, O Hills

Ah, to be at the cool wet hills—
Now that Sun's here `pon me in planes
Who its stern enough face reveals,
And soon be at peak of its pains,
I think of Queen of Southern Peaks
Whose shadowy hills and valleys
No more drenched be with wet, wet leaks,
And far off be rainy rallies.

April when goes forth, May follows,
Black-throats build nests at tea gardens,
Follows when a swarm of swallows,
Rain-rich earth when a tad hardens,
Flocks of new feathers not ere seen
Land, blossoms of spring to cherish,
Cuckoos, thrashes sing twice as keen,
Nature obliges to man's wish.

Ah to be at the hills, amidst
Its dales and vales looking their best,
Gossamer fog gone with the mist,
When weather is at its modest,
And mornings wake up not too late,
When the days seem to linger on,
Freedom there's from woollies to don,
End seems in sight of year-long wait.

And heavenly amidst such scene,
Bedecked are hills as Beauty Queen.

Wellington, Nilgiri hills where I spent ten weeks, soaking in its milieu— rainy
chills at peak and sun not showing for days. Yet, a few years later, weak
monsoon and strong sun reminded me of the hills again. Indeed, man always
wants what is not.

Musings | 09.08.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Mister Kem, My Conscience

Afraid I'm of that life's lone ranger,
That familiar figure, a stranger still,
And oft a dog in my life's manger,
A caution signal and a bitter pill!
Oft hijacking my creature joys,
First to doubt my ego's motive,
Its veto a vital votive,
It robbed me fun from trinkets, toys.

Forcing me to see when I fail
To see; prowls, punctures puffed-up pride,
A top-dog, it wags wicked tail,
Friend he's philosopher and guide.
And if today I'm what I am,
No mean thanks to his quibbling Kem1.

Kem in Gujarati means why or how, indicating a questioning attitude. Here it alludes to one's conscience.

Sonnets | 06.06.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Moment May Lure, But Let It Go

All passing clouds rare with silver lines come,
Some seasons seem to endure, but still change,
The changing Nature for long in ears strum:
O capture passing moment, all its range,
Just as we breathe, let it go, breathe again,
To savour every moment's fleeting charm,
Let it stretch, relish, but let it not strain,
NOW be the sole fruit in man's fecund farm,
A prized present that can't be put to pause,
Moment may lure, but when its time has gone,
O let it go, and leave it all alone,
Past makes sense only if born with new cause.

Beware; count no rewards that moment breeds,
Treat morrow's fruits as mere memory seeds.

Every breath taken in must be followed by one breathed out. And we do it. We seldom dwell on the breath once breathed out. But we do dwell on past moments, and forget to cherish the present moment.

Sonnets | 04.06.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Moments Melt Ere We Know

We often wake up heart in hand
From the dross of a messy dream,
Like a crab from the moist morning sand,
Grasping a sinking, gossamer dream, grim,
For most dreams by nature sad are,
As is all life more or less— more-oft more,
Being guided from a distant star,
The moon as directs waters on sea shore.

So did wake up I from this one,
Which, I wished upside down to turn,
Or better still, some night to return;
But we know, dreams are scarce life-like,
And unlike mundane life may not return,
Nor with bodies dead do they burn,
O to prick all next life like a sharp spike.

Man, alas, ne'er does long enough live
To know what today's truly like,
The morrow scarce can a clear vision give,
And moments melt ere we friendship strike.

- Musings | 02.09.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Monsoon

Some watch rains, some hear—
Muted by brick walls,
Not a drop wets their dry life.

Haiku | 16.02.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Monsoon And Men

I recall rare when last I had
Earth's fragrance following first rain,
Heard peacock call, gone monsoon mad
At sensing rains without refrain,
Saw a joyful farmer's fair face,
Right arrival of season's rain,
Children playing with paper boats
In waters flooding a dirt lane;
But what rain means in city space?
Help from heat, or virtual floats,
Covered up full to keep out rain,
Cut off from every Nature's scene;
Like umbrella has been a man,
Wet from without, dry from within!

Musings | 10.07.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Monsoon Musings

The monsoon eve was tranquil like deep sea,
Time stood still but for a drizzle that rained,
The setting sun looked nigh breathless and drained,
And prepared to sink to serenity;
Grey clouds in triumph glided in their glee
Unmindful of eve's serene prayer time;
Yet, song of rains with evening hours did rhyme,
It disturbed none of eve's tranquillity.
If monsoon summons solemnest of thoughts,
The dying sun of dusk looks most divine
When seasons merge seamless with passing year
Wherein days and months merge like tiny dots,
Men tire not admiring Nature's design—
In faith or fear or love, far from me clear!

Sonnets | 05.07.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Mother Earth

Man has been with such a fecund boon blest,
He hardly need till earth, nor in fields toil,
All he need do: caress, cuddle the soil,
Tickle a smile, get laughter of harvest!
Look at her lavishly lush greenery,
Time was when it fed, nourished all the globe—
Granaries full of generous bounty,
All her terrain when wore a lush green robe.

Spade in hand, greed in mind, digging by tons,
Felling off trees, mining, and minting greed,
Look at the ungrateful lot of her sons,
Who breed and burden her like a wild weed.
Now, looking at her life-less barren twin,
I wonder how long Earth would still be green!

This piece is a cry in wilderness, and in vain. We call Earth our mother, but never treat her like mother. And she will one day be all barren like her twin, Moon.

Sonnets | 01.03.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Mother Earth Warns

I too wish to live— live rather well
As you all that on my bosom dwell,
All patience dies due date,
Let this be told and straight—
I can live without, you can't so tell.

A greed grown fat did gloat on her wail,
Who ever heeds mother's warning bell?
Well before this due date,
They plan to leave planet—
Same way prodigals their parents fail.

Moon has no atmosphere,
And earth has no good peer,
Or they too would one day become hell.

Happenings | 01.06.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Mother- I

From ancient age
If mother's image
Points to pilgrimage,

Why kitchens still loom?
Why's she bogged with broom?
And not placed in Pooja room.

Pooja room: a place of worship in a house
Haikus | 06.05.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Mother- Ii

Mother a mere word?
No, a complete world
'Pon life's void unfurled!

Haiku | 07.05.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Mother- Iii

Shakes up when a Richter scale,
Seismographs when fail,
Only her ship sails smooth sail!

Haiku | 08.05.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Mother Is Mother

She's like none other
And father's father,
That makes all others.

Haikus | 01.06.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Mother- Iv

Were she there
Few would care.
When not around
Would it be found
How rare she were.

Reflections | 09.05.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Mother More Than A Hunter

From freedom of forest to four walls sent,
Leaving her pride and young cubs she had come,
The beast of prey to city zoo was lent,
She was a mother, now mothered by some.

Whilst once relaxed she nigh cool and content
In enclosure open to birds of wings,
Right over, her preferred place of resting,
A pair of owls nested in a tree vent.

Their young chick that had not feathered to fly,
Poor thing, fell plonk upon her resting paws,
And one would think, its end was more than close,
But bare one glance, she closed again her eye.

Perhaps hungry enough she was not quite,
Or post noon rest ruled on her mind the more,
Perhaps not worth the trouble smallish bite,
Or chic's death was not destined at her door.

If not now well soon enough one might think,
Her fate perhaps was fastened to the cage
And well around the corner in a blink,
Her destiny had only turned a page.

Not too friendly but she still behaved well,
Benign, innocent of any evil,
The fowl far too young was frightened to feel,
And it loitered around freely at will.

She was a beast of prey but mother too,
Or Gujarat lions have learned to like peace,
Truth is: rearing life is benign virtue,
Birth of babies brings forth heavenly bliss.

It scarce could fly, but hopped away from paws,
Filtering thro the bars freedom to seek,
I wonder still where her fair freedom was:
Not far from cage but within, O poor chick!

I see a lioness in a zoo blissfully oblivious of a callow chick of owl by her side
fallen from its nest in the tree above. What could happen was obvious, but it was
not to be.

Happenings | 06.06.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Motherhood

You moved out when from home, baggage and all,
I acquiesced still, not heeding to my heart,
You pulled away, now too busy to call,
Resignedly I pull on my life's cart.
When I can bear no more I cry alone,
Whenso you do, my heart shed tears with you,
Your tragic times you might think are your own,
You scarce know, silently I pray for you.
If you think dreams make sense to you alone,
Do you know you are my dreams' sole reason?
My dream has fallen short from promise shown,
But I'm your ma; are you still same old son?
Creating world God thought it wise to ask
Mothers, carry on with this thankless task.

This piece is about a left-alone mother remembering her son staying away and far. Her mind is musing on what her heart is perhaps not in agreement.

Sonnets | 06.09.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Mother's Love

Pen writes till last drop of ink,
Her love remains pink,
Need there's none to think.

Haikus |04.03.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Mother's Not An Oasis

I can't equate thee with an oasis,
Nor with a weary voyager's sole port,
A last hope no one can afford to miss,
Nor a child's fondest dream, her last resort.

Thou art more than a paltry sandy green,
Thine verdant pasture's spread many a mile,
Solace to all, soothing balm thou hast been,
What's an oasis but a tiny isle?

Eternal thine grace much wider is spread,
And when a long-lost son, defeated soul,
Returns as if from desert's dreary dread,
Showered is he all thine love, grace and all.

No mere oasis, a life-giving kiss,
Thou art nothing less than eternal bliss.

Sonnets | 07.04.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Mothers, Not For A Day

It sure makes me feel good their card to read,
Hand-made for Mother's Day to say its say,
Yet, nor cards nor gifts go far as can deed,
What use gestures jostling just for a day?
I'm dying bright sparks in young eyes to see,
And wonder if that can soothe my old age,
Rejuvenate dying spirit in me,
So, try fill up my lonely life's blank page.

Yet, the day comes hailing Moms once a year,
Not crown, I need company all year round,
Someone to see both sad and happy tear,
Someone to soothe my solitude's worst wound;
Yea, no Ma pounds these points hammer and tong
O to be queen mother all the year long.

A thought on Mother's Day

Sonnets | 01.05.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Much Ado On Shadows

The sun rises when,
Shadows saunter to lengthen;
Sun never feels small.

Unmoved— rise or fall,
The sun shines tall above all,
It's shadow that crawls.

It's dawn, cries a fowl,
As if she called sun from miles,
The sun is all smiles.

By the upheaval
They cast on people,
Men and hen boast and bustle.

Haikus | 01.01.2018 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Mushroom Management

Management that keeps everyone down,
In dark, and subdued under strict frown,
One whose salient creed is:
Ignorance is true bliss,
And motto, down from top of the crown;
A kind that now mushrooms
Spreading wide fancy plumes,
Just look down from the Capital town.

Mushrooms grow in dark and damp spots; prosper in muddy land. Mushroom management too is like this. Management it is of an owl, of the top few that keep all else down.

Reflections | 06.01.2018 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Music Was Born Before Man

Man has been charmed by cuckoo's mating call,
Wood thrush, mynahs¹ never failed to enthrall,
And rustling brooks, singing streams on roll,
In awe of dancing strings from crests a fall,

From wafting breeze he learnt how to whistle,
Rhythm, beats from raindrops falling on roof,
Bemused by dry leaves under trees bristle,
He heard tides turning at sea, heard beast's hoof.

Man may have spent years ere scaling high peak,
He learned to dance ere could on two feet walk,
And learned to sing before began to speak,
Man was poet prior he peaked to talk.

He saw things, heard sounds, pondered on a pause,
Lulling newborns on breasts haply in grunts,
He picked musical ideas from infants,
For, music in man was born ere he was.

1. Mynah: One of the Indian starlings that mimic human voice.

Musings | 02.07.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Musing On Life's Last Page

A wrinkled brown leaf
And a dewdrop on the edge,
Hanging on to leaf,
Muse on life ever so brief,
Both on life's last page!

Senryu | 48.02.2019 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Musings On A Father's Day

I dared not tell him a quaint little tale,
Forget a bold idea like bunking school,
Nor yet playing past under pouring rain,
To be son's friend at fifteen was no cool.

But as dad I sure drifted in-between—
Oft trying hard, be stern, more oft failing,
Like teachers who still care, and coaches there,
Now to be soft, and still as oft slipping!

I recall, it was mountain-like tall task
To get approving nod—much less his sign
On school report card howso good it was,
For, his own once had a rainbow-like shine.

Then came time when my son's had gone downhill,
'Your only chance now is a barber's job';
We'll see dad, his smile not much did reveal.
My surest shot he returned with a lob.

My dad knew me well— a matter of pride,
Career was no great concern in those days,
He would advise but still let me decide,
My son has had his own liberal ways.

It may look easier at this time now
Than it was during those hard-boiling days,
Thanks be to hard lessons that once I'd learnt,
And all discipline deployed ere now pays.

With pride I recall time my son declined
Some luxuries he deemed as needless aid,
Be it AC or a drop to college,
I knew then that he'd grey cells in his head.

World winds had not wafted to my dad's port,
But he could well see his great grandkids' time,
To them he'd have looked a tyrant of sort,
Yet, quick he cast him in a changing clime.

He complained of no conflicting age gap
Though lived long—five generations to span—
Bullock carts till sound-bursting planes began—
And preferred to wear no grand-old-man's cap!

I hope not to live so long, nor think wise,
Just long enough body easy can bear,
Long till I hold on to my free bird's air,
Yet, I know destiny such dreams defies.

Written on Father's Day: June 20

Musings | 05.06.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Mutating Morales

Morals of a man once highly admired—
Finely tuned souls in a forthright frank age,
Generous to a fault, not worldly wired,
Candid and open like a printed page,
Empathy, understanding, kindly heart
That beats for all, and simple if not sure,
Free from a smart aleck's much-rehearsed art—
Why is today the world no more so pure?

May be, we love what we did ere detest—
A cutting sharp tact like a two-edged sword,
Narrower mind wrapped in self-interest,
Ravenous itch to grab, gather and hoard,
And what's the root cause of all this indeed?
To covet and crave, a lady called greed!

Sonnets | 01.01.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Mute Melody And Mute Song

The old has ruled with golden rule
For years without a number
That one cares to remember,
Taught in no-question-asked school,
A refrain have for long sung:
Wiser are we than the young.

And the youth in mute respect
For old has cavil-less mum
Kept, treading much-trodden tract
For generations to come;
And old enough with own brood,
Have found this arrangement good!
 Ah a concert on for long—
 Mute melody and mute song!

- Sonnets | 12.01.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

My Ace Shot Back With Finesse

O let not feelings show on surface,
Nor a plight mark its print on the face,
Nose firmly under eyes,
Let no one sympathise,
Show as if you're out to hit an ace.
And I did so precise,
But loaded was my dice,
A sure ace was shot back with finesse.

Tongue-in-cheek | 5.10.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

My Belated Laugh

Their last hurrah said,
Skies thundered when full-throated,
My laugh, belated!

Haiku |01.11.2017|

Aniruddha Pathak

My Boy-Scout's Faith

The fun when settles to be passé,
And drums at last when cease to beat,
I race to wash, get back my face,
But bath mirror mocks at my feat.

Oh to play monkeys and lose face,
But never once the stiff spoil-sport,
Hiding somewhere on the terrace,
Why, anywhere in your safe fort.

But no, I've been a fair boy scout,
And better to mix, be merry,
Cosy with crowd than lose your clout,
But not run 'way from revelry.

But the mirror in bath me tells,
O better beware of your means,
Unless there be rivers and wells,
Store buckets of water to cleanse.

For, dry taps, no water to bathe,
O shaken has a boy scout's faith.

Musings on the colour festival | 05.03.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

My Dawn's Dream

From night-long reign of dark,
Peace of morning does spark
Like a mother's sure smile
That in serene silence
Of dawn assures: I'm here;
With tranquil heart birds cheer
And break into song and dance.
And I do wonder a while,
If that light renders harmony,
And makes life what life be,
That helps me dream a dream
O to rise from dark depths like cream.

Musings | 19.02.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

My Fond Wish

This has been my fond wish:
To find feelings in stone,
In mirage to find fish,
In gods heart— human kind,
In men a kindly mind,
In gods, goodwill for men,
In men goodness of heaven,
And I wish my wish is no vain gone.

Musings | 02.12.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

My Heart Goes To Earth

My heart goes to poor
Clod of earth no close to God,
Ways of world seem odd.

Haiku | 01.03.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

My Lady Love— Desire

My love of her to raging fever turned,
I still longed to embrace her for raw frill,
Hoped, she'd cool down, in self-lit fire get burned
In passion of her own, venom evil;
Clueless, I sought some old medics to see—
Miss Reason and Resolve, both of fine bent,
But not ill, I needed no remedy—
The fever's just a signal, no ailment.
And beware; end of desire is road's end,
Lose life's desires and lose all zest for life,
And not all, bad be those that morals bend,
Bad be but the excess reeking greed rife;
Desire, made of the matter man is made,
Kill it to kill his will; he's good as dead.

Indic philosophy talks about eliminating desires. But this is for those that have reached certain stage and not for all. For most, the path of karma without hankering after fruits is good enough. As this sonnet says, not all desires are bad. What is bad is too much of it, but then so is too much of anything. One needs to guard against the quantity, and keep in mind the quality of desires.

Sonnets | 17.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

My Lost Reverie

Receding night beams a smile rather grey,
Loosening grip on her night-long dark belt,
As frosty snow mellows slowly to melt,
And moon saunters to hide behind the day,
Eastern skies as look laced with limpid red,
Soft mist hind grey shadows begins to flee,
And dawn rises restful from flurried sea,
A fair maid musing on a bridal bed,
As Arun's¹ bright amorous arrows aim
To ruffle feathers of the husky night,
Asserting the reign of radiant light,
The dawn turns day her rightful crown to claim.

But robbed of my early dawn's dewy dream,
Which, trying to recall, somewhat unsure
Of its gossamer rainbow-like vague theme,
I wake and wonder what if dreams endure.

Arun¹ is Sun's charioteer that brings in the reign of dawn.

Musings | 01.02.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

My Love's Silent Song

You might feel love has no hearth in my heart
Because I never once caressed your curls,
Nor have I sported with Cupid's love dart,
Pranks nor yet jinks, our ship has sailed in lulls.
But let me in the name of love confess:
Shallow love tends to have a sweeter tongue,
As lesser pens pen too pompous a song,
The more I love the less I need to stress.
Deep waters of depths the serene most are,
Shallower the streams greater goes the roar,
True love stays steady like a polar star,
So stands my love— harboured in heart's deep core.
My river of love flows ceaseless for long,
One day I'm sure ye shall cherish my song.

Sonnets | 23.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

My Mind Is A Wild Wood

Pray, my thoughts seem to rush in flood,
I've everything but peace of mind.
No, my son, you wind and rewind,
Go yon, when blossom's still a bud.

I scarce know how thoughts sail in boats,
Ere I know, flowers they're from buds.
Watered, my brain fields invite birds,
They come to feast on wildest oats.

None can blossoms of their buds nip,
I am the crop, the crop is mine.
No, with practice can you them clip,
Know this; thoughts live a life of nine.

When I reap what I thought was thought,
It was flower blossomed from bud,
And oft a bouquet in a pot,
Or water lily amid mud!

And my mind's manicured garden
Gets over grown into wild wood;
Buried therein I can't see sun,
And wilder it grows whilst I brood.

I can't search peace though peace is nigh,
Nor can the restless inner I;
Watch your thoughts, silence 'tween thoughts dwells,
There, wild lily divinity spells.

So, give your thoughts no fertile ground,
Nor water; keep weeds within bound.

Wild crops¹ refers to unwanted thoughts. The poem is set in the form of doubts by the disciple and thoughtful lights get thrown in by the Guru.

Musings | 03.01.11 |

My Mind's Closed Gate

I thought I hated ships and sailing trips,
Li'le did I know, afraid I was to drown;
I thought I hated hallowed buts and ifs,
But stuck I was on an island my own;
I hated too the sight of every shoe,
But I feared in unknown ahead to move,
Smug in cosy comforts of my igloo,
Scared of eerie change from my settled groove.
I recoiled at the sight of stamps and seals,
In muted mutiny, in wound-less war,
It was my sickly sense against power's ills,
Not yet the sole truth to what I abhor.
 Things that disturb frighten and fascinate,
 Nigh but sour grapes are in the mind's closed gate!

Aniruddha Pathak

My Mind's Chatter

If mind should chatter
Ego to flatter,
How would I know me better?

Haikus | 03.05.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

My Name

As given with great fuss it once came,
With any a name though I'd be same.
Now in course of long time
Wonder, if worth a dime,
That in dust of habit hangs its frame,
And comes an argument
Hard to win gent to gent,
They call me still with a vilest name.

Reflections | 03.12.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

My Sister Venus

My sister, for beauty art thou renown,
Do lift up thine thick veil of secrecy,
So prone to me, and still so little known,
Ye know not how keen am I ye to see.

Perplexed though I'm by thine strangest of ways:
The way ye rotate —ah in reverse gears,
And revolve— to us earthlings much amaze,
Wonder how days can be longer than years!

I'd love to come and spend some time with thee,
But afraid, what I'd do with thine long night,
Is it secret to thine beauty so bright?
I can't wait long to know more about thee.

Ye know this odd myth that men from Mars came?
But women feel so proud to share thine name.

A poem for children, it sees Venus and Earth as sisters, Earth slightly elder. Venus is closest to Earth, but is covered with thick clouds of gas, and its terrain remains largely unknown. Its average temperature is +456.850 C. It rotates backwards from East to West so that the sun would appear to rise from the West and set in the East. The time Venus takes for one rotation round its axis is 243 Earth days. For one orbit around the sun it takes less at 224 days. So, her year is shorter than the day! In April 2006 the European Space Agency's Venus Express Spacecraft was sent. Japan's Venus Climate Orbiter Planet-C was launched in 2010.

Musings | 02.08.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

My Wish When Died Once Again

My wish when died once again,
As was its wont, an old habit—
When I failed to be friends with it,
Curb nor curtail, nor e'er restrain,
And took my sole, my soul with it,
Saying, let's meet again!

- Musings | 07.09.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

My Wonders Wax Wild

My wonders wax wild
If mother maketh the child,
Or she's made by child!

Haikus | 02.03.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Myopic Man

Far offs from earth man seems to see with ease,
Many a light-years far galaxy,
Stars and planets, their plains, crests and valleys,
He even knows how beastly black-hole be,
But seldom if at all the Self his own,
Just one thing man has for long left alone.

Perhaps this way is how man's ever made—
He feels that all shortfalls do elsewhere lie,
Not within—easy can one see the red
Of spectrum, not green, nor yet his envy,
His blame knocks at all but his karmic gate,
He's two pet alibis— fortune and fate.

As he grows old, gets myopic of eyes,
Perhaps he's born short-sighted, never wise.

Sonnets | 07.04.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Myth Be Love At First Sight

Doubtful, love lights up at the first sight,
In one go few might get it all right;
Jane breaks six hearts or more,
Five times Joe seems unsure;
Hard to fly, unfair seems this love-kite!

Love at first sight seems a myth of the romantics. A study reveals: on an average Jane will have her heart broken five times, and is dumped four times before finding Mr Right. An average Joe has the failure rate of six before shooting right for Ms Right. But does it work well in the end? This limerick is not quite sure. It's like flying an unfair kite. One must first find a good kite, and then ensure that it is tied up well.

Happenings | 07.03.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Naked Truth Oft Comes Clad

Baddies come no bagful all of bad,
Nor goodies always make our heart glad,
World is a mix of picks,
Caresses come with kicks,
A crook might as well teach more than tad.
No'ne lives life smooth like silk,
Nor is washed clean with milk,
Good tarnished gets with a touch of bad.
A villain too can teach
Enough if there be itch,
Naked truth cometh oft far too clad.

A neighbourly Prime Minister listed in Panama Papers, and declared dishonest by court and disqualified for any public post for life. The trial and inquiry were conducted without undue delays, and justice seemed fair and quick. Can we imagine our VVIP so summarily brought to book? If we want to learn we can even from a worst of hell!

Happenings | 04.08.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Name

A poet pens a poem,
Loves to sign off with his name;
A painter, ditto the same,
God! Is there so much in name?

God creates with a Big Bang
But credits someone for fame—
Let these mothers stand for me,
Hard, everywhere me to hang,
And guided by God's grace, she
Then gives the child father's name!

Reflections | 05.05.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Nature And A Child

Not like me— grown man,
It lives the now like a child,
If man too with nature's wild!

- Haikus | 04.08.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Nature Can What Pen Can't

When fair words fail to fit in a tired line,
And dainty wit feels shy, comes not as called,
Easy that came ere— out of ten times, nine,
When diction demurs, jagged looks poem's mould,
Words look hammered in, which, ere shone divine,
Rhymes lifeless and flat when fails to cast old
Charm, assonance thought apt looks asinine,
When poesy deserts her touch of gold,
The mood remains when fickle, rather meek
In sympathy with Muse playing hide-seek,
Strange things do happen when thoughts fail the pen,
To soothe nerves, for old faithful friend I pine—
That sulks nor plays truant nor fails to shine:
Nature! When all else can't she I think can.

I believe there is nothing in this world as handy as Nature to cajole shy Muse. At least it works for me. Here is an atypical Petrarchan sonnet with the rhyme of abba/abba for the octave and ccd/aad for the sestet. Volta is only vaguely present, and comes late towards the end.

Sonnets | 02.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Nature, A Doctor Of Rare Height

Nature's a doctor of rare height,
But cannot a prescription write,
Think, why walnuts are good for brain,
Designed are they to look like brain.

Need there be to guess, nor surmise
Why almonds compared are with eyes,
Cashew nuts are shaped like kidneys,
And drumsticks are good for the knees.

Coconuts for the head and hair,
And your guess is as good and fair,
Beetroots are good for sanguine blood,
And many in mind come to flood.

If lady's fingers come to mind,
Well, I leave it for you to find.

Tongue-in-cheek | 05.10.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Need, Not Greed

Move over gadgets man can do without,
Give me this day devices not in doubt,
Like paper clips, tissues, all user's staple,
Elastic bands, bubble-wraps and many,
Touching millions of lives of common people,
Costing still literally a penny;
Jewels of genius minds forever revered,
Workhorses like light bulbs for long treasured;
Movers of the masses in any age,
More of products crafted, less a package.

Yet, greed gone miles from days of barest need,
Markets greasing greed has turned today's scene,
Egging on to envy neighbour's lawn green,
A market mantra that chants: good is greed.

The world has moved deep into greed marketing from one based on need. But my mind goes to simple inventions that moved, rather than maddened the markets. These are small things costing little and still revolutionised the world.

Reflections | 03.10.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Needless Do I Brood

Words get good or crude
With my attitude,
Needless do I brood.

Haiku | 11.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Neeti Shataka I, All-Knowing Know Not

I knew not but thought knew a lot,
In a quick-silver to get caught;
A pachyderm as if in heat
A man was I so indiscreet,
An all-knowing know-not—
An arrogant blow-dot!
But tutored by a wise man's school,
I realised I was a fool

This is free translation of a verse from Bhartrhari's Neeti Shataka.

Translations | 23.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Neeti Shataka II, Good Company

Ah a drop of water as if
On a hot plate disappears,
Yet, on a lotus leaf
Like a pearl appears.
And were it long to dwell
In deep sea's alive shell,
A valued pearl to be,
What gain ah a good company!
What pain if not, ill destiny!

This is free translation of a verse from Bhartrhari's Neeti Shataka.

Translations |24.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Neeti Shataka Iii, Good And Evil

Hard `tis to sweeten the sea
With a few drops of honey,
Or dent hardness of diamond
But with goodwill howso fond;
Evil leaves no wretchedness,
Nor yet good gives up goodness.

This is free translation of a verse from Bhartrhari's Neeti Shataka.

Translations |25.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Neeti Shataka Iv, Such Goodness

To give, giving not giver's name,
To welcome whoso as it came,
To do good under veil and hood,
And nary a false attitude,
Nor getting lost in puffed up pride,
Or be bashful like a new bride,
Who taught the good this sense of good?

This is free translation of a verse from Bhartrhari's Neeti Shataka.

Translations |26.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Neighbours

Apart a brick wall but no mean apart,
Strange comes this beast— a modern day neighbour,
More unknown than known, known but by number,
A number that ticks with no throbbing heart;
And fraught with no more than a face value,
So, soon as we see a neighbour's bare face,
We trace therein a graceless strange grimace,
To which we tend to add our vital view.

Take note, I too am not worth a mere dime,
Your refined smile to me would never work,
So here's my weird little sneer-cum-smirk,
And nude attitude shows up in its prime—
Borrowed urban behaviour arrived late,
And urban is far from urbane till date.

Sonnets | 03.02.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Never Is Thine Pretence Thee

Before he was civil, man lived in cave,
Every one wore the face that God him gave,
Nigh little he needed to cover, save
A few inches of skin, this man so brave!

His life an open book to read at call,
No one tried to look taller— none at all,
Look poker faced, nor played from behind wall,
Loud and clear were things laid on table.

For long they lived content, carefree to bask
Under open sky, tethered to their tasks,
And someone fashioned a few monkey masks—
One each for each of visage to well mask!

What came no more than a fun-making face,
Soon became man's sole face, his saving grace,
And mask-less was like a soldier sans mace,
Or call him a gambler sans trump of ace.

Man vulnerable feels— shorn of these hoods,
Powerless and subdued as if stitch-less nude,
A cobra de-fanged in its home of woods,
A gambler that lost all bets, left to brood.

Masquerading him from Him, from clear view,
Man wonders oft, where's him that he once knew,
Is this, what I pretence, my person new?
Mask has been me, my reality true!

Reflections | 08.12.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Newness Of Now

Dreaming dreams does man live for morrows,
With shadows of the past wrapped he goes,
Lost of will in life's woods,
And wearing blinds he broods,
No wonder, newness of now not knows.

Reflections | 04.01.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Nilgiri Hills

Shadowy obscure hills and hazy vales
Whose height is hard to see harder to guess,
Wearing foggy mist as a wintry dress,
While cloudy woods drench with wet, wet rallies.

Where murky moons too feeble wax and wane,
As stars of goodly grace lose Lumen grade,
Twinkling behind the darkling clouds of rain,
That keep flogging till they famish to fade.

Or else there lurks gossamer fog
To mock misty mornings that wake up late,
As if to vie with creeping smog,
Or else my morning jogs to suffocate.

And the sun, playing hide-and-peek
With milky clouds, showing dull face
Once in a while, too pale to peek,
Looks too tired of the game apace.

By noon the fog begins slowly to melt
As if to catch short breath if for a while,
To gather but again tightening belt,
And Sunny smile's lost in a cloudy guile.

And by four of the day's diurnal dial
The sun acquires a longish sad grimace,
And as if too tired of his ordeal,
Retires behind hills as if shorn of grace,

To spend a penitent long night
Of rest, to rise again from sleepy hills,
With hope free from grey clouds, and bright,
But I may add, only if rain god wills!

The beauty of the hills, high eminence,
Green bed-sheets like manicured tea gardens,
The hilly girth's hefty circumference
When hazy does get, my grudge too hardens.

And when the green drapery falls
On cottages and stray hamlets,
And when an unknown bird her welcome calls
From hind drippy trees and flower bough-lets;

And whenso my spirit, for long captive
In smothering city space, wants her wings,
When tiny wings begin their song native,
Alas, fading light pulls last curtain strings.

And left I am to dread long, looming night—
Made longer by shy sun, and wet weather—
O like a cow tied to a short tether,
Content to cud in silent un-spelt plight.

And yet, help seems nowhere in sight,
For, Northeast monsoon dares and glares,
And low pressure on seas flares over night,
And it pours, pours as if there be no cares.

Yet, even greatest of calamity
Comes with small mercies from heaven,
And I make good a rare sighting of sun
With shorter overtures made a plenty—

O pen in hand, thoughts of the hills,
Of hazy vales, and leaky woods,
A drink or two to kill sad chills,
And a poetic heart that, what else, broods!

Nilgiri¹ hills: The hills in southern Indian peninsula with well known hill stations like Ooty, Coonoor, and Kotagiri. When I visited last time I stayed at a place called Wellington. During most of my early visits I hardly stayed there for 4-5 days at a time. This was my longest— over two months, and as it happens, excess comes with its own wages. May be, I chose the wrong time. But there sure was a silver lining as this poem suggests. I could put to pen a few poems while I was forced to spend long

hours indoors eyeing the hills that were too close,
and yet too far!

- Reminiscences | 04.11.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Nippy When Turn Wintry Nights

Monsoon skies as recede behind,
Wafts in winter's first nippy chills,
Beds of hazy stars when get lined
Up Milky Way off Poona hills,
City's night owls then seem to pine,
At street-end joints of local hue,
For a night cap soon as they dine,
To warm ah with a boiling brew!

Out they're with family and friends,
Night crawlers to none else inclined
Than downing a quart at street ends—
City's many a milky find,
And stand-alone no-frills bars, out
To leave no fad unturned to please
Poona folks of old Pethi¹ clout,
No, no up-market leased chains these.

The drink is flavoured with saffron,
Condiments and grounded dry fruits,
Attracting crowds in captive drone—
Of kind tethered to ancient roots,
Culture-driven crowd as in fairs,
To socialise with kindred feather,
For glib Pethi¹ gossip, fresh airs,
If not, to chill in wintry weather.

The milk everywhere nigh the same,
Alcohol as remains at base
In hard drinks too many in name,
And differs still in every case;
Rare is the treat, and quality
That no Poona man worth his salt
Would pay more for, if no worthy—
A trait, unalterable alt!

A healthy drink, to pockets tight,
And served cosy on vehicle seat,
A hot-day's drill, wintry chill to beat,

A potion robust as is right,
Call them pucca Pethi¹ purists
Parking an old-world Poona charm,
For long Poona's brood -loving beasts,
Penny-pinching parsimonious palm!

Comes summer, milk turns to ice-cream,
No up-market shop, nor parlour,
For, fancy turns no Poona dream,
Let world for Western ways clamour.
Food has to be wholesome, healthy,
No wanton display if wealthy,
Value for whatso is Indian trait,
And Poona folks flaunt it, no bait.

Peth¹ is a kind of street typical of Poona.

This piece was penned during my long vacation in western hills near Poona, a charming mid-size town when I used to visit it long back, but now a sprawling city. Yet its old local culture has survived in a few pockets.

Reminiscing | 10.01.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Nirvana On Earth

Imagine an infant by mom's breast,
An adult at orgasm's rare crest,
Juvenile caught in jest,
One in grave and at rest,
A seeker lost in life's crucial quest.

The newborn be at her blissful best,
Sinking back, content, asleep on breast,
Flushed cheeks and buoying breath,
Adult at mini death,
All lost in nirvana's final nest!

An old man in his second childhood,
Flesh at rest, mind still in impish mood,
Searching spiritual truth,
Nostalgic of spent youth,
In touch with lost child in solitude!

Reflections | 09.06.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

No Crocodile Tears, Dear

No darling, not your sympathies to earn,
Nor mind nor yet your heart on me to draw,
Helpless infants as oft are apt to yell,
Yea, helpless oft have I before you felt.
Tears cause in me no butterflies of love,
Nor yet trigger love-bonds between us two,
You may check the chemicals therein too,
Check enzymes and lipids if so to prove,
Or if electrolytes are duly dealt,
Emotional tears show more protein as well,
And make them more viscose on skin to claw,
It's none of it— and reason there's but one.

No darling, no crocodile tears I've shed,
To my eyes drying, tears render some aid.

A man cried the night before, and now his wife wants to know why. After ruling out all her false conjectures as to why he cried, he gives the true reason: He suffered from glaucoma and dryness. And he tries crying sometimes to moisturise his eyes. This sonnet may look rhyme-less, but has a mirror-like symmetry —a b c d e f / f e d c b a. The Volta happens in the couplet.

Sonnets | 17.03.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

No Dogs, They're Offspring

Mere pets, nor show pieces tied to string,
Nor are just our best friends, but offspring,
The skirmish long did run
Till custody war won,
For dogs, times truly are a changing!

A couple got married a decade back; was childless with a pair of dogs. Marital discord cropping up they filed for divorce and fought for long for the custody of dogs. The case was settled recently: Rs three million as one-time settlement. The man retained custody of the dogs. It was perhaps the first case when pet dogs were equated with one's offspring!

Happenings | 07.01.17 |

Aniruddha Pathak

No Pen Likes Doggerels To Pen

If asked, a log of wood likes to look good—
All timbers feel no lesser than a teak,
Even a brick from kiln's keen to show trick
Given a master mason's classy mood;
Every flower aspires to flaunt fragrance,
And still looking good which it always would,
Or get picked for a rare floral romance
In a bouquet— not fade in lonely wood;
And no shrubs would like to get pulled as weed,
No bird likes to be Dodo not to fly,
And every dog to boast of a rare breed,
All reputations like to reach sky high.

So too no pen a paltry piece to pen,
But a poem that would tall praises span.

Sonnets | 05.02.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

No Promise, Please

Better no promise to me give,
Words vouched seldom a long life live.
Say, you'll try, meet again,
I'll wait as if you were rain,
Like rain, shall let you when you leave.
Joy there's in love to wait,
As there's in getting wet—
Moments spent with you to re-live.

Musings | 10.01.17 |

Aniruddha Pathak

No Reason In Love

Madness there's in love,
Reason in madness,
No reason in love.

When madly in love,
Look for no reason,
Nor is there treason.

Haikus | 02.07.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

No Room Within

In biting dying days of cold December,
There came Joseph and Mary one late night,
Knocking at bolted doors of an old inn,
Nine months with unborn Christ and in great plight.

'Not even a soul easy can breathe here,
'No, there's no room in this too small an inn'—
There be none anywhere in all the world
If there's no room in heart's hollow within.

There's plenty in homes, open arms and smile,
The guests walk in where with nary a date¹,
They wearing a glorious robe of God²,
Host's heart as op as widely ajar gate.

There is enough space in inn, big or small,
What matters is room in man's feeling heart;
What matters is how one has ever been,
Whose very welcome's a piece of fine art!

And often times the room has to be made,
No matter howso little he might have,
Enough, haply he is willing to share,
Room's always made should compassion so crave.

Some guests, perhaps from lands of setting sun,
They should better be treated pretty well—
An exclusive room no less ah for sure,
Sharing? Not e'en in grave on death to dwell.

'Oh what a place! I wonder why I came
'Here, where there's no space enough for a guest;
'The least I want is putting them to shame,
'But God, save me from such beggarly nest'.

Oft poorest of poor knows well to divide,
They know the bliss begotten from gifting—
Giving whatso one has in humble pride,
It's not gift but spirit behind giving!

It matters li'le the brew be over-brewed,
Or watery bare be the bitter tea,
Moist and soft be the biscuits, crumply bread,
But offered with heart larger than a lea;

Let no more than torn mat on a clean floor
Be all that makes for guests a nightly bed,
If proffered with legendry same lofted lore
Of a five-star hotel's starred selling head!

I've been cajoled to share a crowded berth
Seated-with-four that can barely take three,
When better 'tis to stand than seated be—
Sharing is second nature taught from birth.

I do these plane folks from far much marvel,
The varied hues of a fluid face admire,
That gives whatso that be given, and well,
An art 'tis to sense need, un-spoke desire!

But not quite, let me hope, 'no room at inn'
Turns out to be no true Biblical tale,
Perchance, misguided twist of what had been,
A simple tale stuttering in wan style!

Imagine a Bethlehem innkeeper,
One, raised with an oriental good sense³,
One, who has no room whatso to offer,
Helpless, stable to him was help immense!

1. Without a date: In Indian hospitality etiquette, a guest is one that drops in unannounced with no prior appointment. He is therefore known as atithi, which in Sanskrit means: a=no, tithi=date, i.e., one without a date.

2. Glorious robe of God: This comes from 'atithi devo bhava' | It means literally, 'the guest is as good as God.'

3. Oriental good sense: The innkeeper in the

Biblical story from Bethlehem is essentially a product of perhaps Oriental culture, who faced with no room could not offer the best he would—and offers a space in stable. The story perhaps acquired popular colours under the influence of the prevailing Western norms of 'Sorry, there's no room'.

Penned in the last week of December, the poem was inspired by Christmas spirit.

- Reflections | 11.12.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

No Struggle, No Music

I see a river,
Nothing blocks her way,
And there is music, nor play.

- Haikus | 13.08.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

None Is Happy Alone

Even trees would swear:
Together when, they grow fair,
None's happy alone.

If shared and enjoyed,
Happiness gets further buoyed,
Happy is not happy lone.

Haikus | 05.05.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

None That Tries Truly Fails

Nigh rudderless like trains on rail,
O walk not ways world may avail,
Set caution to wind snapping sail,
Pave your own path never to trail—
It's the only way not to derail.
And should ye want no'ne you to tail,
Set sail to your own heedless sail—
Hell, high tide, hurricane or gale.
This way you might still fail,
And still, none that tries fail.

Musings | 04.12.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Not Buddha, Aniruddha

When I die, at the Pearly Gates to wait,
Let Him not ask: why I lived not like Him,
Christ nor Gandhi, nor like any a great,
But rather, 'Have ye lived up to thine dream? '

There's no one in this world made spot like me,
Nor my mission nor goal, nor yet my wit;
Inspired for sure, but I strive ME to be,
Motivated, let me, me alone beat.

Taught are we to measure up to the tall
In life, at schools to align with the class,
I seek footprints that my own can I call,
I've goals to set, and tests my own to pass.

Not he that lacks courage is called coward,
He that seeks to conform within a ward;
No, let me not copy creeds of Buddha,
I'm here to be none but Aniruddha.

Born am I but to fulfil my own dream,
O to rise from depths of bottom— like cream.

Musings | 02.03.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Not But A Pot-Full

Be it a big well,
An ocean in spell,
Pots fill no more than pot-full.

Haiku | 04.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Not Death, It's Faith In Life

Ask him who hath died still alive,
How often Death must strive,
Looking nigh somewhat naïve,
How long He should try to arrive.
Ask those for long alive,
Eternal as lives Death
Betwixt the birth and death,
Life living breath to breath,
Ask how oft he should strive.

My task it is spring-like to renew,
Recharge tired batteries anew,
While journey goes on searching, seeking rife.
Though there's no end past every life,
I do when come to call,
Life gets the same prison, same strife,
I change no more than wall;
O cross river of no return,
Let all walls fall, freedom to earn.

And while I try, life goes on as aught,
Triumphing o'er me to shine,
Not Death, the winner's Faith!
So, while rocks turn to sands, and sands to naught,
The wheel of Time¹ as turns, things wrought,
Man tries— as I with pen of mine,
Nary a care of next breath,
Nor of liberating death,
O thinking just of next line!

1. In Sanskrit the word *kāla* denotes both time and death.

Here, Time and Death both mean the same.
Not death, nor breath (life) , what triumphs is faith: a
serious thought, but the piece has a tongue-in-cheek end.

- Musings | 01.08.14 |

Not Enough, A Curious Mind

His words came from a deep-set core:
I'd much rather look at a wall
Till I find one of stature tall,
Those I meet seem desert-like dry,
Or too slippery wet well nigh,
Window, nor yet a full-fledged door,
He¹ said, no opening at all,
Nor even a tiny li'le pore
Whence to enter their deep within
From where the light of truth comes in,
Nor take close look of inner scene,
And yet, so has it for long been.

Long years later there came a man²
That he was waiting for so long,
With a sword's sharpness who began:
Are ye going to turn along?
Or, should I heck apart my head?
Bodhi¹ uttered not a word still,
Staring still at the wall, and dead,
The man with an unconquered chill,
There upon severed his left hand,
A moment more and it's my head.
Then, facing him said, welcome, friend,
At last got I've my jade!
O from deserts of stones,
From mere flesh, blood and bones!

He that must walk the path of truth,
Better be sharp to sever head,
And be a man of notso ruth,
Glad I'd now to oblivion fade.
Not enough is a curious mind,
Nor yet child's play, O truth to find!

-
1. Bodhi-dharma¹ was one of the prominent disciples of Buddha. He had a unique way to find his true follower who could walk his Path. When he went to China from India, he would always sit facing a wall.
 2. Hui-Neng², in turn became Bodhi-dharma's¹ disciple.

Aniruddha Pathak

Not Falling, Fault Is Not Trying Again

I've oft felt drained, tired, a spent force,
'Pon trying hard yon me, yet failed,
Another day and new hope roars,
And trying 'gain find me prevailed,
Oft, that devil of failure I can't face,
Damn if I try, damn if I run the race.

Yet, never is man a pure metal,
Though success has its tempting lure,
A mixed alloy, man must choose to battle
Both, the fear of being a failure,
And cockiness of a cock-sure,
Not falling, not getting up could be fatal.

Success, a beach goddess be as is said,
She scarce is pleased till sacrifice is paid.

- Sonnets | 09.01.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Not Life, Death Is Real

I wake one day only for long to sleep,
Suffer my fate to find if life is fake,
And learn not still: to sow is not to reap.

Not but death's real all through life to creep,
To crawl along like a slithering snake,
I wake one day only for long to sleep.

A good friend may or not keen friendship keep,
But death, so good, no friendship does e'er break,
To let me learn: to sow is not to reap.

Life is a tiny blip of time, no leap,
To break bread with journeymen, friends to make,
I wake one day only for long to sleep.

To live, forget— not to find meaning deep,
To swim and sink in life's shallow a lake,
'Tis to learn still: to sow is not to reap.

It is light gathered in every round trip,
And yet, not life, death 'lone has deeper stake;
I wake one day only for long to sleep,
To try and learn: to sow is not to reap.

- Villanelles | 05.10.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Not Moments, It's Man's Mind

Miserable moments of a sad man
Like autumn leaves fade under Time's sure feet,
And yet, this drifting brownish death scarce can
Cajole unwilling autumn to retreat;
If seasons be gloomy as oft as good,
And world happy as often as hostile,
If man's joys borne are by his attitude,
Why hell should still precede heavenly isle.

Moments are seldom good or bad, it's mood
Of a man's mind, nor taxing time on earth,
Arise unfulfilled moments from self worth,
Let's rise, resolve taller to stand and good.
If autumn trees from green turn yellowed brown,
I wonder why man should sink further down.

Sonnets | 06.10.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Not One From A Wisdom School

He's thousands of gripes and grievances,
And hundreds of fears and frights of his,
Day to day they frustrate a fool,
Not one that hails from wisdom school.

Translations| 03.05.12 |

Topic: school

shoka-sthaani sahasraani bhaya-sthaani shataani cha |
ahanyahani moodham vai aavishanti na panditam ||
- Mahabharata

Aniruddha Pathak

Not Only When It Pours

Nigh but a sprinkle here,
Or a moment's splash there,
Enough is to make monsoon mood,
Or not when it pours, pours in flood.
A dream planted in heart
Gives rare moments apart;
A single sprout is oft pot-full,
Or not even a forest-full;
If someone asks, I'd say of course,
It's not love but if pours and pours,
Joy comes from tiny pores,
And gallops still O like a horse.

Musings | 15.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Not Simple, We Like Dimples

Details daunt when to dare, wasting life,
Snags and hitches when flood, ruling rife,
Customs when dictate life,
Why and when pawn new strife,
Straighten up twisted things with keen knife.

Yet, never simple is any KISS,
Ask any a wimple wearing miss,
Ceteris paribus
We like an omnibus,
We do like a miss that dimpled is.

Everyone loves to profess KISS principle— Keep it simple, stupid. But no, we seem to like complications, and just can't keep things plane simple. Ceteris paribus= other things beings equal or unchanged.

Tongue-in-cheek | 04.02.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Not Till The Last Tree Is Cut

Not till the last tree is cut asunder,
Till last river dries up as lost wonder,
Or its waters turn into slow poison,
Till last well as mother earth's breast dries out,
So that the next glass of water's in doubt,
And creeping deserts race a wily run,
Not till the last fish has been duly caught
And weather's turned from hot to still hotter,
Not till man's filled up last of leaking pot
Of poisonous self-polluted water,
When last vestige of nature has been shred,
Only then we'll know greed can't be gilded.
Would man be ever wise of looming ruin?
May not until Earth's barren made like Moon.

Sonnets | 01.01.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Not Yet White Within

In a bolt as an ill-fitting nut, □
Asian, not a full-fledged coconut,
Brown by a native skin,
Not yet white from within,
But do Brits help them blend?
Extend a helping hand?
No, they only love to bare their butt.

A third of UK residents of age 34 and within of South Asian origin, do not feel British. A survey called them coconuts— brown from outside as ever ere, not yet white within. This perhaps means that such coconuts are unable to grow fully in British environment. But does it not reflect on the so-called fair country? A case of 'I like not the apple I need'.

Happenings | 04.08.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Now And The Twain, Then

My `now' that rules `then',
When asked, shape my other then,
Said, `sure, your will can'.

Haiku | 12.11.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Now Is All There Is

The mind went to spring far from scene,
I saw when yellowing brown leaf
That filled me with moments of grief,
And my mind craved for shades of green.

And when I saw an old leaf fall,
One, two, and then a virtual rain,
Spring was my mind's virtual refrain,
And thoughts of spring began to gall.

O mind, your yesterday's spent dream,
I recalled what Kalidasa¹ had said,
Spilling from memories still red,
And tomorrow's vague— gay or grim,

Now is the moment to cherish,
Today if lived at fullest brim,
Makes yesterday a happy dream;
And thing to relish becomes wish!

The past has spent up all its now,
The morrow too shall come and bow,
But I'd live to rue my lost now,
Now's all I have to love somehow.

Autumn or spring has varied charms,
Let me live for no other scene,
Look, Nature's but for its now keen,
Hugs present moment with op arms.

Kalidasa¹: A celebrated poet of sixth century AD, he wrote many an epic poems.

Musings | 07.03.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Nuptial Knots Now And Then

Now

Knowing well wedded way walks long road,
We still make too light of its shared load:
Too quick to coo and start,
Sooner to fall apart,
And to part at the first twist and node!

Then

Heaven's made that lifelong lasting road,
Until-death-do-us-part one-way node,
Led upfront by the heart,
Head playing nodding part,
Breaking bridal knot? Too odd that toad!

Reflections | 02.02.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

O Change The Bait

I wonder if a man must reassure
His wife on each rising sun of his love,
Should his marital bliss northward must move,
Yet, with what alluring fare should he lure?

Many an endearment and compliment
Made O from his lovelorn lab's Petri dish
In their dozens the poor soul must invent,
Or dish out a sonnet in all anguish.

Now, if he should fail to humour his mate,
He not but blame his unfortunate fate,
That bestowed to him quite an empty plate,
Yet, better he strive to change his old bait.

For, who has heard of humouring a fish?
Any bait's good, long as the fish won't miss.

Sonnets | 04.05.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

O Dappled One

Many-speckled sprinter¹, O dappled one²,
Here is the land where thou for long hunted,
Here is the home missed by thee and haunted,
O thou the fastest a beast could e'er run.

In this thine native land that gave thee birth,
We feel sorry for centuries of wrong
We wrought, each trophy hunt of vaguest worth;
Six decades³ seem like estrangement too long.

We were heartless hell-bent folks to hunt down
Helpless moms raising pups single-handed⁴,
Vulnerable to all big cats of brawn,
To baboons, hyenas, meat-eaters red.

Let us now welcome thy Afro cousins⁵,
Perhaps thy very sibling blood sanguine,
Pray pardon our unpardonable sins,
Come to rule our grasslands and keep them green.

We know we failed our tigers to protect,
Yet, our lions languish not regardless,
We were asleep ere, now ready to act,
We failed thee once, but no more, O temptress.

Cheetah once ruled Indian grasslands. But by the middle of the last century they were mercilessly hunted down. The last one was hunted in 1947. Wiser, we now want to rehabilitate the fastest cat in our grasslands. This poem was born during my stay in Wellington when I noted that every time I come to Ooty/Coonoor I see the forest cover depleted. I also noted that even leopards are now rarity in these wilds. The poem comes with the hope that we would not fail cheetah again.

1. Many-speckled sprinter: Cheetah is not only the fastest sprinter among all animals, he accelerates 0-100 km/h in three seconds.

2. The dappled one: Cheetah derives its name from the Sanskrit 'chitraka' which means 'a dappled one', or 'picturesque'.
3. Six decades: Conservationists say that the Maharaja of Sargujar killed India's last cheetah in 1947— nearly sixty years back.
4. Single-handed: Female cheetah are generally loners, while the male siblings often hunt together for life.
5. Afro cousins: It is believed that Asiatic cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatusvenaticus*) is same as the African cheetah. There is little genetic difference between the two. Hence, either they are siblings, or at least first cousins.

- Nostalgia | 01.10.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

O Fire

Pray hearken, O Fire, to my life's red urge:
Do spread thy all-consuming power anew,
And burn her mortal dross sans residue,
That her ashes unto elements merge;
Burn all her pains that she suffers no more,
Stumbling stones, life's whys irking like wart,
And answers failing to bestir her heart,
Let her feeling heart be stilled to its core;
And yet, do let her e'er-green soul retain
The last vestige of her earnest desire,
Her heaving heart's evermore-fragrant fire
For me; and let the rest burn to last grain;
 This done, let her wake fresh new life to start,
 New frame if ye feel, but same feeling heart!

- Sonnets | 06.12.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

O Fleeting Moment

Time consumed goes beyond human cure,
Of the time yet to come one's not sure,
Kiss me, Fleeting Moment,
Gift art thou, God's present,
And one to cherish, not just endure.

Musings | 12.01.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

O Girdle Your Greed

Roll down hopes from highest of a crest,
Good enough better be than the best,
At the crest so highest
Tall trophies look modest,
And no more seem good in double haste.

Reflections | 44.02.2019 |

Aniruddha Pathak

O Love, Ye Leak Some Bias

If a man loves a plain Jane,
The beauty lies in her brain;
Words which otherwise irritate,
Would sound sweet from a loving mate;
What we call smoke from fuel wood,
From fume-sticks be so fragrant good.
O Love, should ye show such bias?
Common and crass when show their class!

Reflections |14.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

O Messenger Of Gods

Messenger art thou of nightly heavens,
Smallest of the eight siblings sired by Sun,
Tell me for what crucial errands ye run,
Do slow down and catch thine breath if for once.

Eight long years ere we did send thee a mail
Thru a Messenger Probe named after thee—
At your great speed of course nigh but a snail—
Too close art thou to sun for thine safety.

We could be in touch more, my dear brother,
But there might be a few problems at hand,
One is your scorching high temperature,
And the speed at which ye run thine errand.

Slow down O sprinter, what use so much haste?
Do calm down a bit, ye know haste is waste.

This poem is on planet Mercury, and is meant for children. It sees Earth as its sister. Mercury is called a messenger of gods because it orbits around the sun with a great speed (87 Earth days) . It is very slow taking as much as 59 for one rotation on its axis. In 2004, NASA launched Messenger Probe to reach Mercury in 2011 at a snail's speed in planetary motions. The surface temperature of Mercury is +1670 C.

Musings | 01.08.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

O Pain, Grief, And Suffering

Now that you're with me, be my guest—
Like me a life-long traveller,
Enjoy night-long welcome and rest,
Tomorrow, let's leave together.

You may go to your way, I mine
To be a bird rare that may call
And never heard by hearts that pine,
Oh to fall lifeless by next fall.

Unleash your worst of sting, feel free,
I'd bear all, night-long you unfold,
No pain conquers me so easy,
Traveller I'm of a tough mould.

So, O pain, grief, and suffering,
Be my guest and a night long king,
Ready to leave by the morning,
You scarce for long to me can cling.

Let by dawn all aches feel amiss,
By nature joy am I and bliss.

Musings | 01.08.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

O River From Heaven

Think of thine lineage heaven-born,
Think, who brought ye here and what for,
Long years ere, one historic morn
Thou wert here at an ashram door.

To begin with a Kaushikee—
The family name of the sage
Of royal lineage known for rage,
In time became Vishvomitree.

Thou wert brought here to purify,
To make the place a paradise,
On virtual death-bed to die,
Ye revolt nose, irritate eyes.

Hardly alive art thou at all,
Notso remains of thine old fame,
From heaven first, then further fall,
The filth that flows shames thine sure name.

To keep cherished thine fair image,
You'd better returned with the sage—
O back to the heavenly dome,
Dead alive, thine spirit's not home.

What seems left looks like flesh and bone,
Shelters wherein silt of man's greed,
Lodged for long the greed has outgrown,
Soiled, stained it has thine noble creed.

Yet, Ganges get when no fair fate—
In silence trudging destiny,
Wonder, how long rivers like thee!
Well-past you're your best-before date.

There was time when rivers were holy as they really were. Mahabharata says that sage Vishvamitra invoked a river from heaven for his morning ablutions and worship, and called it Kaushikee, but popularly it is better known as Vishvomitree. The river flows in

the middle of the city where I live now. Its pathetic condition gave birth to this poem, a cry.

Musings | 01.05.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

O Saturn Of Stern Face

Hi there, my big brother of angry face,
We seem scared of thine presumed evil eye,
Born of ignorance, myth and mystery,
Too far art thou to know of thine kind grace.

We marvel at many thine starry strings,
At thine long, far too long solar innings,
Few of us siblings enjoy such bright rings,
Thine mystery plays magic on mind's wings.

Wide-eyed we look at thine many-hued sky,
Which, ye two big brothers monopolise—
Thine multi-splendour moons do when arise,
Wonder if sun too looks pink with envy.

But we do thine giant Titan envy,
Ah, its size dwarfing even Mercury!

This is fifth and last in the series of poems for children on planets.

Musings | 05.08.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

O Singer Of The Epic War

O Singer of epic war history,
Of brazen battlefields long desolate,
O Saint of life and liberties hoary,
Bhagavad-Gita is thine ageless glory.

Outlived hast thine song an endless story,
Its dead heroes surviving still in state,
Frustrated of ill fate but scarce sorry,
O Singer of epic war history.

Yudhishtir's dharma, Arjun's archery,
Bheeshma's oath and Bheemsen's brute bravery,
Confined can scarce be to the Pearly Gate,
O thou hast sung Gita's ageless glory.

And ye O bard, two roles in one carry:
Poet laureate, progenitor on date,
Born wert thou on mother's river ferry,
O Singer of epic war history.

Ye sang thine song in such a swell flurry,
E'en god of wit¹, though more than adequate,
Lost was in deep thought oft feeling weary,
O Bard of an ancient ageless glory.

For mortal pens a task 'tis so dreary,
Oh even no more than to just translate²,
O Singer of epic war history,
O Singer of ancient ageless glory.

1. Vyasa, the creator of Mahabharata approached Lord Ganesha, a great scribe who could write with great speed, to pen down the epic as sung by him. He agreed but warned the poet: With great speed I write. See that you do not make me wait. 'Okay, but don't write anything down without understanding it, the poet put a counter condition. And so was created an epic of about hundred thousand verses, or four hundred thousand poetic lines.

2. I have done a poetic translation from the original Sanskrit (Volume I published) and I know how formidable a task it is.

This is a Villanelle— a bit way out. The tersest, that normally becomes a quatrain only in the last stanza, becomes so in all. Also, the first and the third lines of the first stanza are repeated here with some modifications.

Villanelle | 02.10.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

O Thou Mysterious Bird

By whatso name they may thee call,
I still love thine myth-imbued name—
Bapaiyo¹, nor royal bulbul,
None else comes close to thine tall fame.

O thou black and white bare beauty,
Measuring a foot from the tail,
Black top, white throat, chest and belly,
Black feathers falling on white trail,

It's thine crest, blackish triangle,
That every bird-lover's eyes draw,
Still, royal bulbul's too regal,
It's Chatak¹ that evokes my awe.

And from far off lands do thou call,
Sizzles when Indian monsoon season,
You spend rainy months, autumn-fall,
And then ye prepare to return.

You breed here, raise a family,
Careen in close where water is,
Yet, what fascinates all and me
Be the resolve of thine and this:

That, ye no water ever drink
Save a few droplets that may fall
Straight in thine op mouth— so we think,
Or none till the rains again call.

And that seems whence cometh my wow—
For steadfast resolve tenacious,
It is this, rain gods to thee bow,
Why they be to thee so gracious.

Far from pitiable art thou,
Not wretched with holes in thine throat—
Unfair a guess that's been afloat;
But I know thou far better now.

Nor art thou dud to destined fate—
That whatso is passed not in charity
Haunts one in life sooner or late,
No, this makes little sense to me.

Let it whatso and howso be,
I shall ne'er stop admiring thee,
As has many a poet ere,
O for thine resolute mind's dare!

Bapaiyo1: A bird akin to royal bulbul, known popularly as Chatak1 in Sanskrit literature. It is believed that it drinks not but rain water directly falling in its mouth. The bird has been used extensively in furthering poetic idioms, and popular beliefs— that the bird has holes in its throat and can't drink normally like other birds, that it failed to share water in its previous birth and hence this punishment.

Musings | 05.07.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

O To Become Or Be

Every man does a life in freedom crave,
Be it freedom from ills of ignorance,
From pangs of poverty, pain of plenty,
Be it worries born of much abundance,
Or freedom be from sufferings and strain,
From deprivation and dread of disease,
From disasters causing the death of his,
Or freedom from this and freedom from that!

Freedom from bondage, from life's every let,
From time he's born till captive be to grave,
To become be then his life's sole mission,
O pulling free from things, from loads on chest,
His heady goal, and heart-felt obsession,
That oft dances in vain as futile quest.

And search he can't what's close— his soul to find.
No mortal born ever 'becomes' happy,
As journey ends, man destined is 'to be',
Happiness and freedom springs just from mind.

And pray what's happiness if not freedom?
Freedom from craves— even one to 'become'!

Every stanza in this piece gets shorter by two lines, in keeping with its theme. It also assumes freedom from any rhyming pattern, even need to rhyme at all, as some lines are blank, whilst others do rhyme at will.

Reflections | 05.12.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

O To Enjoy The Duel Of Duals

If days dawn with vigour and verve red white,
The joys of life seem joyous all the more
If nights are not tinged with darkling blight—
We oft feel— but grief keeps close to our door.
Stay thou clear, told are we— from dancing duals,
Let no worldly water wet, lotus leaf
In pleasure-pain, likes-dislikes, joy and grief;
I wonder still if they're untouchables.

Courage is born but from the womb of fear,
Failure fecund ground for seeds to succeed;
Man aught embrace the duals to be clear:
Life, like coins, comes a twain, O careful tread.

When in dilemma 'tween a twain to choose,
Embracing both a man would never lose.

nirdvandvo bhava arjuna, says Bhagavad-Gita; stay away from all the duals of life. Development psychologists also advise us to stay clear of all negative emotions, which they identify as emotional trap. But it is also critical in life to learn from the negative emotions. That is to have lived life fully.

And yet, a man who has made a long journey may be able to avoid negative emotions. But most of us must learn from our errors and faults.

The theme of the poem is serious one. We expect the Volta to make a profound statement. But the poem takes a tongue-in-cheek tone.

- Sonnets | 03.09.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

O To Give Man A Long Rope

With my leaves, roots and fruits I nourish,
And sustain with my breath, life with life,
Good relief from summer's raging sun,
And shelter I give every season;
The flowers when come and come too rife,
With fragrance of mine I soothe all strife;
I too fetch for them fruits and unleash
Seeds that sprout youthful roots
And a new crop of shoots,
More flower-bearing fruits;
Life lives on, for, we are,
No life can without us go too far.

Man knows this far too well,
Scarce hesitates still from swaying
His mean axe, chopping, denuding,
Ignorant as if he dwells in shell.
Perhaps trees should wear a poison cap
Be a Venus Man-trap,
To gulp this man of greed,
And as fruit bear new breed,
Call we may apes of good hope,
To begin a fresh then,
To evolve a good man,
What else but give him a long rope!

Man is fast denuding the green acres that give him life.
This is how, the poem feels, the greenery might be
thinking of men.

Tongue-in-cheek | 05.03.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

O To Give Wishes Words

Men hope women vouch their wish— but's nor ifs,
And wish, friends were to open up often,
Wives and live-ins would spell out clear with lips,
Parents want their kids to be more open.

If only we give wishes wordy wings!
For, vague wishes only frustration reap,
Let us decode our dreams' subtle meanings,
And on cherished but vague dreams lose no sleep.

If only we ask life what it would give,
That we know what we want and know to take,
Our prayers know what they wish to receive,
Let's be ready a Bucket List to bake.

If life looks like a terminal patient
On a deathbed, counting days left to live,
Her shadow shortening every moment,
Let's learn to stretch our time ere last night's eve.

Our dreams' desires do when deepest roots strike,
Our thoughts and feelings coax seedlings to grow,
Desired fruits would sure show one fine morrow—
Fire fuelling desires, like attracting like!

So when things fail on their own to happen,
Do try giving wishes the wings of words,
Words not vague and loose, but sharp and shaven;
Things happen when desire soars free like birds.

Life's lent to encash notes promissory,
And in trust, not suffer in misery.

Musings | 07.06.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

O To Live Life Of A Rich Man In Rags

Wow, living life of a rich man in rags,
Fearless like falcon let whatso happen—
Not of an aging hapless wretched man,
Nor of hen apprehensive hatching eggs,
Nor wakeful traveller worried of bags,
Of a contented man in joyous den!

Not when means are s-t-r-e-t-c-h-e-d to meet ends,
But where life's luxury is leisure,
Of golden sun shines, moonlit silver sands,
A life of refined, not raw pleasure,
Where joy lies not in leisure's length,
Nor width, but height defines its strength.

To be worthy more than respectable,
Seeking elegance, not raw affluence,
Good opinions, not influence,
Knowing that wealth gives a vain label,
It makes one stable, seldom able,
Oh to feel rich with a mere pebble.

The world we live in still rich enough is,
Butterflies dance, birds sing in symphony,
Skies dazzle for free, priceless comes cool breeze,
Where a child's smile's sweet like honey,
Buds blossom at will, spread fine fragrance,
Where Moon's silver lets sorrows no chance.

To search long years such happiness to meet,
And find it smiling right under the feet.

Musings | 02.09.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

O To Make House, Home

Bricks I've cemented with feelings,
Affection brought in laboured innings,
Pouring in my sweat-sullied blood,
Painted have I walls, blood in flood,
All this with lots and lots of love,
Made I've for two this little dome;
Now, if you come, live in, My Love,
Together can we make it home!

Musings |02.11.2017|

Aniruddha Pathak

O To Sing My Own Song

Searching I was in vain the truth of life
In ancient tomes of scriptures wisdom rife,
In woods and leas, on hilltops, at sea shore
Shrines, when life waiting was close at the door;
When, a deep dwelling voice within did warn:
O Listen to your voice; be to it warm.

Walk not to where will is willing nor keen,
Nor try a royal approval to win;
Chase not too choosy goals, hurdles from yon,
Nor run a rat-race of kind today on;
Take an oar that suits, arms your own to row,
It's no use following the forward flow.

Luck when deserved comes from a lofty perch,
Today or morrow; what use a wild search?
Hearken to heart your own, not to ears prone,
No use sounding a soul-less callous stone;
Your poem sounds sweet enough in your voice,
A borrowed baritone makes too much noise.

Aniruddha Pathak

O Way-Fairer

Do keep your hope alive
That goal shall soon arrive—
That a well walks up to parched you,
Feel not defeated to get your due,
That your joy should find higher pitch,
Your destination ye shall reach.
Keep hope alive,
But forget not to strive.

Musings | 19.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Obscurity

Bury thy being's all identity
Deep in fecund earth of obscurity;
If seed were not buried sans doubt,
Whence would come the new sprout?

- Quatrains | 16.01.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Ocean Of Life

Ocean of un-charted life
Of mystery rife,
Shore there's, nor beacon of light.

Haikus | 06.07.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

October 2nd, Rituals Rife

Many a tall landmark and trunk line road
Named everywhere are to honour him,
But who really takes to his creed and code?
'Pon talking high, how many walk his dream?
'Pon worshipping him with paeans of praise,
How many still walk in tune with his goal?
Many a prayer said on his birthdays,
How many heed to them with heart and soul?
Many a march and many a long walk
We tread in his name in wasted labour,
If we walk— walk his ways like sheep in flock—
To be seen, snapped for a boastful blabber!

Were his ways, visions vibrant still in us,
The values we vouch would be virtuous.

Sonnets | 01.10.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Ode On Change

Change weareth the crown of a king,
Look unto Nature— all its range,
Its law is change that looks no change,
Should the chill thaws not, whence would spring?

Powerful does prevail Nature's law
That I call a great law of change
Powered by its ever hungry maw
That pervades over all its range.

Yet, one thing O Change, on man's need
That changes with the change of time,
That this change often fails to rhyme,
Need cancerous when grows as greed.

And thou hast one great enemy—
A stumbling stone that falls in way,
Inertia of doubts somewhat grey,
Like sleeping dogs doubts never lie.

And so, when time is it to change,
All of world conspires to hate change,
Though it'd die sans progressive change,
Thou art life breath of world, O Change.

A thing that lies long may soon rust,
Water that would flow not stagnates,
So do things in time gather dust,
A thing that changes not still dates.

And there are only but things two
Exempted from this world-wide rule:
One's a fool, other's dead or due,
Change or not, the twain takes it cool.

Take philosophies of the past,
Take religious tenets and creed,
A following they'd once so vast,
The point is: change is today's need.

And Mother of all change is need,
A unique feminine ferment,
Howso great, all else is vain creed,
What changes not gets a big dent.

Most revolutions when they came,
Came because change had stagnated,
Let things lie not for long the same,
Storms that come not are created.

Art of progress, it may look strange,
Be to preserve ordained order,
Amid change O preserve the change
Amid stagnation, upholder!

Open up soon thine life to change,
Buddha said, look for rainbow's range
Of wisdom— may sound somewhat strange,
But it is no mean a challenge.

So, whatso ye like not, change it,
If you can't, change the way you think,
And there's no other way to beat,
Things do change, but not in a wink.

Not whatso in this world endures,
'World too would change the way I want',
If a changed 'me' should duly haunt,
One lazy oft his self assures.

And cry not that world not changes,
It always does and it soon would,
There's One Alone in changeless ease,
He alone can stand solitude.

Sure, you're not Him never to change,
Wait not for world your ways to bend,
Change from violet or orange,
For, change ye must— all spectrum's band.

And do know this brazen new truth:

Change comes not with a mighty heave,
It moves unseen ever so smooth,
No sudden axe may fall one eve.

Things change, life changes more than things,
Old order changeth, yields to new,
Change of habit irks, lay and kings,
Hope mints new order from tired view.

And change as a two-edged sword,
Preserves things in a changing game,
More things change, more remains the same,
He eats apple, keeps too— the Lord.

Ode | 04.12.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Ode On Love And Hate

O thou life's twain called love and hate,
What if I see you separate?
Love would be prime— no predicate,
Under the garb of love can hide no hate.

Yet, equal world worships both you,
Favoured nor frowned, eyes royal blue,
I've seen both wear a varied hue,
But world's nothing if not of dual view.

For, a day spared is, love to cheer,
Hate has widest field as its sphere,
Feeling free to hawk round the year,
If love is, hate seems no less to world dear.

And O Love, a poor prostitute,
In wedding garments looking cute,
Exploited when ye trade its fruit,
Thine esteem raped, ye keep will's voice on mute.

If love's graceful erotic art,
Emanating from human heart,
So is hate a product of heart,
But art there's not even of hundredth part.

Emotions of volcanic scale,
Love-hate— one's cyclone, the 'ther gale,
Spontaneous to hate or hail,
And life is either heaven, or else hell.

By stroke of fate may man rule world,
Or hated not here-to-fore heard,
To heal hearts try ever onward,
But cure may come or not, a whimsy bird.

Should hate widen gulfs of distance,
Should hearts cause it more to enhance,
Love fills up the space-time at once,
O Love, O Hate, thine seems a quirky dance!

Love's born if of faith, so is hate,
Love lives on hope; hate's no such fate,
Lacking trust, hate enters rear gate,
Ye both still suffer an uncertain state.

Siamese twins, O love and hate,
One leaves to let-in bosom-mate,
One dies its twain rules human fate,
The trick is to stretch love's expiry date!

And if there be life without love,
Life without hate whatso won't move,
Life's fulcrum, thou art central groove,
Man's very existence ye tend to prove.

And two sides of a coin the same,
Differing only in the name,
Man likes love and hates hate, poor dame!
Should one die, the other feels shorn of aim.

And yet, the day love's drained of hate,
Purest, it now reaches the highest state.

Ode | 08.12.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Ode On Old Virtues

Virtue, thou art old wine of vague value
Admired even by vintners nary more,
Nor by the adherents taking time's cue,
Ye decorate archaic ancient lore.

Watch new high-fliers that surface from shores—
Go-getters getting tonnes in rare offers,
Tiger stripes, leopard's spots of goodly roars,
Decibels made louder by fat coffers!

If these odd men were not open and out,
Would they be such a face they are today?
Would biggies and big brags be such a clout?
Would scandal-prone leaders rule nations' lay?

Their triumphs tainted get, painted no lean,
Can this wipe clean a single sorry trait?
Rare if success comes to a chaste Brahmin,
Commerce of big bucks makes for today's bait.

Flavours are felt all across fields sans guilt:
Be it movies, business, brands, even books,
Money's the recipe that whatso cooks,
Reputations from worst of ruins are built.

Careers are made, unmade by latest hit,
Best sellers lone take authors to the crest,
Dough drives like not else, may you grin or grit,
Old values make sense but to men modest.

Few can recall a MENSA-topping boy,
Who does not a five crore KBC1 man?
Money when sings the world dances in joy,
Bad-plus-big-bucks, here's a new crackling hen.

Let me not play tuneless in today's time,
Yea, some purists do get praised as Gandhian,
Yet, to be crass is no more such a crime,
Old values I hope are hailed in high heaven.

Whilst weighing values for the weathered time,
Let's mull on old saying: Thou shouldst secure
Safe income ere vouchsafing virtues pure;
Wisdom weighed more, values made pleasant chime.

Few if any place in virtues chief good.
Some go for health, power, or reach for riches,
Or honours, touch of pleasure that pleases,
Heart's no heart in virtues, head wears when hood.

Confucius with a list of values came
When values valued were at very core,
Many did talk of this eying some fame,
But they managed to confuse all the more.

Holy cows when at a premium are sold,
Poor virtue as species goes pretty rare,
In a world that today wallows in gold,
Old values get wiped out by this black mare!

Quiet virtues they say conquer world's good,
Yet, prayers of virtue in silence said
Nowhere are heard as by Lao-tse laid;
And clueless, confused I retire to brood.

Near home, digging unto our ancient text—
Mahabharata, a huge storehouse of lore,
And in today's times knee deep in context—
The epic failed to define virtue's core.

Yet, there seems but one thing to me nigh clear:
Virtue or vice, all else on death when fails,
This twain alone survives the soul when sails,
So let me virtues cheer and vices fear!

Or in today's times going in fifth gear,
I should my virtues fear, my vices cheer!

1. KBC: The popular Indian TV quiz show on earning big bucks.

Ode | 06.08.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Ode To Fair Lady In Blindfolds

More than a score of years get spilled over,
The justice logging bare a single lap,
The guilty still loose, large as heretofore
And on bail flaunting honourable cap!

The coveted court with a supreme clout
Vouching their wisdom as always too late,
Ensconced in legalese not once in doubt,
Whilst alpha bulls scale the wide ajar gate!

We all have often heard this hackneyed tale,
Told, retold over half a century
Of utter wrong legally on avail,
Black coats, white wigs in too little hurry.

And there are tacklers playing against laws,
And poppy-fingered pegs enforcing them,
Itchy-palmed busybodies with soft paws,
Together they mess up legal emblem.

And every such peg in legal domain,
And justice delayed even if done well,
Displaces a brick in utter disdain
From the edifice of justice we hail.

If justice delayed is fairness denied,
We may know it but not well enough still,
Perhaps courts are in search, and bleary-eyed,
Of perfection; wish there was such a pill.

And till invent we can such a fair pill,
I wish our weighed wisdom is humane more
Than wise, and delivered dry of vain drill;
Pray, precision's a sphere of Pearly Shore.

So cut down on needless details so dire,
And keep a keen eye rather on quickness,
For, minutiae legal maids tend to tire,
Too many fine points mend not, only mess.

How hundreds of witnesses vouch for wrong?
What pages packed with affidavits will?
What use judgments so erudite and long?
To me, they add to slow-paced legal ill.

Judges need not by jaunty phrase be judged,
Long judgments I think show lack of clear mind,
Long winding be the mind terribly fudged,
A mind in layers lined goes round in grind.

Fix a limit to all this needless fuss
And the result shall soon be there to see,
Earlier reaches a straight going buss,
Not one that winds, pulling stops so many.

More people only fill up extra time,
And more courts may be of marginal aid,
Simplify, shorten till it sings in rhyme,
And open up the blindfolds of the maid!

And one li'le thing if ye mind not Me Lord,
Good, ye have gotten rid of that white wig,
There's still me think many a twisted cord,
Courts still need to go a long way and big.

There are finest of brains working behind,
And the country's still proud of what has been,
But it's up to you your own bugs to find,
Justice largely given let it now be so seen.

Happenings | 01.06.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Ode To Pointless Piffles

Oh these pointless piffles in daily speak,
Trivial sweet nothings brought to life from brink,
An old peahen out newer plumes to seek,
A strut showing off her moth-eaten mink,
Over-used cants trying to get admired,
Words in infertile labour, too much tired.

'To be honest' of this lot caps the crest,
But he that at home and hearth honest is,
Seldom if ever need vouch that he is,
If not, honesty no more is honest,
Crooked is made a parrot's beak
And still sweetest of words can speak.

Next comes in list: 24/7—

One that works thru the week, and round the clock,
Claims Customer Care taken as given,
But Company Care seems a stumbling block.
'Value added' ah one more painful piffle,
The value it adds is less than a trifle.

'To touch base' is a pompous puffy phrase,
But in a world where substance yields to style,
Of synthetic smile and deceit and guile,
Peripherals are all one wants to chase,
Where product seems a much sinned against sage,
Business today is all about package.

And when man's lost even on the surface,
Details and depth weigh as last thing in mind,
Shorn of judgment in hurried pace,
Studied homework gets left behind,
A web of guesstimates is what he weaves,
And a 'ball-park figure' is all he gives.

Clichés that be much tried, and rather tired,
Used, misused, abused, as are undefined,
Stock phrases, chewed and re-chewed by tired mind,
That should have been long ere retired,

But circulated and recycled still,
They're a lazy writer's OTC pill.

A survey by 'Plain English' polled in India and seventy other countries listed Top Ten Corporate Clichés of the English-speaking world. The topmost five among them are lined up in this piece.

Happenings | 01.05.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Of Men I'm Not Sure

Roots rooted in mud
Lotus still stays pristine pure,
Of men I'm not sure.

Haiku | 02.06.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Oh My Timorous Heart

Wordless and vacant eyed she said it all,
Magic wafted, her eyes widely were lit,
A searching gaze upon me did when fall,
I put down all my heart upon her feet.
An early spring-like, her eyes softly warm,
Probed me then with some strange look of despair,
And sparkled still with rare magical charm,
Words silent were, lips sealed, fragrant was air.
I knew not then as now what to tell her,
Speechless, bowed down were my bedazzled eyes.
Even today, at my life's late winter,
Eyes soften at my worldly ways, if wise.
May be, we destined were to meet, depart,
Or Fate had spared me a timorous heart.

Sonnets | 01.10.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Oh To Be Hanged Or Hung!

Let voted houses remain hung,
Let horse-trading go on unsung,
And pictures perpetually hung,
But never once man shall be hung,
An edict 'tis of a strict tongue,
A firm belief and devout faith,
Man can only be hanged till death.

And garments all without a grouse
Are always on hangers are hung,
Whilst aircraft in hangars are housed;
If at all a sane soul is hung,
It can only be his portrait;
I've seen women fairly 'well-hung',
But well-endowed they are I bet.

The ways of words | 02.08.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Old Age And Wisdom

A man on grey side of his long green age,
With wiser ways and values he preserves,
Can scarce claim still to be wisdom-filled sage;
And oft wears a face he seldom deserves.

It's easy wearing a phoney image
Of Socrates, or flaunting grey-haired pride
That time bestows on a man at some stage,
Yet, fool's wisdom is not easy to hide.

An old age that comes with heavy baggage,
Seldom makes man a newly minted saint,
For, each age has a blank canvas to paint,
And man wears this painted page on visage.

As no one's old till he so realises,
So is wisdom that dawns, the man when dies.

Sonnets | 03.05.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Old Leaves Fall

Ripened old leaves fall,
Trees never shed tears,
But men fall in pall.

Haiku | 03.03.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

On A Judgment Day

First a dressing down
On a Judgment Day,
And then a new dress!

Haiku | 18.12.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

On Course To Kiss Disaster

A failed State with no sense of remorse,
Flaunting nukes, a far too-flogged tired horse,
How far can go a bomb?
No farther than own tomb,
All spent seems its help-me-or-else force.

No doubt, we are talking of Pakistan— no longer a cohesive State. They have for long arm-twisted USA, most of world, flaunting nuclear weapons: give us aid, free doles, or else...

Happenings | 08.04.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

On Parole

If not prison, life's being on parole,
A let of leave on oath, gratuitous dole,
A sole's sent on a shopping trip on Earth
To fill up life baskets, whatso deemed worth,
Whatso in dearth and lacking in last birth,
Yet, what we pile are trinkets of li'le worth,
In trivial mirth is lost all of parole,
We dither, dawdle on god-given goal.

And curtains call, we feel more than silly,
Life baskets lifted are summarily,
A new basket and a fresh shopping list,
Are sent back again— Destiny is kind,
But trinkets still are tricky to resist,
Man with a pair of eyes is still purblind.

Sonnets | 02.08.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

On The Wings Of Dew

Dawn's gold was when due,
In doubt was draped my dawn's dream
On the wings of dew
Dangling, utterly sans clue,
It soon lost its hue.

Senryu | 16.12.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

One Blissful Blip

Of heavenly worth,
Worth all pains from birth,
But a blip of bliss on Earth!

Haiku |21.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

One Bow Was Keen, One Unseen

His bow to the monarch was no mean,
To dragon's might as mute as unseen;
And signal came unfurled
To the bi-polar world,
There's reason for us to see nigh green.

President Obama's bow to the Japanese Emperor was rather too deep; excessive, many might think. There were no such apparent bows in China, his next stop. But he returned home almost empty-handed, offering too many concessions: Visit of Dalai Lama postponed; Tibet declared as part of China; China's role in Indo-Pak dispute conceded; and many on the economic and trade fronts. And all this while India kept getting homilies and lip-service!

-Happenings | 05.11.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

One Mortal Man To Another

One mortal man to another,
What I oft wonder can offer,
Whatever man deserves to get,
God, God alone may one day let.

If searching art thou for a spring
Season in scorching heat of June,
Or for a fresh cool stream flowing,
Repent shall thou by turning noon.

Look unto thine life weary man,
Look, Lady Hope's face truly wry,
Come close, take a keen look as can,
She has made bravest of men cry.

If ye think life is but a song,
Think of a monsoon melody,
Elegy 'tis and lament long,
Or is a mournful tragedy!

The theme of life, emotion lent,
Awashed with tears of weariness,
Seen thru soiled lens of sentiment,
How can lasting happiness bless?

And life is like walking on grass—
Tentative steps of rabbit feet,
Veering walk on to path concrete,
In care of green grass ye must pass.

Beware, life's beauty lies in mind,
Forget fancy's painted portrait,
Grey bodies on graves as are lined,
Life cometh with best-before date!

And man's cruellest culprit— his mind,
Who, could have been his bosom friend,
When turns into foe, worst of kind,
Ye can't trust, fair justice to hand.

Ask me not of its friendship's fate,
Ask me not of the story's end,
I have few fair words to relate,
Soul alone stands as man's sole friend.

Beaten by life's venomous snake,
Lost in love, fight-less, life at stake,
What can a man to man offer?
What boons a be-cursed can proffer?

Musings | 03.09.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Only Kiss Can Tell A Flute

The sculpted form might still be cute,
When kissed you find a fulsome flute.
To him that plays knowing not how,
Far better may sound an owl's hoot.
Metaphors thrown in for a wow
Seem like metre fitted in foot;
One can't be a classical cow
Dressed dandy, shaggy and hirsute,
Nor yet spiritual wearing jute,
Know this well and know absolute.
If one were musically mute,
Never would help the best of lute.
Intending to reap best of fruits,
Go invest right from now in roots.

Ghazals | 10.08.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Only Nature Can

From yon of the park
The dawn dawns from dark so stark
And day makes its mark.
Only nature can so steer
Without changing gear!

Senryu | 01.01.2019 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Op Eyed We Look, Closed Eyes See

The wide world all so vast here to charm her,
Life's younger half all lost in sightless dark,
All wonders were here, here as never ere,
God's gift of eyesight, ah what a bright spark!
Rare sights plain things were—take soapy lather,
Take cleansing kitchenware, ah what a thrill,
Rainbows mere words ere, more than dreamt ever,
Life unfolded by sight— ah what a deal!
A movie in motion in front of eyes,
She spent hours on end looking from windows,
And shopping trips, ah world tours in disguise—
World imagined only ere, now follows.
What marvellous gift ah this pair of eyes!
Yet, wide-eyed we look; closed, wonders arise.

Sonnets | 03.10.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Or A Lifetime's Not Enough

If early dawn fills me with joy,
The noon melting up all my buoy,
The shadows as the day unfolds
An unknown sway on my mind holds.
How many minds a man exudes?
As many as perhaps his moods,
Or as many as his thought waves,
As many a colour he craves.

Clueless, I try mind to suppress,
But it revolts with a shock rude;
Yet, if looked at as mere witness,
No attitude, it's such a dude!
A clue's enough to know the mind,
Or lifetime in vain one may wind.

The soul within might be the real 'I'. And yet, man spends all his lifetime in trying to know its pretender, the ego; call it mind.

Sonnets | 09.11.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Orphans From The Womb

In a ward for infants and newly born,
Silent sat young mothers rocking the 'rose
Of their eyes' to sleep, some with worries torn,
Their new born wait whilst to be cuddled close.

There too is this Ma who among them lies
Sleepless, next to a vacant whitish cradle,
No sign of sleep anywhere in her eyes,
Impatient, waiting to go sans saddle.

But long and lonely still her wait might be,
And gruesome gets the wait for child, oft crude,
In a secluded ward this mom can't see,
For an adopting home, hailing mom-hood.

We live in a world wanton in her ways,
Parenthood pinned on a long pilgrimage,
For an alms of a child fasting long days,
Unwed moms whilst feel imprisoned in cage.

Even mothers from no poor parentage,
Leaving the fruit of lust as nameless face
On footsteps of a lonely public place,
Oh, signs of changing values, times and age!

Oh well, this happened all thru and ever
Since and even before Kunti¹ set sail
Her child of curiosity in river,
A Sati, her repute never did pale.

But there are better ways upon our hand—
Use of medical means, to terminate
The hapless life ere too late 'tis to mend,
Or stopping seed of lust right at the gate!

But long as orphans be of wombs, of sin,
There would remain odd cradles of trash bin.

Kunti¹: The mother of Pandu princes of Mahabharata fame. She set sail her son,

Karna, begot from Sun god in river, and raised by foster parents. This piece narrates the story of an unwed mother waiting in a maternity ward; her newly born child in a secluded ward awaiting adoption so that she can return light of unwanted responsibility. It depicts signs of times.

Happenings | 12.02.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Pain's The First Gain

Would this pain to eternal life transform?
Yea, bow down to pain, humble and bent-head,
Hopeless now, it'd one day be potent norm,
Its touch does transform buds to blossoms red,
Take your every pain to its new meaning
O man, meek made of mind that scarce can ride
On waves, crying helpless on storming tide,
Take troubles to their ultimate unfolding,
For, means more meaningful are than the end,
Moving on matters more than journey's end.
The art of life is not avoiding pain¹—
Nor its predominance be `pon pleasure²
Punishment, perhaps endurance raiser,
And if so, mankind sure should be much sane;
Or else, why must a new born suffer pain?
Why's he delivered? Pain is the first gain.

-
1. The art of life is the avoidance of pain.
– Thomas Jefferson, To Mrs Cosway, 1786
 2. The preponderance of pain over pleasure is the
cause of our fictitious morality and religion.
– Friederich Nietzsche, The Antichrist

- Sonnets | 06.01.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Parish That Thought I'm Prude

What's good and not, a wild wail in wood,
Nudity as art be or not crude,
Yet, a way down-right lewd
If logo is tattooed
On manhood, parish that thought I'm prude.

A forty something German man won a prize of £ 20,000 worth of Mini Cooper for getting its brand logo tattooed on his manhood in a live radio contest. Listeners heard him squealing as a female presenter looked on. There was many a crazy stunt, many a desperate act, many an actor contesting, and he won the car by a narrow margin. One would think the man who won the prize must be an odd crazy freak. But no, he was in vast company! But it is a progressive world we live in.

Happenings | 06.01.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Parting

The red sun yielded to evening,
How should I spell out your parting?
The dark looked light fair when you were,
Bright days now look like nights darkling.
Imprints of your presence so rare
Carved is in heart, all your being,
Your absence would strike like lightning,
Pen on paper words feel wanting.
Emptiness peeping from rear view
From bike's backseat when I see you,
Fresh green blossoms from nowhere beam,
And now with then analysing,
Wonder if my life's swan could swim,
All frozen thoughts should start melting.

Musings | 06.12.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Passion When Eludes My Pen

Passion's fervour eludes when my pen's clip,
I cajole, nor caress that it pays heed,
Nor go halfway with a hand of friendship,
Nor yet work hard weeding unwanted weed.
I keep instead stoking the dying fire,
And oftentimes weeds have ways to inspire—
As often as they make me much perspire,
It keeps nigh young my pen's aging desire.
I try to rest rooted in discipline,
That my mind's wanderlust stays ever wild,
That raw curio of a child remains piled,
It helps me keep my inner garden green.
That I take a sea-farer like dive deep
And hope one day a rare treasure to reap.

Sonnets | 04.01.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Past, A Promenade

A nice thing past, what a promenade!
Past is no psalm read and repeated,
Visit it and return,
Get enriched, from it learn,
Reference made leave it, walk ahead.

Future, a dreamland

And future, what else but a dreamland,
Sunny vision's land, but no God-send,
Never should ye stay there
In its rarefied air,
Fine, if used as a third helping hand.

Present, a gift of God

Life's lived well if lived in the present,
Heavenly gift is it— a present,
Waste no time in dead past,
Nor in future not cast,
Know thou this: NOW lasts a mere moment.

Musings |03.08.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Paths Are Paths—right Nor Wrong

In this labyrinthine strange world of thine,
Of lanes and bye-lanes, I may make or miss
The path that leads me to right, path of bliss,
Which, when I opt for, hurdles seem to line
Up; to my left deceit and doubt do hinder,
Compelling me to turn where I'd ere gone,
Or worse, stand still clueless my act to mourn,
Whichever way I go, goes a grave blunder.

Embarrassed of embarking on many
A mistaken lead, burnt fingers, tired toes,
I've a self-taught lesson learnt uncanny:
Paths but paths are; no one right or wrong goes,
One that weaves no waves in your tranquil lake,
Simple and straight, be the path aught one take.

This sonnet has been born of my discomfort of living in an increasingly intolerant world.

Sonnets | 22.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Patience, My Mind

Slow, slow impatient mind,
Slowly does world unwind,
You may flood the garden,
Fruits come but in season.

Dheere, dheere re manaa,
Dheere sabkuchh hoy,
Malee sinche sau ghadaa,
Rtu aave phala hoy. - St Kabeer

Translations |16.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Paunch And Launch Of Manhood

A symbol of esteem, of man's mood,
Hid hind hilly haunch, what bother-hood!
And the scene under paunch
When at the point of launch
Goes off sight, gone is mirth, gone manhood.

This piece sympathises with men who can't see their manhood. A study done by a consultant sexologist and fertility specialist finds that there are many men unable to see their proud possession hidden under protruding potbellies— a 'buried manhood syndrome'. This apart they suffer from low self esteem, acute depression, and emotional distress.

Happenings | 09.03.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Peak-Less Path Up The Hill

Should world a fitter place is to live,
And better gets by the passing day;
If we keep earning more, eat better,
Live haply much longer than before;
If rich get richer and poor push still,
Its graph's paced faster for five decades
Than in five hundred that preceded;
Healthier are we and taller nigh,
Freer ever in all history;
And consume ever more calories,
Watts horsepower, gigabytes and square feet,
Megahertz, air mileage, miles per lit;
We get best of things from distant shore
Anywhere, global trade at each door;
Luckiest lot ever born are we,
Freedom, peace, or leisure time let be,
Or learning, Medicare, travel clime,
Yet grumbling in gloom, why's there no rhyme?

Prosper more, pathetic more, still get,
Invent more, e'er more enabled still,
Becoming better off than e'er yet,
Where's the catch? Where still is the evil?

At the end of the first stanza the piece asks, 'Why's there no rhyme?' And still, around the point it introduces the rhymes in the lines. The progress the world has made is beyond doubt. Yet, something is amiss.

In his book, *The Rational Optimist*, Matt Ridley argues that the world has become a better place to live than ever before. This peace takes off from him.

- Reflections | 11.07.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Pedestal Still A Prison Is

Beware of a perch lofty you might call.
Marbled pedestal, howso tall be still,
A prison is shorn of a red-brick wall,
And condemned is to live a life of chill.
A granite chunk not yet sculpted as bust,
Lives in hope of endless potential—
Chiselled, nor yet on a pedestal just—
A sculpted one's in prison perennial.

Many a man so installed do I know,
Who little if at all lifelong e'er grow,
Seated cosy whereso are mounted so,
From chair's false prestige easy do they fall.
Be they made of stones, bricks, whatso as wall,
Pedestal's still a prison in a hall!

Sonnets | 05.08.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Penning A Poem

At times trying to pen a poem,
A wordless plea on blank paper I'm—
One with a begging bowl,
In hands held hapless soul,
Foliage, flowers nor fruits— trunk and stem!

Reflections | 07.08.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Perfect Pause

The right word strikes with a rare force,
It has balance, it has repose,
Pointed a man of prose,
Yet, few can match the mighty horse-
Power of a pause perfect,
Highlighted a poet!

Reflections | 01.07.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Perhaps Man's Not He Was

Kites climb up high against blowing wind,
Fish against the flow swims, not behind,
If struggle makes man rise,
Never a compromise,
Despair still some before a way find.

Easy can a roadblock make man pause,
Getting stuck in his style whatso cause,
Struggle makes Nature rise,
Man's nature— compromise,
Perhaps man is not what he ere was.

Tongue-in-cheek | 03.07.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Perseverance

When we try once, and hit that one,
A chance is it of heaven;
When we try n times hitting none,
And get it right at n plus one,
O know it at once
It's perseverance.

Reflections | 05.06.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Persistence Wins, Not Arrogance

Adamant, rocks give the river no ground,
Their rocky pride blocking her farther down,
But sure does she flow, fume nor yet a frown,
In coolest confidence she turns around;
Quiet this war of nerves goes on for long,
No short sprints, she runs a long marathon,
A starting whistle nor yet closing tong,
Quiet does the duel go ever on.

Let stubborn rocks commit their stony sins,
But sandy proof shows up in river bed,
Inch by inch, chip by chip they lose their stead,
She, yielding to the obdurate still wins,
To win the war of life, vie with the long,
Lose battles, but wait for the winner's gong.

Sonnets | 04.02.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Perspire Ere Ye Get Inspired

And struggling I was from early morn,
Before the birds ventured out a singing,
Somnolent and tired still the yawning dawn,
Over anxious to get some opening,
Hoping, hope eternal would deliver
My thing duly gift-wrapped in grey silver.

But nor came light, nor it killed ignorance,
In hope I waited all through restless day,
All evening, despairing day when gave way
To night that came with same stony silence
Which said: what ye look for can sure be out,
If rid art thou of a niggling old doubt.

Muse inspires, even conceives but can't sire,
Man must perspire for apple of desire.

Writer's block is quite common to all who write, especially poems. Early dawn's dream gives some opening baits, but not quite. And you await your muse ever since. This sonnet is born from such prenatal pangs.

Sonnets | 07.01.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Phoenix Arises From Ashes

Like enemy behave when your close friends,
Like unwelcome guest lingers when ill fate
With not a hint of its departing date,
Enemy's enmity when never ends,
When your heart truly pines but deemed as wails,
Most astute of your acts when come to naught,
And seeds sowed ere fail to sprout as ye thought, When your fervent plea too like
all else fails,
To hell when turns what was heavenly place,
You feel six-feet-underneath be your space.

Yet, hours before sunrise darkest may seem,
Phoenix arises only from ashes,
Wait, auspicious may turn a darkling dream,
Ere monsoon winds reigns summer's scorching lease.

Sonnets | 01.12.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Phones And Their Phoney Fluff

Mobiles, bright stars, brainy by far,
In hand, pockets, no small pests are;
In today's times make sense—
Thin line— sense from nuisance,
Pubs bars are, but what do they bar?

When walked in, were a good servant,
A master now so arrogant,
So pull their phoney fluff,
O man, do call their bluff,
And just as ye bid make them bent.

Let's not fault techno-tools' new breeze,
Let new skills, know-how, knowledge please,
Technology is ease,
Let new tools and toys please,
Need there's none to bend down to knees.

Let them shrink miles, make man mobile,
Should we wilt to their wonted wile?

Tongue-in-cheek | 01.04.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Phones: There Was Time When

A feature phone nor yet was smart,
Nor had a store of memories,
Nor could it claim state of the art,
To it still go fond reveries.

A time it was you come home when,
And enquire if someone did call—
A caller list was handed then
In a note pad that hung on wall.

And yea it was such nice feeling
Of being wanted in a world,
Your steps might well acquire a spring,
And what ease to call back unstirred!

Fine, the phone was not at all smart,
A big black monster it was in deed,
You would not for your life it part,
A long queue waited for its bid.

And precious was the Tele number,
Phone too big, wired and unwieldy,
Its supplier a cool cucumber,
With you 'till death or destiny'!

And privacy was out of port,
Availed nor yet available,
Like scrutiny in open court,
A corner's all you were able.

There were Hellos, can you hear me?
Literally you had to shout,
And earphones were not yet handy,
It was a virtual yelling bout.

Trunk calls were a special event—
Energy sapping marathon,
Or like a hundred-metre sprint,
For just minutes three you are on.

Or for an extra time you plead
That may not be always given,
And the talks were always hurried—
On extra time game lost or won.

And there were phone booths so galore,
Where you need to insert a coin,
A set procedure, tiring lore,
A long queue whilst waited to join.

And yet, there was phone etiquette,
A thing now of an ancient time,
No calls of Hi ho-hum in spate,
No calls called sans reason nor rhyme.

Mid-night calls calamitous were,
Else, whole house would come to standstill,
A pounding heart and gloom in air,
Till sounded is an all-clear bell.

Those were days it seems long time ere,
When phones never intrusive were,
Benign, though as a black beast known,
You them owned, they did not you own.

Nostalgia | 07.05.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Pleased Are We When It Pours

The massive clouds their white petals shed
And wombs of heaven get impregnated;
The maid, eyes black and mascara applied,
Clad in black, by rain gods is espied
Whilst roaming in a dark glittering night,
She glistens with the flash of thundering light.
The scene of this nightly sky
Make people excited nigh—
Two brownish nipples in heaven
On the bosom of a woman,
Pregnant with possibilities rife,
And dripping elixir of life
Pours on the lips parched and in strife,
And then cometh loose all the sky,
O pouring forth and no-more shy,
And no one then misses the sun.

At spring sun welcome is with pleasure,
Rain it is truly a rare treasure,
Let sun shine in those sun-starved shores,
In parched lands pleased we're when it pours.

Kalidass' Meghdoot (The Messenger of Rains) in Sanskrit is celebration of rains. We in this land of plenty of sun pleased are when it rains. Rain is the elixir of life here. Spring is fine but summer is not so welcome. It is only in sun-starved lands that poets sing of sun.

Musings | 01.08.11|

Aniruddha Pathak

Poem On A Parched Palate

Ravenous rebel maw, pray what use
Are poem's metaphors, what use muse?
Left to nurse a parched throat
At mid sea, raft nor boat,
There seems nigh little choice O to choose.

Reflections | 04.03.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Poem Translated

A piece translated
Heart has, nor yet head,
You bake cake, get burnt up bread.

Haiku comes from Japan. Yet, those written in Japanese, possibly the best of haikus, when translated in English, look like 'a burnt-up cake' as this piece says. A poem I feel cannot be translated and still be retained as a poem. The better option is to trans-create it in a different language. It is a challenge to keep its original intended meaning, its structure, and its poetic beauty.

Haiku | 03.10.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Poem, A Beast Of Heart

Poetry, what a unique beast of heart!
Words writ take no surrogates to replace,
Seamless the words fit with whole work of art,
Wilt one to wound her weary soul, her grace,
Change a comma, syllable to the least
And the beast goes breathless body and soul,
Tease it, nor tinker this touch-me-not beast,
A lady frail, she's temperamental.

Teacher art thou— training poetic pen?
Pray paraphrase her not in so much pain,
A pompous prose might try much as it can,
It gets none her soul, but body and brain.
Nor ever try a poem to translate,
Try and see if you can it recreate.

Sonnets | 02.08.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Poems For A Living

If ye see people fly— not a wing,
They sure are poets— autumn or spring,
Some soar high in thin air,
On paper with pen dare,
Their field sky is— not earth,
And none has enough mirth
To depend on poems for living!

Tongue-in-cheek | 05.04.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Poems Of Head, Of Heart

There's a poem hatching in heart,
Trying to surface, I try hard
Brick by painful brick, part by part,
My head as ever on the guard,
Trying to give the words new wings,
But child of labour hard if sings.

There's oft one regardless that flows,
Struggling though, striking with tact.
As rhythm that rocks ever grows,
The sound's born on the intersect,
And melody that comes to be,
The music is from depth of sea;
And when arrives safe on the shore,
Of head nor reason nor of rhyme,
More of rhythm, of divine time,
It comes from heart's deepest core.

- Musings | 08.08.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Poems: It's Bit Like Baking Cakes

Call it Muse or mood or attitude—
Search of good ending in fodder food,
No use your brain to rake,
It's bit like baking cake:
Not but what, it oft turns out no good!

Even proven among poets at times turn out pieces that are forgettable at best. I often wonder: penning poems is like baking cakes. No matter what you do some will turn out no good, call it muse, mood, or attitude.

- Tongue-in-cheek | 03.06.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Poetry And Beauty

That is poetry
So sensuous,
A mere earful she
Would make a poet's heart
To beat nigh rapid,
Candid and splendid!

That's woman's beauty
So beauteous,
A mere eyeful she
Would make romantic heart
To beat nigh rapid,
Candid and splendid!

Trans-creation of a Sanskrit subhashita:

Sa kavita sa vanita
yasyam shraavanena darshanena api |
kavi hrdayam vita hrdayam
saralam taralam cha sattvaram yati ||

Translations |13.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Poetry And Politics

Something sets me this ponder hard—
Poetry if pumps up politics,
Or politics trumps poetics—
I've seen many that see them as bard,
And some rhymesters and no more
That manoeuvre from shore to shore.

Take this now out-of-job minister¹,
Another, if I may, rhymester,
Palming out puerile rhymes,
Who thought poet he was ahead of times,
And claimed that he meditated
Thru poems and earned his grade.

Here is one more known for some valour,
Reciting times in gilded glamour,
And captive audience claps his fame.
One more writes verses of some value,
Reflecting in his chair's borrowed hue,
Yet, both could have stood well on own name².

Technology now a pen-pusher aids,
It takes compressing a few keys,
And lo, lines come to life in ease,
A jacinth jostling with odd jades,
Juggling with gems of varied shades,
If pen-pusher a smart poet is.

I'm no Plato poets to hate,
Yet, politicians I do lowly rate.
So, I feel of this fairly sure:
Poetry often seem to lure
The 'ther, but seldom is richer made,
Nor can politics earn a better grade.

1. One of his gems as a sample:
30 days,84 Tweets, /They say I've reached over 2 cr peeps,
As I am on this medium sold, /I gather all that twitters isn't gold,
Here I gather plenty insights, /From politics to basic rights.

2. Both were once Prime Ministers in India.

- Satire | 04.06.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Poetry: What Is And Not

Not when thoughts into poetic lines freeze,
Nor when prose decorated is like frieze;
Not when words painted are, and feelings pose,
When winter has warm wish to be spring's rose;
Nor when some beautiful images
Get captured in decorated cages;
When heaving hearts hanker to rule,
Heads hammer out young lessons learnt at school;
Nor as you see in this little poem,
When heroic couplets as if from deserts stem;
When lines are tinkered with ready tools,
And heavily loaded, look like mules;
Nor when old heart a mistress may desire,
Spent passion when burn in conjugal fire;
A poet that puns aimless runs,
In nunnery as if are nuns;
And alliteration's fine in limit,
It is like too much light needlessly lit;
Poems, not all but make-believe,
Poetry is no far from how we live;
Avoid schools where fresh wings are hated,
And minds are drained like fields harvested;
If you close eyes from what may surround,
And still can see for miles around,
Or with plugged ears still can hear all clear,
You are the bird that sings; you are the seer.
Thin line divides what is and not,
No art is it in school is taught.

Musings | 10.07.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Poets And Pens Have Writer's Block

Why does the modern art more than mock?
Easy can a paint brush than pen shock.
With penchant to draw swords,
Poor pen draws few rewards,
And must put up with a writer's block!
Whilst poets' pens grow old
Old paintings still get sold,
Appreciate in value as does stock.

Tongue-in-cheek | 01.02.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Politics

An oldest profession
Old as prostitution,
And with a mission
Strikingly similar,
And no less popular,
Nor any less uncouth,
Heard from a horse's mouth,
A rare true confession!

Tongue-in-cheek | 05.02.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Politics II

Politics, a kind of game of shame,
Pulling each other's legs the sole aim,
An odd set of raiders,
Not team, self defenders,
Game lost, there begins a game of blame.

A man in sixties is budding youth,
Prejudice mistaken be for truth,
All passion no reason,
Treason has no season,
Black's new white, eye for eye, tooth for tooth.

An honest upright no more gets sought,
Deceitful readily sold and bought,
All devil's advocates,
All Machiavellian mates,
What's nation's honour if need be fought?

He goes far and wide his chair to keep,
Drink of disgrace with rivals to sip,
To pose as patriot
In wildest dreams he's not,
No border he finds too tall to leap.

Keeping in mind the subject matter this piece is set in a Limerick form, a set of four.

Reflections | 05.01.2018 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Poll, A Punishing Pole

And after the landslide, there's a slide,
A bride won, but honeymoon denied,
Wanted magic on wane,
Patience as ends in pain,
Promises made, performance belied.

This is what the third consecutive by-election seems to say on the ruling party's performance. A lot of promises were made during the recent parliamentary elections. The people tired of erstwhile regime's pathetic performance gave the alternative a thumbs-up with a landslide victory. But after more than 100 days the regime has little to show on the promises made, and people's patience is wearing thin. No wonder, the poll has turned a punishing pole.

-Happenings | 12.09.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Portability

Amidst things that with men endure,
Get stuck as death for life, and now
Portable half truths if not pure,
That gullible go for somehow.

Not just mobile numbers for mobile,
Portable goes automobile,
Those insured and long as the Nile,
All, part be of a portable pile.

Man once mindful nigh to image.
But heedful of lucky number,
Bears loads of digital luggage,
A porter that loves to lumber!

Devoted he ere lived to names for life,
Which, he seems more now to numbers,
Un-portable his portly wife,
Plus politicians, pricey plumbers!

The royalty once had it all,
Save loyalty so hard to lift,
For figures' fidelity we now fall,
Yet, all we gather's flotsam set adrift.

And we in this land live in hope,
On promises like carrots shown,
But a hangman's hope's no long rope,
Like a dog we chew on same bone—
And the same number portable
The digital age's new label!

This piece was when re-looked in 2015, the last stanza was added. Mobile portability is still largely in name.

Happenings | 09.02.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Post-Truth, The Mood Of Time

If truth has its own thesis
That needs no emphasis,
And untruth, antithesis,
Post-truth perhaps is synthesis—
Untruth's sis, and a miss so famous,
Year twenty sixteen's pet amorphous!

If unstressed syllable's thesis,
The stressed one is known as arsis,
I need no stress, said thesis,
Untruth usurped all emphasis,
Her sis, a miss much-crowned,
Post-truth pouts a visage nigh frowned.

If truth a fulsome fact is,
And untruth though fictitious,
Still lives in relative ease,
And post-truth, a smart miss,
And collectors' prized fish,
That might one day be cherished dish.

We know, truth often silent is
Faced with dogged emphasis
Of lie, who an ace sprinter is,
Faster anywhere reaches,
Where post-truth ready to greet,
O welcomes it in ways discreet.

Post truth may enjoy a long lease,
In this New Year her sure bliss,
It'd live a life of effort-less ease
Judging from how the mood is.
It fits the times like a fine rhyme,
I'd say: post-truth's the mood of time.

The only hope for truth if there is:
A proven marathoner it is.

Post-truth was the pet word of 2016. If truth is multi-dimensional as Jain

philosophy believes, post truth is even more dynamic as this piece says.

Happenings | 08.01.17 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Potty Disparity

Parity, if there be such a bird,
Potty gaps won't stare at fairer world
That pays twice for this aid—
Use of blocks in bricks red,
That too with embarrassment suffered!

Tongue-in-cheek | 01.06.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Power From Cave To Grave

Man for ever soaked in power of the strong
Has worshipped what to his wishes won't yield,
Commanding the weak-kneed, committing wrong,
From brave world of barbarian battlefield,
Under pretext of principles to save,
Homage is paid to power from cave to grave.

He that rises to heights of stratosphere,
He that holds on to power— to heart so dear,
Afraid of honest peer, living in fear
Of losing, scared of laws to interfere,
Afraid, the flow of power might interrupt,
He, easy prey, to him doth power corrupt.

In today's scene— power caps in the power-house,
Where the votes weigh, anointing them to rule,
Hallowed who look in chair, powerful milch cows,
Bulls in glass house wielding every power tool,
And ready their pilfered power to disburse,
Sprout cronyism from a tax-unpaid purse.

And each power cap poison-prone a creature,
Each wielding an exaggerated view
Of self, though power's like an early dawn's dew,
Each grabs till grave and sinks to low stature,
And crying still like starving babes— 'give, give',
A hungry maw knows not but to receive.

But we that glibly put power to hell-hands—
Turbid hands of a power-hungry tyrant,
Rare if cavil, they might turn faceless fiends,
And prove unworthy of the trust ere lent,
Nor wonder why a facile face should frown,
Why he glares at others grown to look down.

We that should well know that power pawns pitfalls,
That, unbridled power should as soon vanish,
Pry to push up the same Peters and Palls,
Long as is power, there'll be rulers and ruled,

Long shall there be the shahs and the slavish,
Long shall the facile be frowned at, be fooled.

We know, power rules thru a credulous mind,
And roots out gentle virtues— seldom vice,
Greater the power, greater the grab from hind;
But voters scarce beware, a loaded dice
Decides; diamonds that dazzle always strike—
Beholders no less than holders alike!

Dignifying the meanest of the mean,
Magnifying midgets of smallish mind,
Deigning dignity down to scarce ere seen,
The lowly in exalted chairs are lined,
If power can intoxicate best of hearts,
I shudder what it can to vainest warts.

And laws are laid power to perpetuate,
In statute does lay supine power's last cue,
Brute majorities would not self abate,
Nor stop the slavery of weak-kneed few;
Power per se seldom should corrode like rust,
What does is clout, its sinful child called lust.

Beware; no power concedes without clamour,
It watches if people submit to more,
To know what more unjust wrongs to lever,
It'd last till resisted, pushed from the shore;
Loyalty to power lasts for a long spell,
Power and propriety seldom marry well.

Beware O much-ruled man, the strong may lust
For no power; rooted 'tis in weak unjust;
If man be power-hungry vainest of toad,
If his mind prone be to pride, power in doubt,
How much more would it be oh with power's clout!
'A slave in mind loves tyrannical ode'.

Man oft is power-providing ready plug,
A parent raising corruptible child,
Now bribing, gifting, letting pass a drug,
Under a cool nose are grave habits piled;

They indulge until spreads the pestilence,
The child keeps whilst taxing parent's patience.

As is power to too much pampered a prince,
Wine and woman, to bull as is red rag,
As bribes to bureaucrats have been long since,
Avarice to old age, musk to the stag,
Vanity to vain, to greed gratis grant,
To passionate, the lust for power's fragrant.

An atypical ode set in sestets

Ode to power | 02.05.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Prayer, No Petition For Pardon

Ye know, Father, I'm a prodigal son,
No father hails he whose mind's stricken,
Lost in life's litmus tests, of all fight,
A son that feels like a ship sunken,
Living as if in a darkling night;
I know, Lord likes repentant heart and head,
So I've come with a straight countenance,
Straightened, polite in true penitence
For all the mistakes that I have made,
As soldier in the battlefield of life,
I'm here, Lord, for a glimpse, your darshan¹,
And brought have I no petition,
I shall fight till my last breath is rife,
And confident with your grace, my faith,
Unbent, unconquered, till my death.

You are an ocean of compassion,
I seek no alms, nor pleading my case,
Pitiful sons that plead in vain you shun,
I seek your goodly grace, kindly face,
Only if ye should feel pleased with me,
Crops cultivated I seek to reap,
I know you've given me eyes not to weep,
But yonder horizons to see;
This is my fair and just view,
You're mighty great, agreed,
Yet, your son too is no lowly breed,
Bless me should ye so feel to get my due.

You have given the wide world enough,
Wind, water, light, ether and fire,
Sun and Moon, starry skies— entire,
Why, whole cosmos and all useful stuff,
I wonder what to give you, great giver,
Save, try and be your worthy son,
And yet, I'm no one-way receiver,
I'll see that my dues are duly done.

So, Lord, if I come to thee,

Heavens, if it's to keep me happy,
Just that if and when a mistake I make,
My steps waver, slip up or shake,
You'll understand as a good father,
That human I'm, not much farther,
Pray, be no Yama² with a punishing sceptre,
And a list of where I did falter,
Nor be a judge never to pardon,
Be thou a kindly father in my garden.

And I've a request as to where you stay,
Pray, let not your palace chief, temple priest,
Make a timetable, nor a list
Of who should and when to come to pray,
How can a Lord of world in prison be?
Your true abode is all of heaven;
As Sudama³ I confess I've come, you to see,
If not friend, let me be a proud son.

an1: For His holy sight, a glimpse.

2. yama²: The Lord of Death.

3. sud@m³: The childhood friend of Krishna, who came to meet his old friend, but did not talk of his poverty.

- Reflections | 03.02.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Prayers Are Pleas

All prayers seem packaged as pleas in veil,
Puja, covert appeals seeking pardon,
Whilst bandagi begs for heavenly bail,
The worship vies for vaunted place in sun.
Whilst sacrifice fancies choicest of fruits,
Charity seeks a firm berth in heaven,
Gifts get given to gain matching return,
And pilgrimage is tour, not made for roots.

Yet, bless me Lord that my hopes breathe alive,
I pray thee that in happy peace I rest—
Content in my luxury-laden nest,
Pray, let honey sweeten up my beehive,
And as ye may keep well-supplied my store,
I swear I'd love thee if so all the more.

When everything has become a business of give and take, prayers and worships can't be exceptions. There is no Volta in this sonnet depicting light satire tongue-in-cheek. What it says all through is made amply clear in the sonnet-ending couplet.

Sonnets | 28.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Precious, If Rare

A man once saw his yellow pee,
Wowed, can it make me prosperous?
Wondered, if what glitters gold be,
But alchemy found phosphorous!
So, all that sparkles is no gold,
Nor yet yellow per se is gold,
It is what makes things precious,
And what makes it so, rarity—
That, things are hoarded, held and holed.

Initially phosphorous was literally made from human pee. Searching for gold in days of alchemy, this new element invented shined in the dark, and was more precious than gold. But once it was produced industrially and in bulk, it was no more so precious. One might say:
Not what may glitter and glare,
Precious is what remains rare.

Tongue-in-cheek | 03.04.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Prisoner Is The Mind

Way up in my life adding years to age,
I picked notions that I for long did cage,
Which when wiser enough was to well think,
I cast aside steadily one by one,
The inner me when nodded with warm wink:
Tell me who does liberate feel, my son!

Constricting notions let loose when to flee,
Once prisoners of my mind were set free,
The jailbirds that'd put a jailor to jail,
Holding him captive in a bond-less bind,
In no time bolted freedom to avail;
Ah, prisoner was none but my own mind!

If to forget is setting my mind free,
To forgive should be divine ecstasy!

- Sonnets | 02.09.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Prisoner Of A Mortal Mansion

A prisoner art thou in mortal mansion,
In scheming mind, intellect caught in pride,
A spectator mute of their perverse passion,
Unable to act nor react aside;
Befooled, benumbed by raw powers that ye bless,
O thou unsuspecting suffering Self,
Thy savants mocking like mischievous elf;
What a price to pay to be mere witness!
And yet, be they savants, servants, or friends,
Prisoner shalt thou forever remain—
A poor helpless li'le soul until all ends—
Till ye evolve and reach thine destined plane.
Wonder, why need ye be helpless witness,
Assert, thine alter ego to suppress!

-Sonnets | 01.12.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Privacy Spilled

On losing chastity belt's sole key,
She called in fire-fighters to get free.
Chopped chuckles, subdued smiles
Audible still from miles,
And a lesson of life-time learnt she:
If chasing chastity
You aught lose privacy;
Eating apple pie and be guilt-free?
Eve did when chance `pon this,
Lost a life-time of bliss,
Man's lucky, there's on earth no such tree.

An Italian woman lost her chastity belt's key and was forced to call fire-fighters for help. Stunned, they could hardly stifle their chuckles while breaking her belt. Italian laws on privacy would not allow revealing her name. Yet, could she save her privacy?

Happenings | 13.01.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Progress

Progress has an irony of its own,
All humour comes with no Humerus bone,
A man born free and raised on a pavement,
When moves on to slums on rental payment,
Ridicule wrapped in mockery unknown!
But this is what progress we call,
Growth based on greed when shows no fall,
Debt gone bad; call it capitalised loan.

Happenings | 07.08.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Prose And Poetry

While prose limits, posits, pretends,
To narrow mundane meaning binds,
Fails to touch heart's deepest core,
Frozen snow blocking freedom's shore,
Fails when to explore new crests, finds
No rainbow shades, comes to dead ends,
We know why caveman chose to sing
Ere used speech communicating.

Yet, today's cut-and-dry world speaks—
Prose to touch base, a mundane need,
Poems to reach rarefied peaks,
Oft failing still poorly indeed,
Whilst imitating a dull prose,
The rose forgets when it is rose.

This unusual sonnet is set in tetra metre. The octave is rhymed: abccbadd, and the sestet efefgg.

- Sonnets | 05.09.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Proxy That Rules Prime

Ever since I married, became spouse,
Built for me family we call house,
Walked in hast a dour guest— dateless time—
Boss of house but valued nigh like dime;
The guest gave herself a gong called grouse,
The sloth now on shall be set in time—
Time not tamed shall be culpable crime—
Ask not why, common sense `tis called nous,
Feel cosy as can with me in house,
Much as most as if they be a mouse;
Most rules blessed are whether or not rhyme,
Discipline, let it be a sour lime.
Your guess gets good should ye watch my mime,
Proxy's played by my wife who rules prime.

Tongue-in-cheek | 04.08.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Pumpkin Roots

A town bumpkin saw something like tuber
And promptly felt, let a wise man decide,
Who in turn to reach roots dug deeper,
But let city experts the matter guide.

One felt he'd not enough time to decide,
Another focussed on a few details,
A biased man stuck to a single side,
One more was lost on trivial trifling tails.

Not sure, they formed expert team to work joint,
Look into every possible angle,
No beating round bush, straight finger to point,
But faltered still unto deeper tangle!

A farm bumpkin watching from far and keen
Then offered, 'why, is not it a pumpkin'!

As business executive in a few companies, I found myself on various committees and meetings; and with hindsight I now feel, more often than not such was the outcome.

Humour | 03.03.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Puppets On Stage

Enraged, we show rage,
If loved we show love,
Puppets on a stage!

All free, still in cage,
Few things do men move,
They look and turn page.

Haikus | 08.04.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Questions

Wonder, the world would be we find today
Had we had all the answers at our door,
Had the world been more black and white than grey,
Good, we've more questions than have answers for.
Thank heavens, man many a mistake made,
That many an answer turned to be wrong,
And solutions we sought were no sing-song,
In no shallow waters we had to wade.

So, let man soon all affirmations ban,
Let fewer sentences end with full stop,
Let's deal with more question marks if we can,
A full stop to me seems like lazy lop,
Let no stop end search, nor human progress,
Questions enlarge vision, stops them compress.

Sonnets | 04.06.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Quirks Of A Jaded Age

Two wobbly old men at opposite ends,
Hostile forces as if from rival poles,
At loggerheads and still affable friends,
Finding holes were their favoured pastime goals.

One, like a stork stalking for a stray fish,
Awaited his turn better life to live;
Another cherished almost a death wish,
Life lived if only for ever to grieve.

His second wife an accident of late,
His large brood he thought was born— him to rile,
Their aim tethered on each to tolerate,
He'd oft say, if only I were sterile!

How I wish there was a repellent coil
To keep my irritations far and out,
Or a concealed and live-wire metal foil
That kills them like mosquitoes in one bout.

His friend perchance but a shade better was,
With a late start in life, marriage and all,
Late grooming of fortune past a long pause,
He endlessly waited for sons to call.

None could sleep the never-ending nights well,
And mornings brought no rest, nor ever cheers,
Age was the sole ailment casting its spell,
It was this they poured ire on friendly ears.

The morning meets were spent old bile to wash:
'You look good for your age all life to sigh',
One wished with his waiting life to play squash—
The other self-cursed, soon enough to die.

'Scan these papers; is there any promise? '
And prompt would unfold his friend's veiled attack:
'Ye think life would spare you a pleasant breeze?
'Forget, your estranged son calls or sends check.'

Life too much was for one dying to die,
One boarding his bed, every single night
Wishing no more to see morrow's dawn nigh,
But dawns sure returned O to pile more plight.

His all-weather friend, a tad brighter-eyed,
Had his life put off for a vague morrow
That never came— his dreams had not yet died,
But they seemed to unfold ever so slow.

Each counselled each to be more tolerant.
Ill health makes one helpless, his life to rue,
And hoping for help is a futile hunt;
Old-age is infancy dipped in dark blue.

Thank heavens we are fairly fortunate.
Say, not yet stone deaf, nor helplessly blind,
Nor cursed with a failing forgetful mind,
Body's blest still with limbs mobile till date.

Look, I'm not here to hear your hack on life,
For, fretful sleep lets me forget no things,
Aware, alive am I of life's lay strife,
Not on life, I crib on its hollow rings.

Man miserable is not for his plight,
Nor yet happier still for what he has,
For, heavenly mercies he takes too light,
In not enjoying 'now' dearly he pays.

And when every hope dies premature death,
One is still left— that breathes with sure breath—
The hope to die that'd sure materialise,
O after falling, Phoenix-like to rise.□

Musings | 01.06.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Rage In A Cage

Play as if on stage,
Turning of a page,
I watched passing rage;

A captured image
As if in a cage,
And it felt no rage.

Haikus | 05.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Rain, What A Graceful Giver

Ah rain, what a graceful giver!
Bleaching green, quenching parching earth,
Still holding no giver's lever
A word's not uttered of his worth.

The wielder of Varun's¹ wet thunder,
Plundering plight by pouring plenty,
Slaying unyielding clouds asunder,
And job done, leaves in mute dignity.

The giver to every river,
One that nourishes seeds of life,
Quenching, cooling earth's scorching fever,
It's him that earth's with bounties rife.

Pompous a bit, patronising,
Whimsy of late, shy though willing.

1. Varun¹: The rain god in Hindu pantheon.

Sonnets | 07.06.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Rains: The Secret Of Life

Trailing I was a toddler kid
That chased a pretty butterfly,
And soon the sky flared in a bid
To shed its passion, and to cry
In joy, tears falling drop by drop,
Soon gathering pace: plop, plop, plop.

'Rain, rain', the child screamed in delight,
'Rain', I joined in; others encored,
Nose with fragrance, the scene with sight,
I filled me with the rains that poured,
And parched dry, scorched for long,
The land felt pleased after long wrong.

A few wet days and earth was paradise,
Ere a wasteland of dried up corns,
The barren tracks of bushy thorns
Wore a lush green garment cooling all eyes,
Soon the parched throat was parched no more,
And longing for rain soon left earth's core.

The fervent yearning as ended,
Her ecstasy no more rapturous,
Seeds in her fecund womb erupted,
The land in bliss looked just joyous,
Fulfilled, ready to sprout new leaf,
And lustrous green beyond belief!

Like rains that share secret of life,
Notso strikes hard on hidden strife.

The magic of rain, the secret of life is never so clearly visible as in arid land.

Images | 08.08.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Rare Earth

A mere glance at the blazing Sun—
The brightest star in our heavens,
Burning up its bosom in tonnes
That life on Earth goes on.

Look then at the silvery Moon,
Look at all the lifeless planets
Soul-less, they might be midnight's boon,
Revolving like aimless puppets.

Peering afar in nightly sky,
Look at any a lifeless star
Too hot but thankfully so far,
There's no proof of life far and nigh!

Now look at green garments of Earth,
Solar world's sole life-giving daughter,
Look at her nectar of life—water,
Marvel at her amazing worth!

Look at her unique size, distance
Amid myriads that one may see
She's the rarest of rare that be,
Look at her tilt, slant, and substance.

Now think of her shameless offspring,
Perhaps her saddest mistake of grave—
At great cost to nourish him and save,
He's turning to autumn her spring,

Unmindful of her mother's plight,
Unbent and still unrepentant
Of the impending gloomy night
He's caused, no hint he's penitent.

Garnishing greed, heedless he craves,
Digging up he's a mass of graves.

Man's search has found many planets outside Solar system vaguely comparable

with Earth. They may or not have life; we are not sure. Earth remains the only one and rare. And yet, man is out to destroy it. He would rather go to another planet at great cost, but not try and save Mother Earth. He feels earth is a commodity that can be used and thrown away.

Reflections | 01.06.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Ready To Reveal, Not Yet Still

Me-lords, why's justice shy to reveal?
Be like bikinied beauties— too ill:
Titillating from far,
Averse, close look to bar,
Touch-me-not-holy-cows like coy still!

The judges, especially of the apex courts, feel that RTI does not and should not apply to them. Recently, Delhi high court felt that the office of the Chief Justice of India falls within RTI periphery and that the information about the assets of judges should be made public on demand. The Supreme Court has gone on appeal against this— to a court lower than itself!

- Happenings |07.10.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Reason, Nor Rationale

All reasons when come to an end,
All rationales are made to bend,
No single point's left that be deft,
Personal attack is all there's left.
This may be the scene everywhere,
There's disgust-drenched heavier air.

But when it comes to you, my dear,
Reason, nor rationale you fear,
For, reasons in your favour dance,
And rationale, oh there's no chance!
And perfect harmony rules here,
And how can I forget, Romance!

Some marriages reach a rare height,
Not because, but despite!

And some marriages are truly made in heaven. There's harmony, but it is more
despite than because.

Tongue-in-cheek | 05.09.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Recipe For Disaster

Take a com capital— all and entire
A chief money bag caught on raging fire.

Imagine a one-way-no-return street,
With a criss-cross of lanes, an endless mire,
And entries not restricted as to fleet,
In such mess runs a red-line bus, Desire.

Imagine speeds if at all restricted,
Limited were but by the maximum,
Auto engines on a minimum hum,
And say, the cut off is hourly hundred.

And that the auto windshields are tainted,
The windows are rolled up and duly shut,
Curtains are drawn that light and view be cut,
And traffic sign has baffling orange shed.

Imagine there were gorges mighty deep,
And no one knew, road abruptly ended,
Nor that the City's highland was dreaded,
The bus has now no option but to leap.

And then this country's Bus known as Desire,
Brakeless, hurtling down a gradient of greed—
Shuddering to think of the end so dire,
One stops here, prefers no further to read.

And yet, the bus is rescued scratch-less safe—
Say, caught as if in TUFLOX fibre nets—
Oh to save country's billion dollar bets,
The World Bank had to bow, and IMF!

Ravenous hunger of one greedy land,
Forces one of world's blanket most free deal,
And recipe if needed we've on hand
Of a meltdown—today's red raging ill!

This is a tongue-in-cheek piece on financial meltdown and collapse of banking in

USA with world repercussions of 2008-09.

Happenings | 03.07.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Reflection

My dearest, my dream's wildest rage,
Today in a glass shop-window,
I saw a wondrous something,
Beautiful as was stunning,
Hard to define, harder to know,
And yet of immense value,
One-of-a-million rarity
That can rise in no gravity,
And which, I wished to buy for you,
But it was, dear, my own image!

- Tongue-in-cheek | 04.04.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Rejoice In Thine Own Richness

A Samurai to a Zen Master went,
Unhappy, Zen, not sword, claimed more esteem.
Look, Moon has silvery lustre, no scent;
Now look at rose that ever fragrant seem.

Comparison maketh man unhappy,
Why worldly goodness fails to enrich life,
Life grooved to presumed patterns most men see,
Not poetry, but see only its strife.
So, haply rejoice in richness your own,
Rose never envies Moon, nor yet Moon rose,
Behind their masks ye should look at men close,
And you'll know reasons for their muted moan.

If life gets stuck on to preconceived grooves,
Get liberated. Life is life if moves.

Sonnets | 04.12.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Rejoice, Small Joys Come Free

The joy of a sunrise, be it sunset,
Or watching blossoming of tender bud,
Seldom is found say in a chartered jet,
Windfall, nor yet if fortune comes like flood;
A bird that ambles close to where you sat,
Starts chirping as if you were an old friend;
A landscape lifting spirits looking at,
Take season's first rainfall flavouring land.

Take not small joys greedily as granted—
A wearing day winds with a warm shower,
Comes then from kitchen a welcome flavour,
I wish man were a tad more grateful made.
God's made many a thing mankind to thrill,
Be grateful, He's not yet thought you to bill.

Sonnets | 08.09.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Religion And Doubt

Religions may flourish— tenets in flout,
Or may survive— the very faith in doubt,
But there is thinking stout,
Within it and without:
They would vanish in the face of a doubt.

Aniruddha Pathak

Religion And Love

Man can, leaving religion behind,
Can live minus meditating mind;
But can't survive apart,
Aloof of love in heart—
Of the holiest breast of mankind!

Aniruddha Pathak

Religions

Cadavers of forgotten truth
Captured long ere in ancient age,
Kept imprisoned in golden cage,
And e'er since dead—dead in their youth,
Truth, few tried to digest, work with,
Much less realised or relished,
Now to the masses as is dished
Out as assorted myth;
Truth in its metered, footed beauty,
Every word captured as was heard,
Each singing like rarest of bird,
Looking winsome in captivity;
Its truth remaining still much blurred,
Behind bars, imprisoned, unheard!

And men not quite in search of knowledge,
Forget can scarce the golden cage,
Nor can transcend its beauty's rage,
Prisoner of every word bare,
From age to age eager to share,
The same long-rotting cadaver
That he fondly calls religion.
Bequeathed to each generation,
Promising for hereafter, heaven,
Each losing an essence from core,
Each getting rotten a tad more,
Ever the worse than never before,
Perhaps why religions so much smell,
Few knowing this still, such is their spell
For followers— frogs in a well
That reason with their heart, not head,
Having tonnes of hate and hatred
In green or white, or shades of red!

No, religion has ever opened doors,
Nor has it led believers safe to shores.
If religion born is from fears that grow,
As God invented was from loose ends,
How can pure nectar from it flow?

How'd oil drip from desert's dry sands?

But where, where's the escape?
There seems no deliverance from this rape
Of faith, as truth first enters head,
Appreciated, enjoyed, though dead,
Ere can reach a long waiting heart,
And stay there for many a birth
Before proving its worth;
Is there a way apart?

- Satire | 05.07.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Re-Living My Childhood

Watching two buds blossoming slowly by,
I scarce can think of an opportune time
To bring back mine that had long lost its rhyme—
Two birds when prime their raw wings, try to fly.

Two birthdays bridge the gap between the two—
She and the younger devil full of go,
While lady angel seldom gets fair due,
She better knows how to let the storm blow.

She plays pontiff on things proper and prime,
Of fairy tales half way more often left,
A chime here, else a nursery's half rhyme,
Most of which goes on, ah long warp, li'le weft.

And lost in waltzing leaps, valleys so deep,
Poor li'le devil would surrender to sleep.

The angel represents my grand daughter and the devil, my grand son.

Reminiscences | 04.04.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Remains Shall A Calcifying Shell

Moses, codifying commandments ten,
Used eight 'shalls' too many, no single 'can',
Sarkari babus still— on service rules—
Created cobwebs at the speed of mules:
In a schedule containing twelve odd rules,
Flagged thirty three 'shalls', these shell-shocked fools.

To Moses, shall was sacred will of God,
Nigh but writ on stone to stand all alone;
In Service Rules if one should find it odd,
I'd feel: too far has bureaucracy gone.

When rules freely flow as if on water,
To be stilled at will like Indian daughter,
Rules get forged and fashioned a flexi clause:
'But P.M. may...condone'. He oft has cause!

I feel glad there was no civil servant
To help Manu¹, nor Moses, and thank God,
Else, all his laws would have died redundant,
Yet, many still seem fresh like peas in pod.

But babus seem stuck like order of day
Till someone would revise the service rules—
Inserting a command in all schedules:
'And henceforth all babudom banned shall stay.'

Who'd still collar the cat? Not one from cats;
Nor one that fields, nor bawls, nor one that bats!
Till then we shall condemned be, ruled by rules,
And suffer fools, till we send them to schools.

1. Manu was the ancient law giver in the Indic mythology.

- Satire | 01.08.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Remember, O Soul

Preparing art thou when this world to leave,
Leave worn out vehicle lent on life-long lease,
When ye leave everything notso to cleave,
Relax O Soul; repair to end-less ease;
Time when to say goodbye to thine past date,
Body and mind, to intellect of thine,
When ye await a choice of change, new fate,
A newer bottle, say, and vintage wine,
To arise from old, rekindle lost aim,
O Spark from Infinite Luminous Light,
Remember all ye did dark was when night,
It's too late seeking grace for acts of shame;
Repent; regret thine evil acts of sin,
Let true remorse from all thine pores pour in.

Sonnets | 20.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Remembering Chennai1

High-pitched loud voice is not what I recall,
But devout neighbours chanting morning hymns,
As if their gods in far heavens were hard
Of hearing; and neighbourhood joining in,
School kids throat-full, bagful of books, Tiffin,
Women in jasmine, saris wrapped six-yard,
Clothes screaming colours, décors in extremes,
Loud birds—boisterous crows, drooling doves, all!

I recall season's rains— wet, wet or dry,
And sultry weather all year, humid, hot;
My dreams reach out and miss that monsoon twain,
To that ever present post-noon cool breeze,
To people snoozing to rest in cool ease,
To cyclones in the Bay bringing much rain,
Pouring pot full when not, paltry when not;
I miss lush green smile of coast, blue-green sky.

And of course, can't forget funeral bands—
Those dancing for the dead and departed,
Perhaps vouchsafing what the Lord did say—
That this death is but a change of garment;
Nor I forget the cool quiet moment
On beaches, nor the Eastern Express Way,
Nor yet simple folks with a thinking head,
Nor can miss morning sea's silvery sands.

Two more things will always with me remain:
The delicious cuisine, rasam, chutney,
Myriad delicacies made in heaven,
Whole of lanes smelling sambhar-lined repast;
Musical heritage of ancient past,
Their repertoire vast, well rehearsed, well run,
Taking you to a heavenly journey,
Making for me a unique Southern Twain!

And tongue, tough and twisting known as Tamil,
Oh past twenty four years still too mouthful;
Many a road no better than big lanes—

I never could divine—why be called 'high',
Save say Mount Road, or Rajaji Salai!
Nor could one explain without taking pains
Why a non-VEG eating joint as a rule
Be called military, snacks or full meal!

Some things grow with you as if part of blood,
And keep surfacing when memories flood.

Chennai is what was once known as Madras. I stayed there for twenty four long years, a Tamilian knowing little Tamil! The piece is composed in octaves with a mirror-like symmetrical rhyme scheme, ending with a couplet.

Nostalgia | 11.02.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Remembering You

You often used to come home tired
From a thankless yet hard day's job,
Looking for someone loosely wired,
And I stand in front like a stuck doorknob.

Rage bubbling in like pent up breath
Would make the guilty me struggle
Like a prey caught in jaws of death;
And my kid sis can't see looming trouble;

Ma in search of a soothing balm—
To serve a quick hot healing cup
Of tea, the rest try, cover up,
And fend as one team that things sooner calm.

On fire for long the cooking pans
Cursing rest, smug on kitchen shelf,
But mother's worried countenance
Oh finds it hard to calm down her stiff self.

My luck beginning to fail me,
My nemesis as always prone
To curry your favours for free,
She'd soon spill beans in their barest of bone.

As making new mischief was mine,
Punishing perhaps was your way
Of de-stressing on thankless day,
Mischief helped me recharge energy line!

So I'd keep inviting your ire
In disregard of your day's pain,
Adding my fuel to your fire,
The routine was set in repeating chain.

But I knew you loved me no less,
That punishing me pained you more,
You were not one love to express,
I still feel warmth of your love in my core.

As true son I know I was no different,
I didn't need to beat your grandson,
Yet, not any less adamant,
As breads, baked we're in similar oven.

They were my early school years. I was rather a hyperactive mischief-mongering, my father an over sincere head of a post office would take all the work-load as his own, with the subordinates delegating upward more and more. He would be home very tired everyday. And I would become the victim of his ire. To punish me had become almost a routine. But in the morning following punishment, he would feel somewhat sorry and shower extra love and praise to me. This poem is dedicated to him.

Reminiscing | 08.09.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Retired Husband, Tired Wife

When a man retires from working life,
That's when a full-time job gets his wife.
The job of a day's time
Rewarding rare a dime,
And as perks— life on edge rife with strife!

When I wrote this I wondered why it took me 15 long years to pen a small ditty like this. But it is hard on men to confess truth. I'm sure all suffering spouses must be feeling somewhat like this. Yet, to be fair on me, I get all along solid firing from the new boss— much more than I might have received all of working career.

Tongue-in-cheek | 01.05.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Revenge Not Taken

No revenge doth leave
Your foe more shaken
Than one forsaken,
One never taken,
And with a lifetime
Of unbearable burden,
Of unpardonable crime
All life, the foe's left to live.
A revenge never taken
O leaves him for life shaken.

Reflections | 03.10.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Rip Van Winkle

Caught was he dosing off in the House,
Laymen keeping vigil with grey grouse,
Yet, is not there a plan
Ever since it began?
Day-long dull, nocturnal goes the mouse.

It's not Rahul alone. We have had a dosing PM, and snoring ministers, MPs browsing on blue sites, even absent, late-coming, sleepy public servants in most government offices. Have not they all been dosing for the last six and half decades? And many more with drowsy wide open eyes. If not, how can we be in such a mess? How can our problems go out of control? How can our work ethics be so awful?

One can't help feel there has been a plan to keep the public asleep so that leaders can keep their eyes closed. May be, there have been calculated moves to keep the masses uneducated as well so that votes can be had from drowsy sheep; plan to keep them poor and in need so that votes can be bought. A ruling party has been punished in recent elections, and a new one is in power. Though it is too early to judge good days are unlikely.

- Happenings | 02.07.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

River, A Maid Of Poetry

She, born of height, cradled by lofty crest,
Mothered by mounts, and reared by little brooks,
Dancing down sprightly, a stream still modest,
Oft hiding hind hillocks, crannies and nooks,
In no time to resurface once again,
A new avatar, a wide-mouth waterfall,
Cascading down and in utter disdain,
Meandering river to be in thrall,
Thence, at long last to be an estuary,
Sprawling, shallow, wide-mouth and slower still,
Destined to embrace sea, fulfilled to be—
One, with option nor yet a free self-will!
No, no maid rushing forth to embrace sea,
She's painted so in fancied poetry.

Rivers are painted in fancy by poets, the most common being that of a bride rushing sprightly down to meet her beau, the sea. The plain truth however is: water flows down seeking gravity.

Sonnets | 02.02.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

River, Thou Art A Living God

Nor I the Lord know, sceptre nor His rod,
Ye O River, thou art a living god.

Like God, hast thou beginning nor an end,
Streams and flows that make thee no rivers are,
On meeting sea ye lose thyself to blend,
In sea, as rain remain alive for far.

Thou hast vast wealth within thine veering banks,
Amazon's width, thou art Nile's fecund length,
Vast girth of earth falls under thine wide ranks,
Thine kingdom is a valley of vast strength.

I cherish thine unrivalled fair design,
Careening course carved with immense good care,
To thee mankind returns, Mother Divine,
Those that can't, in comfort feel thou art there.

Fluid, yielding, thine waters benevolent,
Can wear off rocks to crumbs of tiny sand,
Ye demolish whatso in thine way stand,
Thou leaveth the rigid most to repent.

Ye preach mankind the paradox of life:
The mild is strong enough the strong to fell,
No weakling, ye glide over every strife,
Still humble that ye can't make oceans swell.

Musings | 02.09.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Romance With The Rains

Like a bride looking for love in her life,
Earth awaits rain god weighed down with water:
O pour in plenty, fill pots and potter,
Quench my parched flesh, deliver me from strife.

Helpless I hail, he hearkens not, she ponders,
It is the beau that the beauty should woo,
Wonder, what would I do, I've not a clue,
How I make him hearken amidst loud thunders.

But why, I can use my bewitching smile,
The flora, varied shades of verdant green,
No more pleading, let me win him with guile,
And he rained and rained until all so lean.

But now the earth's grey needing copious rains,
From this dilemma now the poor earth pains.

Earth an eager maiden is trying to woo the rain clouds. But like all maidens she is shy. Rushing, roaring come the clouds, and soon they will go yon her reach. Heaven did bestow her once with a bewitching smile— the smile of lush greenery she once had in plenty, but her green cover on the wane and yielding to grey, she can no more attract her beau, the rain god, and will get greyer still, warmer still, barren still— oh a vicious circle.

Sonnets | 02.04.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Roof Of My Patience Leaks

For which season can I in hope now wait?
When even rains find no room in his mind,
Though memories flood river-like in spate,
On what can I sustain, what support find?
How strangely unique be this monsoon season!
I try— try hard not to remember him,
But heart is no head to heed to fair reason,
Wild way-off hearts only love dreams to dream.

And why not, I still marvel at his love:
Time was when he would walk in pouring rain,
I doubt, he did so love for me to prove,
Truth is: I can't but wait, be it in vain.
Wonder, what pleasure love in monsoon seeks,
But season peaks, roof of my patience leaks!

Rainy days of monsoon seem to do strange things to souls in love, if this sonnet
is to be believed.

Sonnets | 02.07.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Sapiens, And Still Not Wise

This man in search of speed and pace—
Homo sapiens known by birth
And deprived of inherent worth,
Seem to run a hectic rat-race.

Evolution if calls him wise—
Grossly a charitable thought,
Reality shows otherwise,
Yet, smarter perhaps, wise he's not.

Rat-race letting him let, nor pause,
Nor ponder what plundered his peace,
Nor yet natural ease and bliss,
He no more is what he ere was.

Mere motion's not of action-rife,
By racing like a blinded moth,
He scarce can kiss the face of growth,
But that seems what defines his life.

Eager to mark his large footprint,
He launches thousand ships a time,
And dashes off in burst of sprint,
Not racing mad to him is crime.

Amidst plenty, most world lives lean,
Craving for peace this man weary
Ends up living life contrary,
Rootless he feels not in touch of within.

In race for a dream place somewhere,
With wistful, vacant, eager stare,
Running to chase, getting nowhere,
And tired, he grasps for breath of air.

On banks of a flowing river,
Running forever in rat race,
In unknown search of thankless pace,
Quenchless goes this man called mover!

Homo sapiens, sapiens in Latin means wise.
But is man really wise?

Musings | 02.07.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Script On The Cosmic Wall

E'en stones stand no test of time for long years,
Bare an inch a year, mountains move in time,
Her waters resting no fleeting moment,
Rivers cut thru hard rocks in a slow rhyme.

E'en Earth and her siblings shall one day die,
The sun wither, a bleak red star to bloat
Ere become a black hole to oblivion,
And Milky Way may one day wear grey coat.

Nor are atoms destined to live endless ever,
And though the soul immortal shall still carry on
When all Creation one day cease to breathe,
Futile it is to think dusk would linger till dawn.

And in a mocking metaphor of cosmic scale,
Man is condemned to live mosquito's meagre span;
But seeing rocks split, living still in shredded size,
Toiled he has all history to live long as can.

So, painters try and fight time on coloured canvas,
Sculptors chip on marbles to live on borrowed years,
Poets painstakingly chisel with chosen words
O to live weary on yellowed sheets as time veers.

Man well knows to decipher script on wall,
See Infinity fall yon cipher's pall.

Musings | 01.09.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Sculpting Poems

Stripped down to core, brought to the barest bone,
The chipping-chopping of a sculptor,
Probing the heart of a huge chunk of stone,
In search of a vaguely hinted figure,
Be poet's chipping of churning vague thoughts,
Imagining how the mused lady looks,
Linking up like a child the dotted dots,
Yet unlike cooking from recipe books;
The sculptor's strokes of love might silent speak,
The poet's pampered words might as well sing,
And metered or not, rhythm their own seek,
Each reader then wings in his own meaning.
Oft yet, chipped and chopped on a thankless day,
The lady seems to tell him: there's no way!

- Sonnets | 01.07.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Search Is All, Path The End

You are an undying distant promise,
A slow traveller I'm on foot,
Suffering separation for long,
Dissipating, to die on the way,
Seeing no end of the endless path;
In getting I lose thee,
In losing I deem my gain;
An endless quench and death of death,
Let this long discontent be life.
In darkling clouds His radiant outline
Comes to be and goes off the sight,
Which, I can't in my eyes capture;
And that faint Him oft shows and goes off,
Which, in the illusion of moon's magic beam
I search in every grain of creation,
And scarce can recognise still.

From mahagita by Osho, in Hindi

- Translations | 20.08.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Search Not Far And Out

I set out one early tired morn,
Before the birds were out singing,
Drowsy when felt the yawning dawn,
To look for what I was searching,
Hoping someone would deliver
Me a gift wrapped in grey silver.

Ere came the light killing innocence,
Awaited I all through the day,
All evening, the day when gave way
To night that came with stony silence,
Which said: what's searched shall soon be out,
If rid art thou of all the doubt.

Nature inspires but rare, muse seldom sires,
Man must perspire to get what he desires.

- Sonnets | 08.01.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Season Of Poll Weddings

Here comes the season of poll weddings
Alliances, armours and claddings,
Striking strange coalitions,
Crass consolidations,
Bed fellows strange in stranger beddings!

General elections are round the corner. The political parties have gotten busy making new alliances and adjustments, manoeuvres, and machinations, making strange partners, and strange bed fellows. It is when wild world exists amidst civilisation.

Happenings | 06.01.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Seasons Show Their Mood

Seasons show their mood,
We men sulk and brood,
Nature smiles in beatitude.

Haiku | 18.03.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Second Childhood

To lighten a tired loaded shoulder
And let go all of unwanted baggage,
To walk unburdened, breathing bolder,
It is to get back to innocent age.

Why else doth life give us second childhood?
To nurture weary self from lifelong drain,
To get rid of our deified hallowed hood,
O that we weather old age not in vain.

No easy still to be child once again,
A man slave is of lifelong memories,
It's hard to erase every wrinkled crease,
To wear child's heart if face is hard to gain.

Ere infancy unfolds in so much pain,
Learn we must to age gracefully, and sane,

A child as grows losses innocence. This is part of growing. Yet, innocence is bliss, and as they say everyone should try and be a child at heart. Old age perhaps gives us another chance to be an innocent child again.

Sonnets | 04.05.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Second Childhood Ii

One more youth, nor tooth,
Nor second chance in life's dance,
Just second childhood,
An old man in a child's mood,
An innocent bliss!

Senryu | 07.06.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Secret Of The Smile

A smile-wrapt enigma since began,
And a smile that came from no woman—
From model, Maestro's muse,
And a male as goes news,
A female-like and slender a man!

The secret of the enigmatic smile of Mona Lisa is out. An Italian art historian has claimed that the model used in Leonardo's master-piece was his male muse— a young, effeminate, slender man with long, auburn curls. They were probably lovers. It was a self portrait as earlier believed. The secret was revealed by high magnification technique which showed up an S, the first letter of the male muse's name.

Happenings | 05.02.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Secret Of Thine Smile O Flower

Many a shade, many a shape and size,
Many a delicate figure and form,
Ye dedicate life to cause of fragrance,
Thine beauty belongs to whoso has eyes,
So much life packed in less, long, not thine norm,
Long past thine life lingers blossom's romance,
And all this but with thorns as company,
Caveats, nor complaints thou hast any.

Far sweeter art thou than is pure honey
In thine bosom, and thine bewitching smile
Seems to beckon birds and bees so many,
A magnet thou art around a long mile.

How dost thou pack in short life so much punch?
We humans clueless are O for a hunch!

The octave has an odd rhyme scheme: abc/abc/dd. The Volta is held up till the last couplet.

Sonnets | 08.02.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Security's In Cloud

Hackers see thru an unguarded cloud,
And guarded shrouds dance singing aloud;
Smart frontiers face hazards
Undreamt by the web guards,
Clouds are clouds capricious— quite like crowd.

Hackers ferret out private photos, nude and all, of some glitterati's
In show business, kept in cloud computing sites, a routine practice
now. Yea, they seem to be smarter than the smart phones, their
users, and service providers, all put together.

—
- Happenings | 07.09.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Sedition, A Child Born In Doubt

I've never seen a word of greater clout,
Nor one, more passionate to creed a child,
Sedition is an offspring born in doubt—
No motherhood me think is more reviled.

As fruit of lust— born she was of a Greek
Descent called 'stasis' reeking of stalemate,
Strange, but the word reeks of 'revolt' if meek,
So, confusion confounds 'tween mom and mate!

Or may be she has a Latin descent,
'Seditio'— turning to self, to one's heart,
In tension to move farther, far apart,
A twain of moms never in agreement!

For long a fond child of mom-land, England,
Abandoned there, but fostered in this land.

In India the law against sedition has a colonial legacy. The word itself has doubtful and conflicting etymology. A democracy should have no place for sedition, as preservation and status quo are against the grain of the rule of people. In democracy, change should always be welcome. This poem highlights the conflicting parentage of the word. The last two lines allude to the fact that Britain, where the law of sedition was first born, has repealed it altogether after long vacillation. So have many countries. India is still in two minds, thanks to our two-mouthed politicians.

Happenings | 03.03.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Seduction Of A Single Drink

It's like a new dish tabled, not tasted,
The world of what can be in a mere wink,
A date is it of young dreams not dated,
Such is seduction of my single drink.
Flavour revealing taste to waiting tongue,
A daughter-in-law's first step at the door,
A new born son hinting what lies in store,
A drink that ensures wild dreams die not young.

To him whose muse for more is smitten not,
Whose musings come on wings of wild fancy—
Nor lost are on passing poetic thought,
What's bottleful when enough a sip be?
No dear, one drink is not downed by devil,
It warms enough of long chill; whets my will!

When she asked me one day, what I get out of just a single drink, this sonnet was my answer.

Sonnets | 02.06.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Seek Not And Ye Shall Be

Live life as if a breath of soft fresh breeze,
Go with its flow, let it and resist not,
Care, the present moment is fully caught,
And bring not the moments gone, back on lease.
So said, I sought the fleeting-now to seek,
Tried be there with the moment's filling pot,
Tried build my now, brick by beatific brick,
Yet, fleeting moment was mine fully not.

May be, seeking is like lusting for fruits,
I found me Self-seeking, yet getting not,
Life being a journey in search of roots,
The failure had me as if mid-sea caught.
Road to being may pass thru becoming,
O search nor seek, the key is in being.

Sonnets | 04.07.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Seen By Many, Known By Few

By many a man seen, known by few,
Came on like a comet, bolt from blue,
To love a president
Rest of life to repent,
Now hates be a wide-eyed twenty two!

At 41 today, Monica Lewinsky does not want to be twenty two again. For, she was shamed, humiliated, called 'that woman', and gawked at in her twenties like no other girl. She had made a mistake of loving a president of US while she was a White House intern. But who at that age nary a mistake make, she has gathered courage today to unfortunat girl, seen by many, known by few, understood by fewer still.

Happenings | 10.03.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Select Memory

I may recall poor what someone once said,
But I make sure people for this lapse pay,
Nor I forget what they should not have said,
Quoting and misquoting I make my way.
And when stuck, I'm afraid,
Between black-white there's grey.

Tongue-in-cheek | 02.02.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Sense Of Humour

A man laughs when a tad far too aloud,
Well ahead of the approaching punch line,
The joke's when still misty behind a cloud,
His sense of humour's shorn of any shine.

And if the laugh should struggle to be out
Minutes and miles past belaboured punch line,
And too late when the joke is not in doubt,
The sense of humour's obtuse, asinine.

But subtle when starts a smile, if not laugh,
That clearly pre-spots the potent punch line,
The joke's when on its journey barely half,
The sense of humour's doing more than fine.

But that sense of humour oh what to call,
That laughs— the joke hardly at door at all.

Sonnets | 05.06.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Serendipity

I tripped and fell into a life boat,
And for no reason made a scapegoat,
The ship captain cavilled
When on the mishap grilled;
Ah what an alibi, what a quote!

I tripped to end up in a lifeboat, Francesco Costa Concordia, the captain of the ship said when asked, why he abandoned his sinking cruise liner wherein many passengers died.

Happenings | 04.01.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Set Your Boat Along Mine Afloat

Let the lamp lit by me, my friend
Brighten up your life's troubling dark,
Let sun shine from behind a bend
O leaving out its scorching ark;
Should cold shiver run in your heart
Come close to me under my care
Leaving all else in life apart,
Ready am I my warmth to share;
You by my side as I'm with you,
Let's give each other love, give rife,
Radiant but soft as dawn's dew,
What if this dew's lost by sun's strife?
Let's not just hope to wipe our tears,
Let our mutual love them prevent,
Together let us add long years
To life, let hours look like moment!
Let me full faith in you devote,
Just set your boat to me afloat.

Musings | 02.02.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Shades Of Spirit

In winter she wears white,
In spring sharpest of shades,
Comes summer, yellow red shows bright,
That in monsoon fades,
Comes autumn and all that's gay
O slowly turns to grey.
Nature loves to flaunt it—
It wears the shades of her spirit.

Reflections | 04.10.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

She Wants For Her A Wife

Now that a woman has earned well her place
In virtual sun, feeling as in heaven,
Glass ceilings gone, what be done duly done,
At work and play— on earth, water, in space,
I wonder what male species can expect
Save, hold on to whatso begets respect.
No, this is not an expression of grudge,
Pray weigh it as a fair minded would judge.

She might want next what man has had all life,
But had no freedom to dream for—a wife!

Tongue-in-cheek | 08.08.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Show Me Light In Plight

Chest drawn a lamp shines
In deep dark ravines;
But flickers in windy climes.

Haiku | 11.11.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Shrinking Violets

Oh to be gentle in a world so loud!
Suspect, distrusted and much derided,
Touch-me-not-shy long under misty cloud:
Whom, Darwin dismissed 'with odd state of head',
Jane Austin whilst gave shyness broader scope,
Calling it 'moral, mental-borne disease',
And Freud, his fame fetching for men no rope,
With dream mind's subliminal twist of his,
He smelt of 'displaced love of self-scored goals',
To where no fancy disposition was,
Poking fun at them, scoring birdie holes,
He saw somewhat hazy gossamer gauze!
And violets nigh sensitive to blame,
Besieged, shrunk with self-deprecating shame.

Perchance, shyness attracts public unease,
And yet we birds of feather are by far,
Men seldom unto common mould can squeeze,
Some dream of strange wings of a lone star;
So, let me offer them this goodly bliss—
That, shy souls often more inventive are,
Though sensitive nigh to a gawking gaze,
Tolerant are they still to worldly ways.
Mistaking plain shyness as being cold,
Aloof, and worse still somewhat arrogant,
And valuing those that be loud as bold,
A mark me seem of a tad ignorant.
Yet, let the world in ignorant bliss bask,
I marvel at my task— them to unmask.

Okay, I'm a touch-me-not violet,
Not so shy still, hiding hind cloak of veils,
Nor introvert with a lazy mind-set—
But with gifts to fertilise fecund skills
That may elude talkatively inclined,
Who, in loners, lack of social skills find.
Some greats do confess to 'fainting with fears'
Ere speaking to the so-called loud speakers!
I know violet's shyness has no'ne hurt

But them—I too am cosy in my skin,
To keep flowers natural, verdant green,
This scarce can be claimed by an extrovert.
So then, O let me love my solitude,
And as being inventive, let me brood!

This piece is a set of three sonnets in praise of the shy—shrinking violets. Its contents may find its reflection in two recent books brooding about bashfulness: *The Man who mistook his Wife for a Hat*, by Oliver Sacks; and *Shrinking Violets: The Secret Life of Shyness*, by Joe Moran. These books advocate that the shy should get a better deal, for they tend to be more creative. And musing about them, I feel elated.

Musings | 01.03.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Signs Of The Time

Hitherto a sleepy way-lost village,
Shall now enter history's fresh new sheet,
Vain may turn lessons of its farm college,
That would wonder how men should the greens treat.

Poor greens to greed shall now the tithe pay,
Life alive to dead graveyard shall yield ground,
Grey iron and concrete shall the earth pound,
Pylons, pillars stand where trees smile today.

Old hillocks and heavenly shallow lakes
Shall get buried deep under greed's duress,
Standing denuded shorn of born-with dress,
If progress all its priority takes.

As far beyond as tired sight might endure,
We shall see trails of plied and potent wire
In hope birds would avoid this deadly mire,
The Null Lake may not retain her old lure.

The village of refreshing lush green look
Shall soon wear an over-sized greyish coat
As an industrial township of some note,
O with a book-marked page in history book.

And yet, a village long frozen in time,
And orphaned now of its springtime dreams,
Her bounty of beauteous trees, it seems
Oh shall pay price of progress to us prime.

Should man lose on growth highways on the run?
He knows of no ventures without a price,
There's no virtue today without grey vice,
Let's still one day hope to such crossroads turn.

Industrialisation and technological progress and its impact on the country-side form the theme of this poem. Yet, helpless, it displays an ambivalent attitude: All progress demands its price that alas has to be paid—yet, a village frozen in time... shall show signs of some future. The signs of time are clear, yet can we

have progress that demands no such stiff price?

Images | 12.10.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Silence Of The Pond

Silence of the pond
Seems to mock at my life b'yond,
My noise seems no fond
Of this, my impatient hound
That has it strange found.

Senryu | 03.01.2019 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Silent Lips Of Love Scarce Lie

Eons that I chased for a pie in sky,
You not but said, no or I, hum or ho,
And I wondered on what, what if, and why,
You were resolved to remain there whatso
I felt, but let's go yon of this no go,
I'd much rather an affirming yea I,
Or cut-and-dried honest and bare nude no
To my e'er firm: I love ye, else I die;
Or if ye so believe, sing on our love
Wordless, nor tongue nor lips need ever move—
Enough I think for our two heaving hearts,
Say no more, quiet are shot Cupid's darts.
For, silent lips have a lot to relay,
Your monotones have more than much to say.

This sonnet expresses feelings of a rather exasperated lover who no more but gets monosyllabic response to his endless confessions of love. But the true lover that he is, he reconciles to the inevitable, and there comes the sonnet's Volta. In tune with lady love's monosyllabic vague answers, this piece too uses only a few rhymes. The real Volta happens in the concluding couplet where in utter relief the lover feels ready to even embrace silent lips.

Sonnets | 05.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Silent With My Feelings

'Lone did the sun set
Amidst sepulchral silence,
I too alone sat.

Haiku | 13.12.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Simple As Taking Bath

A brief nirvana dear, I bet,
Should ye want to reach there one day,
If you should keep destiny's date,
You must begin now, right away.
Your Self within to elevate—
In bath tub soul-moments a few
Be all it takes 'you' to renew,
And therein ah to luxuriate!
A search of self's no prickly path,
No need to fuss nor meditate,
Nor struggle for spiritual state,
And simple still as taking bath!
Thanks dear, but last time I had tried,
You know what: the tap had gone dried!

Tongue-in-cheek | 04.09.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Sitar Suppressed

What the world guessed for long got the voice:
A gifted wife had had no fair choice;
And what the affront was?
Louder she drew applause!
Sad, ego played spoil-sport to world joys.

There were inklings, and hushed up tunes in musical circles,
and the world for decades had wondered. What was guessed has
now got the voice. The sitar maestro, Ravi Shankar's first wife
Annapurna Devi, his guru's daughter, has now admitted that she
retired from public life because her husband didn't like that she
drew forth more applause than him. How sad! A gifted sitar has
gone muted, silent but singing still.

- Happenings | 05.09.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Slap Care

If you can a thousand dollars spare,
Beauty care now comes with a slap-care,
One precise slap on face
Should ye grudge no disgrace,
Ah, Thai thwacks facial wrinkles to dare!

A Bangkok-born masseuse launched a unique beauty care technique in USA to tone up facial skin. A woman called Tata delivers precision slaps cum facial pinching using closely guarded Thai wisdom while assuring a wrinkle free firmed up face. The treatment lasts six months. There is also a monthly package for US dollars 1000.

- Happenings | 09.11.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Sleep, A Death Rehearsal

Sleep, a night-long mend,
Leap to unknown land,
Or dress rehearsal for death!

Haiku | 01.01.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Sleep, Show Me Thine Face Of Death

Come to bless me, O Mother of all rest,
Charming princess of bliss— seers be or saints,
Savants or shepherds, paupers and peasants—
Solace to tired souls and a welcome guest,
Come; sway thine magic wand that I forget
All my day-long slumber-stealing sorrows,
That I sleep as if there be no morrows,
Spread thine pleasant wings and touch of velvet.
Easy if thou showeth thine kindly face
To sinners sinful most, the cruellest,
Who, peaceful rest in thine merciful nest,
Pray deny me not thine delightful grace.
Come O sleep that I lose none of my faith,
Let me dwell deep upon thine face of death.

Sonnets | 21.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Smart, Nor Stupid

The history of life upon this earth
On stalemate does stand on man's mental worth—
If it's better indeed
To be smart or stupid,
If I say it matters not, it's no mirth,
Look at what man has done
To his home and sole hearth,
Both smart and stupid known are not to learn.

I don't know if this is why Buddha propounded middle path!

Tongue-in-cheek | 06.05.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Smile – Not A Solitary Isle

A true smile's not a solitary isle,
Nor an oasis spread half an odd mile,
But a few thousand of verdant green isles,
An archipelago no less that smiles,
When every body cell joins in a pile;
Nor is laugh a solitary thunder
Of one triumphant wanting to plunder
A point, to keep his rival pinned under,
The rival army broken asunder,
A cause gone out of hand, smile gone under,
A laugh's let loose, it seems, when scattered smiles'
Every cell is in a state of wonder!

Yet, a smirk is no smile when 'tis too young,
It is no child of heart—perhaps of lung.

-Tongue-in-cheek | 02.04.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Smooth Like Silk

Honey, nor yet milk
Smooth enough a silk,
But haikus, their ilk!

Haiku | 05.01.2019 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Soccer For Long Was White

The Meet¹ was charged and informal besides,
Where protean points came to be presented
The Soccer Cup's host nation among brides,
The Proteans talked more from heart than head.

Silent and speechless did the slide show speak,
Screen showing world map in varied colour,
Eighteen host nations had savoured the hour,
Black and white strips now awaiting a pick.

World's every land mass had had its moment
Of glory, Soccer World Cup once to host,
Save Africa, one single continent—
The point on those that decide was not lost.

All Africa— north to south, east to west,
Showed was in black, with a border in white,
A point on apartheid's evil was prest,
Subtlety worked; the Meet's mind was made quite.

This happened six agonising years back,
The vote had moved Mandela when to tears.
Of all the sports soccer no peers did lack,
It always nudged nations on to high gears.

And that is what Mandela had in mind—
That, black-white hexagons can't live afar,
Let lines of apartheid be redefined,
Let every nation get a spot in star.

So how had Africa a statement made,
Whether or not coveted Cup it wins:
We too deserve glory painted in red,
The will then had its way— money, nor means.

This poem was born on the eve of Soccer World Cup in South Africa in June 2010.

1. The Meet: This was a meeting in Zurich in 2004 to choose the nation to host

the Soccer World Cup six years from then. South Africa was one of the claimants.

Happenings | 03.06.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Soccer's Cup Of Joy

A pack of players possessed, on a roll,
Nay, a pack of wolves closing in for kills,
Chasing as if a devil's hot on heels,
Yet, vying but for a ball to net goal,
Oft rushing aimless, a vague thing to chase,
Now punching, pouncing then to be in play,
Or playing square passes in a home base,
Oh to keep hopes ever alive if may.

And some feigning a grievous hurt on fall,
Pushing, pulling, shovelling, blaring fangs,
To win a cup of joy no cost's too tall,
Too bad, spirit of game if in shame hangs,
And hate to yield an inch, let the game stall,
Let penalties in plenty be, sweat, tears,
Let hated red card be, yellow recall,
Ah in the cause of those end-of-game cheers.

Where's that old game and sport's dainty deft dame?
Where's that bond binding a billion bugles?
A game of scuffles, of beguiling blame,
Of fattest pay cheques for the game's eagles;
The cup of naught-naught-six, of vim and buoy,
Nay, a cup of squabbles, curses galore,
Of deadly tackles and deceitful lore,
For game's spirit still where's that cup of joy?

Seeking solace are poor nations that lost,
Many a family of mixed marriage,
Haply united once, now in some rage,
Some welcome winners, lost heroes and host,
Some in small feuds, some split on whom to back,
Father-mother oh in a rival camp,
In headache of head and heart, whom to sack,
But cause there's none to show the light of lamp.

More of a beast than beauty that well bands—
Fans on the show, fans glued to TV screen,
And some roaming aimless in public stands,

Viewers, watchers, and players no less keen,
In shorts and bras, show of flesh made nigh noble,
In sum making things no less memorable,
But joy and tears always come with the Cup,
Which, we must learn to bear, soon to buck up.

There too are wages of war I'm afraid:
Coaches cut to size, managers on fire,
Referees on sack, players on the fade,
Yet, game's never marooned in marshy mire;
The few cheers when at last come to an end,
All is when over, regal with the rank,
The fans when leave the World Cup German Land,
FIFA aloud shall laugh its way to bank.

World Cup Soccer 2006

Happenings | 03.07.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Solitude

Left to delve deep in penitence filled plight,
The soul is apt to often find alone,
Grey clouds as grow darker in sunless night,
And thoughts get gloomy like a grey tombstone,
For, grave moments of life are lived to moan,
Mute does a soul muse like a lone milestone.

Being alone need be no loneliness,
A crowd as is not much of company,
Nor company can spell journey's success,
And journey of life is essayed lonely
Amidst huge crowd in sublime solitude
That in course of time begins to feel good.

Alone comes every soul, alone doth pass
Like a dew-drop, alone must shine on grass.

Shadows lengthen, day as prepares to depart in the evening. On the eve of life
solitude in the same way grows to deepen.

Sonnets | 03.08.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Solitude Is Good

Even if left alone with barest skin,
I wonder dear how lonely can ye feel.
There always is one's self around to deal—
A witness that dwells in one's deep within.

It's up to you if he's a foe or friend.
One's gilded with guilt or is innocent,
He's there with you every single moment,
Giving a piece of mind or helping hand.

And in your case dear me as you know well,
My presence always closest to you is,
If not me moments with me, memories,
I'm sure they leave with you a fragrant smell.

Thanks dear, I now feel loneliness is good,
It's good to have periods of solitude.

A couple is in conversation. He views loneliness as problem. She says it is impossible to feel lonely, because the soul as a witness is always there. And by the time the sonnet ends, he feels loneliness is good. Solitude is nourishment to soul.

Sonnets | 01.09.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Solitude Of Deserts

Like nothing else is life in dry deserts—
An anvil to get tamed man's attitudes,
And tougher more a teacher than green woods—
As if a new man, man from it reverts.

Men of world when tire, retire to forests,
Who, might as well in deserts choose to live,
Desolate still is Nature, men its guests,
In solitude men its blessings receive.

Aloud, lessons of life do forests teach,
Thickly wooded that are, wild be whose life
With birds and beasts, butterflies, beetles rife,
But silent does a desert to men preach.

Wonder if God made this sandy White Sea□
To induce from man a belated smile—
On spotting a solitary palm tree,
O to feel as if he's in a green isle.

And if in wet woods there's a silver line,
Dry deserts shower a golden sunshine.

A few years back I spent some hot and cold weeks in deserts of Rajasthan, where solitude reigns as in forests. But I realise, the solitude of deserts is way apart. This piece shows how.

Musings | 08.02.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Solitude Of The Silver Age

He was back home as was every evening
From a routine wellness walk to the hill,
Temple visit and meeting and greeting
Old friends, stood brooding by the window sill,
On an eventless life that he had led,
And said aloud though not a soul was near,
Save his arthritic wife in acrid bed,
And none whoso in neighbourhood to hear:

Tell me old man, your eightieth birth day
Has come and gone like miserly monsoon
Whose grey receding clouds now scattered lay,
So be this Harvest Moon's silvery boon;
And though with due regards to your pink teeth,
I can't but feel you won't have many more
Brightest moons, nor yet feast of Pongal sweet
You like along with every guest at door.

He stood frozen, his thoughts like early birds
Chirping sharp, blunt like a barber's old blade,
And pondered on the role of candid words
In life—from varied source, of shape and shade;
And as our scriptures say, 'Do know thyself',
As one to know the familiar voice well
That would ring in times of need a clear bell,
He stood there like an agonising elf.

The Self, thine friend, can as well be thine foe,
Try up-lift it never to undermine,
Celebrate life to be alive, and lo,
He heard from close a familiar line
Filtered through the bedroom's long ailing door:
It is time you finish your food and wine,
And felt alarmed that the call from his core—
The voice within— too can be feminine!

He filled up two wine-lets— for two of him,
Well, Mister Voice Within, just as ye say,
Here is for your benediction so grim,

And here goes one for my happiest day,
He emptied it all down his parched palate,
And turned with a swagger to other side,
Lifted the wine-let meant for his twain mate,
And downed it for friend, well-wisher and guide!

The dialogue dragged over dinner table,
That the old man had learnt to fix by now—
For him and his helpless wife, unable
To help her ailing self, and with a bow,
Well, O thou Voice within, it seems we've not
Met in this manner for a far long time,
Welcome home to celebrate here our lot,
We both suffer, for, no one is placed prime.

No more, no sir, not after such late night,
And time for you to stop too, if I may,
Getting up, raising glass to its full height,
Solemn and steady for his age, to say,
Thanks be for wonderful time together.
And stood up straight to sing Sayonara
In broken rhythm and bruised time measure,
But with a well-attuned end rhyme, Ra, Ra!

The moon privy was to his lonely moan,
A mute witness, as witnesses oft seem;
He too must make his errands all alone,
In health and happiness and in times grim,
Making two of them to ease nightly chill:
One, pushing solitude of silver age
That would turn to greyer age, weaker will,
But being mute the moon had advantage.

This piece is about a frustrated old man. And old age is sure frustrating. We can find many such old men— token head of a divided family, children married and far, often oceans away, spending the leftover years of life in peace, in too much peace, in fact. They occasionally slip into lamenting their loneliness which the poem calls 'solitude of the silver age'. The outside veneer of the poem has a humorous touch, but the sadness comes out despite the brave front put up by the old man.

Musings | 05.09.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Some Beauties Reign Forever

Fuller the foison faster does it fall,
All great empires in due time aught whither;
Some at zenith may look towering tall,
Wear curly plumes, tufted fancy feather,
Yet, grander they come greater be their gall,
Richer their rot with rancour getting spread
Right up to citadel's last standing wall,
Every façade of fame at fault from red!

And yet, all youth aught when at its time age,
Your charm, me love, seems to me no skin-deep—
Let that be this pen's languid last image,
Yet, with age your charm makes a quantum leap!
And if in my fond eyes the fault should lie
Imprisoned, would my heart reveal the lie?

Sonnets | 14.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Songs Of The Late Season

Ominous time when plunders has no peer,
It steals when scores of years from any age—
Sprightly younger years driven in high gear,
Along with old no less ready to rage,
Wanting to reach spring in its red blossom,
Returning to muse and pen down a page.
Perchance in life things at an apt time come,
Man can't, and still tries to cross fate's fine edge.
And songs of life take silent time to season,
Be they on time or late, too soon or slow,
To sit in judgment is the job of heaven,
In resigned grace let me not wish to know.
A peacock dances not just rains to bring,
Nor yet a bud blossoms to beckon spring.

Sonnets | 01.10.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Sonnet That Loves To Sing

A little song¹ that loves with self to speak,
A fourteen-line flourish fetching a form,
Each exquisitely crafted, each so sleek,
A far cry still if fourteen forge a norm.
Royal court born, her folksy grace shows keen,
In dancing harmony her lines advance—
Showing her roots Italian, French romance,
Love's alchemy when depicts shades of green.
Her synchrony still is no one-wing bird,
What six be to eight, eight be to her whole,
In-between may come Volta and her soul,
And mystified does nod the reading world.
A short poem so prime, all through alive,
It blossoms, all her fourteen birds when strive.

1. Sonnet comes from Italian Sonnetto, meaning little song or sound. Sonnets began their journey as a song of love.

Sonnets | 10.10.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Sooner Comes Help If Not At Once

A lone survivor wakes from a shipwreck,
Washed ashore on deserted lands
Of an island tiny as was lonely;
Sores and lesions all over his back
Aggravated by hot and humid sands,
As helpless as a newly born might be;
Resigned to fate, dreaming of his lost lands,
Bare hands his sole mute friends.

Aimless and idle all his time he spent
In fervent prayers to God,
As non believer, he felt odd,
And gave his frustrations a full vent—
'Pray spare me thine punishing rod'.
Rest of time he spent scanning thankless skies,
Saw nothing, vast as could see his tired eyes,
And felt like tender pea without a pod.

And resigned that nothing would alter
His fate, he built on hopeless sands,
With driftwood and leaves, odds and ends,
A castle of a make-shift shelter
To spare him from heedless sun and rain,
To store his belongings so bare,
Whatever the island could spare—
Not so much to keep him safe as be sane.

As he was returning one fateful day
From food gathering and shorn of aim,
As if his fate was laughing in dismay,
He found his little hut in flame,
Smoke billowing high in the sky,
Bidding all he had a ghostly good bye—
Wailing aloud in grief and anger,
He found his life on a cliff-hanger.

Defeated, lost of hope, all the way,
Slept off, to find his fate frowning at him,
But when woke up late, late next day

By a ship's sounding, shedding steam,
Approaching the isle like a pleasant dream:
'How did you know a stranded man was near? '
'Your smoke signal, man, it was loud and clear'.
'I should have known; there's someone supreme! '

Let things go worse, sadder from bad,
God does in touch with life remain,
Through sufferings, through pain and train,
No one need lose heart in cold dread.
Up in flames goes when one's shelter,
God's grace such smoke signals summons.
Busy, never still to falter,
And help cometh, sooner if not at once.

Narrative | 01.07.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Soul, A Far Off Goal

Body over soul,
No diamond, but coal,
Soul, a far off goal!

Haiku | 6.10.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Sounds And Scenes I Like And Not

I like the silent sound of early dawn,
Not quite the dusk dashing in a hurry—
Before you say good bye, she's nigh but gone,
Dawns linger on amidst my dream's flurry.

I like rain that in measured rhythm falls,
Not which storms in with thunder and lightning,
Nor yet one in steady downpour unrolls,
Nor I like noisy that robs my dreaming.

Yet, let it furious sounds make from outside,
If they get filtered to be dull within,
Let sprinkles come in, give me a berth wide,
I hate to get drenched when not quite so keen.

A feast of sounds and scenes rains make post-rain—
Birds shaking off raindrops from wet feathers,
Sun peeping out, shining up the terrain,
But I like no perennial wet weathers.

The best music is made by mountain streams
In a hurry, chattering with the rocks:
'Give me way, I'm getting late', in soft screams,
Good music's made by something that flow blocks.

Scenes of stagnant street water none can please,
Pleasant spell waters hurtling down the hill,
Or sounds from sea, monsoon robbing its bliss,
With tidal waves when sea lets loose his will.

I like the sounds of a mosque's prayer prime
Muffled by rains soothing its strident shrill,
And still loud enough to wake me in time,
Yet, some sounds test my sense of the civil.

I like feel of sound wafting from a far,
Beautiful when borne on the wings of wind,
As fishermen's singing with drum-beats are,
Yet, the world on a louder side is leaned.

But we city dwellers, poor accursed souls,
Few of nature's sounds do enter our life,
Ruled are we by sounds that in ears bore holes,
And having entered, cut thru like a knife.

Ergo, between the two I like a scene
Rather than sound for which I've no defence—
I can't stop harsh sounds from entering in,
But always can block sights to my eyes' lens.

Sure, I like silent sound of early dawn
That lingers tenderly on ere all gone.

Musings | 05.07.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Speed Breakers All

Ego and warring creed,
Envy, and burning greed,
Speed breakers be that seed,
Read, heed from far and rid.
In journey called life, speed
Be what matters, and deed.

Reflections |06.11.16|

Aniruddha Pathak

Spirit Of Law, Not Legal Merit

Ye can uplift justice per laws ere writ,
Ye alone can keep it for long alive,
And let it strive and struggle to arrive—
In spirit of law, or legal merit.

O white wigs of wisdom donning dark robe,
The richest storehouse of legal letters,
Beware lest your reputes should rest on probe,
Both spirit and legal merit matters.

Discard still legally-dipped a garment
Sullied by overuse nigh indiscreet,
Leave aside too heady an argument,
Remember every human has clay feet.

And if I may object and dare, Milord,
In due respect addressed 'tis to high chair
Ye warm, and to robe ye happen to wear,
The bow is to chair, to your legal rod.

It pays to know, justice is more an art
Painted in truth, now dying if not dead,
And drawn on a canvas of feeling heart,
Head does matter here but scarce heavy head.

Aniruddha Pathak

Spirit Of Time

One more rape of human spirit I fear,
The outrage rages touching a new peak,
Varied versions get florid tongues' keen ear,
Yet, why it happens still is Latin-Greek.
Women's Day's is made merry no less still,
Seminars and speeches, rallies galore,
Womanhood when wears a day-long bold will,
Descending day though dies when, dies this lore.

A harried heart a safety valve when spies,
That pampers us, distracting to feel high,
A glass of wine at a fool's paradise
To feel alive a few moments ere die;
The guilty awhile when get bailiff's bail,
And women, accursed souls, live with the tale.

And most ere late tired get to let it be,
Life is Maya, delusion is no crime,
Nor is it sin a rhino-skin to be,
Such be the life; such the spirit of time,
When, being born a weak sex be her curse,
Thou art, O fair sex, thine enemy worse!

The sonnet should have ended after fourteen lines as usual. But it allows itself an extra sestet.

Sonnets/Satire | 06.03.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Spiritual Growth

I plant a seed and soon it grows
On taking firm roots,
Then come flowers and fruits.

I share knowledge that he not knows,
And lo, knowledge seeds and grows,
It spreads fair fragrance like a rose.

I smile at him that his way goes,
Who, a return smile to me owes,
And smile's fragrance ah further grows.

To me this growth is spiritual,
One to one and mutual
Life as is perpetual.

Green's not the only thing that grows,
The sole in its long journey grows,
Ignorance from the roots as goes.

Reflections | 01.09.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Spiritual Poverty

Poverty of pocket, what a curse,
Life a way has to boil down to purse.
In money-minded world,
O man, do mark my word:
Spiritual poverty is still worse.

Reflections |32.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Spread Your Smile A Mile

Suppose you laugh aloud or just smile
Happiness it is your very own,
If you make an unknown sad face smile
Joy and bliss of yours has greater grown.

If you bring back lost smile on the face
Of a long suffering distressed soul,
Show to him your inmost kindly grace,
True joy shall blossom from you as whole.

Try meeting someone with smiling face.
You may win him at most by one half,
But if he joins you with his own laugh
You may win say with a service ace.

Let your entire anatomy smile,
Let body's each cell break into dance,
Let the whole contagion spread a mile,
He that talks to would have no chance.

If every green shade goes off from ground,
An eclipse as if has shadowed life,
Birds' eerie silence sepulchral found,
Friends as if desert you in grave strife,

Me alone if dwells in thorny bed,
Everything if looks sad and sedate,
Let my smile brighten up to be red,
See, no smile remains locked in closed gate.

Musings | 01.02.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Spring Is Not For Ever

Spring's red comes after a long winter's blue,
With a message to all mankind: Let go,
Forget the past to forge ahead and grow,
To life when comes the life as if born new.
March Twenty First¹, mercury's on the march,
The grey acquires when a fresh coat of green,
Green life when comes under a greater arch,
Buds when blossom, the garden's no more lean,
And radiates with rainbow's shades many,
Birds, bees begin to sing in symphony.

Yet, summer takes o'er soon, dull gets cool breeze,
Sun acquires harsh grimace and no more smiles,
Not forever is spring, though God's grace is,
And all green gets pale grey for miles and miles.

1. Vernal Equinox

Sonnets | 12.04.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Spring When Wakes Up

Knowing its short lease
Spring when wakes up from deep freeze
Soon thaws and hurries.

Haiku | 07.01.2019 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Spring, A Moment's Solemn Breeze

Like memories of youth returning,
Splashing rainbow's lavish rich hues,
Flitting thoughts as if on capricious wings,
Comes spring; drives my mind's year-long blues.

But why is spring here once again?
To show riots of warm colours,
Nor display blossoms of flowers—
Spring proves: youth's green over grey gains.

Pervades in air romantic rage,
I hear this dialogue in the excited
Love chatter of birds by it invited,
Gone has the snowy camouflage.

A gay abandon is in ample dose,
Spores causing still a sweet li'le sneeze,
A tickle's felt in my dried up clear nose,
But what matters: fragrance of wafting breeze.

Spring, butterflies be when no far,
Soon as the sun lights up the garden,
Buds blossoming when somewhat harden,
The winged wonders sip in a nectar bar.

Their dance warming with the sunbeam
They come from a nearby shrubbery,
Pirouetting in a dainty li'le flurry,
And help make spring gay from wintry grim.

Like a lifetime couple some dance,
Garden their family's private heirloom,
Spiral in courtship, frantic prance,
Just two of them— the bride to be and groom!

And no sooner they come they leave,
Their romance as unique as easy,
Leaving me as dazzled as dizzy,
They always give more than receive.

And the scene too soon enough comes to cease,
But so is spring, a moment's solemn breeze.

Images | 08.02.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Stagnant Sea As Salty Gets

Life's born as piece of work in progress,
Pen upon a paper as started,
A book of epic scale in process,
More is made, more remains to be made.
Still, it scarce can take self for granted,
Back and forth and still in forward state,
As life that stagnates would vegetate,
Needed most still, pray who comes to aid?
Me Death, scarce can life when move ahead,
One-wing bird, no more, life seems at birth,
With my help it carries forth on earth,
So aided does life move, by me led.
So, at birth life walks in along me,
On death too, if only ye can see.

A twain life and death be walking prone,
Breath inhaled exhaled gets as in time,
One without its twain never is known,
Together do we play a long chime,
But for us millions may age, not grow,
Stagnant sea waters as salty go.

This sonnet (in anapaest metre) has one extra sestet. Death starts off with 'it's me that...', but realises midway that it's only part of the twain.

Sonnets | 01.12.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Stars Foretell, Men Must Spell

Tell, stars, what ye wish to foretell—
What fate for earthlings you've in store.

Well, future always does spell well
To those that play at Nature's shore.
Long has ye man mindlessly erred,
Heeding to no warning flares flared—
In peril, in prosperity,
Unmindful of adversity,
Take care, O man, your affluence
Has let loose tonnes of effluence!

Stars to planets only foretell,
But ye earthlings still have to spell.
An if disaster does still spell,
Be thou warned, the stars did foretell.

Reflections | 02.08.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Statesman

Here's a man known to do, nor yet die,
Heavy head unduly held so high,
Pomp and protocol bred,
Politically dead
In new life, cultured wit and white lie!

Reflections | 04.02.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Stranded On Isle

Plugged and gadgets prone,
Wired with the ear-phone,
Man's still all alone.

Panels palm-held are,
On auto-pilot his car,
Here in isle— no far!

Man may have kissed outer world; made material progress; taken long strides in science; technology operating things from the palm of his hand. But he is still not in control of small things, nor can control his life. His outlook is still that of a man stranded on an island.

Haikus | 04.05.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Struggle Makes Music

Stones when blocked her way,
Over, around, she flowed on,
And music played on so born.

- Haikus | 14.08,14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Struggle Maketh A Man

It is when winters vie to be coldest,
When a summer's hot spell for long sustains,
And the winds when blow up at their boldest,
Come heaviest of spells of stormy rains.
It is when Nature seems its meanest known,
That sturdiest of timbers do get grown.
From ashes of strife may a Phoenix rise,
It is in pain that life lifts up from lay,
In struggle when the life lives, as it dies,
In struggle it gets born as is the way.
Remember, man, how ye journeyed from ape,
No'ne lifelong struggles can ever escape.
By stretching still limits of what he can,
Man makes him stand apart from also ran.

Sonnets | 04.01.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Stuttered Speech

A man fond of Spanish— his life's itch,
He bought tapes that in sleep would him teach.
Tapes stopped-played to his plight
And failed to work well quite,
Poor him! Spoke Spanish with stuttered speech.

Aniruddha Pathak

Success

Failures chasing me till the edge of knife,
I thought: let success be my bosom friend
In this misplaced marathon we call life—
Best friend and companion till journey's end;
Hoped, success would always close to me stay,
Patting me now, or encouraging me,
Letting me glory at the end to see,
And yet success can only be an aide,
A help maid, as milestone on roadside's laid,
That told how far I've come, how far away.
It was this stone that told wither was I,
Warned, better 'tis to be man of value
Than of success— a monkey on chest nigh,
And deity that demands sacrifice due.

Sonnets | 06.06.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Success: Slowing Failure

In times ill let one learn to endure—
Learn to live, smile and bear if no cure,
It pays to be alive,
To dig in and survive;
Success oft lies in slowing failure.

Growth slows down before a falling phase begins. Fall then accelerates and hell comes loose. In situations like this it's great achievement in slowing down the rate of fall. There's little one can do save watch, endure and stay firm and resolved. One may recall what Krishna said in Bhagavad-Gita (2.14) : tan titikshva bharata. Learn to bear, O Arjun.

Reflections |11.02.16|

Aniruddha Pathak

Summer Solstice

Summer solstice, sun at its sharp and bright,
Making for the year's longest day of light,
Leaving behind the looming wintry plight,
The day when eats into long chunks of night.

But to me bestowed with abundant sun,
Summer's not much of boon blest by heaven,
And Solstice not more than a passing fun,
Nor longest day means a rare fortune won.

Never is winter a melancholy
Of Northern lands that ever nifty be,
In summer we hasten to climes hilly.
And seek cool lagoons or loiter at sea.

And still, if longest day's shortest for some,
The best way is to hail them just as come.

The piece was penned on a summer solstice day (21 June) . The North when celebrates the longest day, for South it is the shortest one. North's summer is winter for south. Sun farthest from equator is still closest for some. Someone's night is another's on average everything equals out. Mother Earth and father Sun are equal for all. It pays to keep this in mind.

Sonnets | 07.06.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Summer When Smiles Early

Summer when smiles nigh early on the trees,
Karan, season's kick-start, shows off at first,
Bright yellow blossoms swaying in warm breeze,
It seems to brag: blown I've biggest of burst.

Lest it be left out of this fragrant race,
Champa, well worth a wait, hastens to charm
Mogra mesmerises, wears maiden's face,
With sweetest of songs birds begin to swarm.

Even Curry-patta, kitchen's green soul,
When blooms with tender leaves, shows shades of greens,
When Gulmohors, Acasia, close cousins,
Borsalis and Bogains seem on the roll.

Squirrels when scamper breathless and ceaseless,
Koels when coo behind fresh foliage,
Locked are when house lizards in long caress,
It sure is early spring's soothing image.

Early springs and summers set in with boons,
And monsoon is far but a few full moons.

This poem depicts an early spring season in Central Gujarat where I live currently.

Musings | 01.04.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Sunday

A day to be in a state of being,
Resting, retiring from lifelong chasing,
Away from it all, fruit-seeking doing,
Just to be, yon of bounds of becoming.

An act short of retiring to forest,
Learning to do without creature-care joys,
A day of moral rectitude and rest,
Time it is to listen to inner voice.

To reflect on how the journey has been,
If need be reorienting its course,
To be in touch with Self dwelling within,
A day when to voice of heart ye endorse.

It ends up still more heavily loaded,
Or idling be when the sole mode instead.

Sunday was originally meant to be a day of rest from the usual mundane pursuits, retiring from it all, and reinventing. The life that is lived is too much oriented to becoming. But the day has been reduced to resting and idling, or chasing other pursuits and making it all the more loaded. If only we halt, take a deep breath, think, and reorient our life a little differently; to look within, and feel the bliss of the Self; the joys of simply being.

Sonnets | 08.06.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Survival

Fathoming in her feline friendly eyes
For long familiar in my musing mind,
Which, nigh softened and responsive I find,
As if telling the world to be tad wise:

Ere, we moved free, not a boundary wall,
We've lost now our unhindered mother lands,
Defied have I a sure death after all,
But strange indeed to feel I still have friends!

I withstood survival's conflicting ends,
Not so many would in harsh hostile world,
Reduced to numbers verging on absurd,
Many must die alas, rivals and friends.

If you've a heart ticking, caring and kind,
The wild nature not wanting you would find.

An orphaned leopard female cub must now face the wild world alone, her mother having died. A couple, photographers, track her journey, often losing the track. Once they lost her for months and then found it again, grown up too recognises them. This poem is how the couple imagines the cub must be thinking looking at them in woody wilderness, then and now— wondering, I was lucky, but many would not have made it and survived.

Sonnets | 02.02.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Svachha Bharat

Leave aside all these filibusters,
Nought would what a milk-washed fact musters;
Facts are tough to digest,
Fiction, hard to harvest,
Keeping clean comes ahead of dusters.

The title literally means 'Clean India'. We allow all the mess to accumulate for years; no preventive measures, and then blow billions in cleaning up this mess, and that too little to show for result. If there is one thing common for all poor countries, it is that they spend their resources on unproductive projects, in inefficient ways, fire-fighting and the like that can be easily avoided with a little bit of planning and more meticulous implementing.

Tongue-in-cheek | 11.08.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Sweet Smell Of A Kill

Assets under high stress,
And bad debts in excess—
To banks an awfully bad odour,
A good kill to sharks, to banks grapes sour,
To Chris Flowers, sweet smell of success!
And those that caused this smell,
Big cats, who'd tie a bell?
May God's grace our good governance bless.

The stinking foul smell of non-performing assets of banks is in air. Today, world seems fond of euphemisms, but it means bad loans and bad dreams for the banks. Yet, a good opportunity is it for the vultures of Wall Street who like its stinking odour. What for the banks is bad-debt, is for these sharks a lip-smacking bet. J Christopher Flowers is one such man.

Happenings | 05.03.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Swift And Still Adrift

Happy or sad, long be this life's journey,
And heavily loaded need one scurry,
Only he succeeds who's slow and steady,
He stumbles who's in too much of hurry,
An old Buddhist wisdom as aptly said.
Be steady and firm like a mountain wall,
Deep ocean-like, mild like moon's silver ray,
Echoed Jain thought. It matters not at all
How slow ye walk, long as ye walk the way,
Confucius came later to mankind's aid,
In a hurry man may well go astray,
Slow down as if a stone, reach there un-sped.
Let all this wisdom be against the swift,
The world races still O to get adrift.

Today's world seems in frantic hurry to change despite spiritual wisdom vouching otherwise. There's rat race in every field. See, how while driving, all we want is to push ahead of others; how we rush breaking the queue the moment lift arrives; how we rush to alight trains andbusses.

Sonnets | 01.12.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Take Caution O Thought

Take caution O thought, thine offspring is act,
Raise the child, the father of thine habit,
The two children are values and belief,
With good thoughts are one's precincts well-lit,
Remaining long so lit, ah, what relief!
So, take caution O thought, and be perfect.

Reflections | 06.12.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Take Lying Lips Away

Pray, take those lying lips away,
Which sweetly, so sweetly swear lies,
Now that there is light of the day,
Clear are seen swollen lies in eyes.
I want my love as is to see,
Bring back kisses again,
Let them in vain all be,
Only when feigned vain is vain.
The love of life's no crime,
Nor love of love— it's prime.
So, take thine lying lips away,
Lies do hurt in the light of day.

Musings | 32.02.2019 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Take Melons By Gallons

Man knew of muskmelon and mogra¹,
Cannon ball effect of Viagra;
Forget now the old grind,
Not ripe red pulp, but rind,
Raw and white, low and lay,
And in scorn thrown away,
To rid slack, love's fragrance to bring back,
Here is best of an aphrodisiac.

Mogra¹: An Indian flower, a kind of Jasmine with intoxicating fragrance, and considered as aphrodisiac.

A new research extols water melon as a libido enabler, erectile dysfunction, and sagging skin. Their effect is not organ specific like Viagra, and there are no side-effects. Yet, the potency of the fruit lies not in the luscious, fleshy red pulp but in the white rind which is generally discarded.

Happenings | 06.07.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Tavern Talks

From being single sans knots,
Alone with self-scratching thoughts,
I opted for marriage as an alt,
And ever since get picked without fault,
There's no winning in this world,
Save this tavern, take my word.
The only place of freedom
We can wherein talk wisdom!

Two disgruntled males talking at a tavern

Tongue-in-cheek | 14.11.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Teachers Far From Schools

My heart goes to them on this Teacher's Day
To those that try teach with no teaching tools,
To those that walk nowhere in sight of schools,
Teachers no less still teaching in own way—

Teachers that teach all around passing day,
For thanks nor yet for a round of applause,
Love of the wards sole cause if cause there was,
To stalwarts such me seem be Teacher's Day.

The first that comes to mind's aid mothers are,
And with them come sisters, elder or not,
From memory still never be they far,
Things they teach stay stuck, and long after taught.

One of mankind's oldest to teach ever—
Nature may trail mothers but only just,
It works if one has patience, faith and trust,
Nature has all there is to deliver.

And teachers there be too esoteric
For today's times fleeting at speed of light,
Even spiders to this should get a pick,
Spinning webs, failing and falling from height;

And that reminds me of mistakes men make,
Life's nothing if not learning, unlearning,
And relearning for yet another take,
A fertile ground for a life-long farming!

If child a father be of man— a sense
With poets who see sprouts when just is seed,
And if you've failed to freeze your innocence,
Get into child's mind for creative lead.

And if a simple soul complex hast grown,
And if morphed into an opaque mirror,
Look within; burnish that child's hidden bone,
And errors shall no more be such terror!

And this list can grow untidily long—
In Hindu pantheon, gods there be no few,
But all you meet also have guru's hue!
If ye must learn enough is just a gong,

Reflections | 01.09.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Tears Shed On Graves, On Poems

If bitterest tears on graves shed
Made are of half words left unsaid,
What can be of poetry said?
A maid singularly so made,
She draws more on what's left unsaid,
O than on words expressly said.
And tears that the readers may shed,
Compare ill with what poet had.

Reflections | 04.03.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Teenage To Every Passing Age

Like heady scent of blossoming flowers
When hardly has she learnt giggles to hide,
Reconciling with the body of hers,
A girl begins to dream as a young bride.
She has by now as oft laughed as has cried,
But her tears soon begin to get nigh dried,
Thirties, and she learns to levitate, ride
On air; soon as she puts premium to pride.
Forties and she gets into galloping stride,
Well atop goes her professional pride,
But by fifties life is bereft of cause,
A robber comes when robed as menopause.
By sixties she's a bona fide' guide,
A good friend and philosopher beside!

Sonnets | 09.08.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Tell Me What - I

What if one fails this to freely pass—
A matter of such stress— a Stop-Press,
But every effort fails,
Aloud still toll the bells,
And he feels his worth is worse than grass!

Tongue-in-cheek | 04.11.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Tell Me What - Ii

If one's torn and all tears,
Few have time— nears or dears;
If one is in great fears,
Few care as appears.
If happy as ne'er ere,
Who's time still joy to share?
Now see, loud let this pass,
All have time enough to embarrass!

Tongue-in-cheek | 05.11.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Tell Me What - Iii

What's that the world calls love?
Cosy togetherness,
Dressed up or in undress,
Together when you cove!
None of this, freedom `tis this to pass,
And say, may God me bless!

Tongue-in-cheek | 06.11.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Tell Me What - Iv

And now jeans that absorb this at once,
In freedom to move, all blazing guns,
The cloth all the smells tame,
One can move without shame,
Wear these jeans and walk with confidence.

A new material for jeans is invented. It is treated to absorb unpleasant smells.
The company promotes them: 'Wear our jeans and walk with confidence.'

Tongue-in-cheek | 07.11.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Temple Times

How utterly shocking it was
To see his smile fading like a flower
Withering in summer's hot sun,
He who with his 'Good Morn' would pause
'Pon delivering office papers
And daily supply of goodwill
With his customary broad smile
Only to melt soon as a moon
Might behind monsoon's grey clouds,
And dissolve unto his work;
A smiling mobile face
It seems is a forgotten grace.

And hard it was to imagine
Him in a hospital bed, but he was.
No, it was not the dark gloom
That enveloped his bed and room,
His searching, sinking eyes,
Nor yet the milieu all around,
Nor even a sunken, gaunt face,
I was struggling to trace
That ubiquitous smile in vain,
I hoped, would surface despite pain.
But amidst the surrounding dread,
A forlorn face sunk further in bleak bed!

Amos, he worked with me— a sincere, diligent hand ever smiling. I recall one day we heard the shocking news that his kidneys were sinking. The company gave some help and colleagues contributed towards medical expenses, but the treatment was long drawn, and he opted for VRS and left. The poem describes the scene at hospital bed. It has Hopkins's Sprung Rhythm.

Reminiscing | 03.10.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Temples Of God

A tender tree leaf,
Young blades of grass, if
Remind of no God, what else?

- Haikus | 04.01.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Terror Of Bath Mirror

Looking into the bath mirror,
Struck I was with unknown terror—
The face under my morning scan,
Far from me, saw an unknown man
That in no way looked like my fan.

Bath mirror be the only time
Man looks at his self, plum and prime,
Rare if not disguised, nor yet masked,
And no use funny questions asked,
Feign if feedback would ever rhyme.

And I know O thou troth bearer,
No truth hits like from a mirror,
No scare scares one like its terror,
Bath over, comes a mask wearer
That waves it all off as error!

Reflections | 01.02.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Thank Hell That Heaven's Sweet

The beauty of lotus from dirt does rise,
From scorching heat come cool showers of rain,
And every joy springs from deep pits of pain,
So are sorrows sent to men him to size.

There'd be charm nor venture in life's challenge,
Should road ahead be straight smooth and well-laid,
If life always shined bright hues of orange,
Bewitching were to come every young maid;

If life were but a bed of roses quite,
As if all thorns were condemned to exile,
If banished was black shade, life always bright,
All pleasure-no pain would make life sterile.

Crib not O Mind problems keep a cropping,
Thank, they come whetting dull will from rusting.

- Sonnets | 07.04.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

That Smirk Behind Your Smile

It looks to me like a garden all smiles,
Not an isolate smile stuck on an isle—
Like an oasis spread as if for miles,
It's smile of a flower that hath no guile.
No loud laugh, nor a derisive thunder
Of a victor vanquishing with ways vile,
Nor of a robber ready to plunder,
One of a kind, I love its unique style.
Your smile has the power to pin me under,
Melting my pent up rage, wiping all bile,
Breaks down the held-back reserve asunder,
And all my complaints collapse in a pile.
One little thing's about that lethal smirk,
That behind your sweet smile often does lurk.

A man seems so much worked up on his wife's smile that he says all that he has to in one breath, and using only two rhymes for twelve lines of this sonnet. A Volta comes in the couplet that uses one more rhyme.

Sonnets | 01.04.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

That To Me Friendship Is

When what he wants to say you want to hear,
Notso he says you find colour-less spring;
When mutual silence seems reinforcing,
Cosy in his world when you appear;
Departing needs when no formal goodbye,
When sorry and thanks seem so redundant,
All-revealing when sounds a single sigh,
In whose friendship you win life's battlefront.

A friend that forever is there in need,
And still, he's one that gives you ample space,
His presence seldom is burdensome face,
His word goes a long way to become deed;
That to me friendship is,
All else a passing breeze!

Traditionally sonnets have an octave of eight lines, and a sestet of six. This sonnet too appears to have the same. But the last two lines of the sestet are half its syllabic length, and so effectively make a single line (two half lines) . This sonnet hence has a division of 8+5, not the usual 8+6. The true harmonic proportion is $(5/8 = 8/13)$.

For more, see [Whatso Nature Has Made', Sonnets| 11.12.2017 |](#)

[Sonnets | 09.08.16 |](#)

Aniruddha Pathak

That To Me Is Poetry

Words that flow forth, fount to fore
From feeling heart's deepest core,
That purest stream is poetry.

That which sprouts— seed well worth
From bosom of fecund earth,
That tender sprout is poetry.

From quenchless mind what outpours,
Flies off far, on wings what soars,
That golden dream is poetry.

What in woody wild spring-like leaps,
From leas and leafy bushes peeps,
That sprightly deer is poetry.

What at the dusky eve of day,
In worshipful mode may pray,
That sacred scene is poetry.

In watchful steps who walks,
And in her unique words talks,
That fond toddler is poetry.

At dewy dawn so handsome,
The buds that blossom,
Its floral fragrance, Poetry!

When season's first rain has rained,
The earthy smell unrestrained,
Of all to me is poetry.

An August cloud aloud when thunders,
Awaiting at gate when she wonders,
That wonderment is poetry.

A hopeful heart when heaves,
No word from lips when leaves,
That silent tongue is poetry.

Translation of a Gujarati poem titled Kavitaā, by Devanshu Patel

Translations | 41.02.2019 |

Aniruddha Pathak

That's Happiness For Me

Just looking at her e'er so happy,
Taking a toy to her most pleasing,
Playing in mother's lap, and smiling,
Hearing a lullaby ere sleeping,
There, that's where happiness of mine be.

Throwing a heavy school bag aside,
Uniform, homework all else beside,
Or bunking all classes un-applied,
Enjoying rain from every care free,
That is where happiness do I see.

With many muted dreams in her mind,
A young girl deep in love nigh purblind,
Setting out for a date ere well lined,
Smiles when she sees him there already,
That is the happiness O for me.

Waking early one day,
Ma finds house lonely lay,
And the door-bell rings at dawn's first ray,
Her daughter, kids hugging with some glee,
That is what I call feeling happy.

An old man too bent from a tired back,
Taking old cassettes from an old rack,
The sun is preparing when to pack,
He dancing after long when I see,
That, what else happiness can e'er be?

This is translation of a Gujarati poem by
Shy@mal Munsh\$, titled mane to sukh ema@< dekh@y.
The metre used is anapaest.

- Translations | 03.01.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

That's To Have Lived

To laugh away, things when go wobbly wrong,
To welcome all the same— win or defeat,
Life devoted to make a child's smile sweet,
That she sings all life a melodious song.
To fetch forward life's inner most beauty,
To coax rainbows of life longer to last,
To sway not from avowed path of duty,
And leave behind the legacy so cast.
To appreciate seeing an honest act,
To forgive betrayal's fraudulent hand,
Spend patient time that a foe turns to friend,
A life that has with Death a secret pact,
It is when world knows you lived and lived well,
Even your grave giveth when fragrant smell.

Sonnets | 05.09.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Acres Of Thought

My acres of much-ploughed thought fields,
Their recall taking long, and lost
In memory; is it a crushing cost?
Feigns if I've lost for good their yields.

I doubt; for, what has been a thought,
Contemplated, in view and face,
Chewed and chewed over in chain, aught
Remain un-lost in time and space.

If to think is to be alive,
Let me keep cultivating my thoughts still—
Lofty, mundane or naïve—
If for not else, ah utter mental thrill!

I doubt the doubter that I am:
Man recoils from labour of mind;
Let me be amid them
That in thoughts abide, all aligned.

He that seeds thoughts through darkling night,
And waits endless hours watering,
Might become dawn's beckoning light
That gets brighter, noon approaching.

In hope I carry on to plough
Unknown acres, and not in vain,
To whose green wilderness I bow;
I know he can that thinks sure can.

And I hope still, what look mere weeds
Today, would yield bounties one day,
And soon become much valued seeds;
Weeds are greens whose value's still grey.

What if these acres at my shore
Defy, as now, precise mapping?
Far from futile, free to explore,
Quiet they breed, one day to sing.

I was thinking on weeds a while,
Like thoughts lost in an unknown file,
And mousing last terminal mile,
Showered `pon me this light with smile:

Man, by far of matter is made,
But his spirit rules stronger still,
The greats strong might be made in head,
Greater are they with spirit's will.

So, let me not let someone build
A toll gate `pon my mental field,
The lost acres are to me dear,
Let them take time to yield—many a year.

And I'm prepared long days to wait—
In hope of yield at future date.

This poem might remind the readers of
Robert Graves' 'Lost Acres', reading which a
question that occurred to me was: 'Are these
acres truly lost?' And this poem was born.

- Musings | 15.09.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Art And Mart

Came in the crowd of upwardly mobile,
Enough cash in their private pile,
More informed of the mart
Than finer points of art,
A kind that values a folder,
To contents of file is colder,
To whom package is more
Than the product in store,
Where substance serves to style,
One can smell them from a mile.
Yet, nation grows art when grows,
When art is loved for art's sake,
Not when art to auctions owes,
Not when millions are at stake.

Happenings | 01.10.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Axe Forgets

Axe forgets, and soon is forgiven,
Trees, we know, take to no shooting gun,
They pardon human sin,
And keep the planet green—
Poor trees, thankless run a marathon
Like Sun that sets, job done,
Both run a thankless run.
Man's a far cry from Sun—never been,
Nor is he like trees that can't be mean.□
Yet, both hope he will learn,
With that hope rises Sun,
Same hope lets trees grow green.
Though no'ne may know how long,
Eternal, feels this song.

Musings | 02.02.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Beast And The Beauty

Maths and figures fill me with mortal fears,
But I was game to games at Maths Day fun.
'Oh I feel owed by Theta and Tan', I said.
'Mere phobia', a lady said, 'from far spheres,
'Try meeting a good old Infinity,
'Be intimate on a first name basis;
'Maths never is a hard-to-please deity,
'Foster friendship with her', my advice is.

Yet, I feel fine in being a wordsmith,
Not in gadgets that know to number-crunch,
Maths hits me an intimidating punch;
Poetry, ah I can be cosy with.
And poetry is not in maths so lean,
Take sonnets that love a harmonic mean.

Sonnets | 09.03.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Beauty In You Is You

If wondrous most thing in the world be world,
The beauteous most a thing in you is you.
I see this clearer now e'en with eyes blurred,
As soon or late truth always gets its due;
You might not this believe though straight from heart,
Which, today's men of mall-turned robots lack,
Yet, heart's all there's to hail if mart be art,
So, with not else but heart let me this crack,
(I know, I aught deal with women as are,
(And never once how I'd like them to be,
(There's but one way if man wants to go far:
(Call a pond, if not puddle, a vast sea!)
Everything about you is doubtless beau,
Yet, the most beauteous spot in you is you.

- Sonnets (tongue-in-cheek) | 08.06.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Beggar Was Not Him

My hands in empty pockets, stuck out tongue,
I smiled vain at a beggar's outstretched hand,
Hoping, he'd my helplessness understand;
The early sun was mild, guiltless like young.
Knowing my plight, he smiled, gestured at me,
My response was what I had— counter smile,
He seemed to appreciate my misery,
Felt, it was not a rehearsed clever guile,
And tried to put me to ease, 'oh it's fine,
It's good enough if one wishes to give',
Moved, I held his hand into helpless mine,
His gesture touched me, caused my heart to heave.
And oft when we give, far nigh little give,
Sans giving any, so much we receive!

And for long I wondered who was generous; who the beggar was amidst us.

Sonnets | 08.01.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Birth Of Death

I

Let me narrate how Death came `pon this Earth,
Said sage Vyasa to Yudhishtir, shattered
By Abhimanyu's death, 'Oh vain my birth
Should a young dream die and lie scattered'.

A story it is from a Golden Age,
A king called Akampan had lost his all
And his dear son in battles that had raged,
A brave young man had lost on duty's call.

Lost of all hope, in grief he roamed alone,
In search of peace— his mind still sunk in war,
And he finds sage Narad there standing prone;
For a ship lost on high seas, a Poll Star!

My son was brave-enough to take on gods,
But enemies came, conspired him to kill,
Pray, tell me what death is, what dying means,
Life I know, but not what death has to deal.

To his query the sage this story told—
Of Birth of Death, of old age and disease:
When Brahma created world in times old,
Death had found no place in the scheme of His.

And life lived and lived for endless long years,
No one died, and still new life came to be,
Poor earth! No more this burden could she bear,
Ant-like life swarmed O like a shore-less sea.

An ocean of life in a waxing tide,
Plundering Ma Earth's modest means, no pause,
Causing chaotic turmoil, unknown ill,
Grass-eaters ate flesh, such were hungry maws.

Oh hard was it getting to breathe, O Lord,
Who, wondered how to turn this giant tide,

To lighten Earth's burden, shorten life's cord,
Ere it collapsed under own weight and died.

Brahma thought for long hours, for days on end,
'Poor of me, how I never thought of this? '
A way out seemed far from creator's hand,
His visage showed worry where once beamed bliss.

In rage, his eyes seemed like luminous arc,
Flames of fire flared all the worlds to consume,
And pierced heavens to lap all the Earth,
And it looked like a cosmic night's dour doom.

II

Gods, goblins gathered in a flood of fate,
Earthlings worshipped along sages and seers,
And invoked Shiva, easy to placate,
O with folded hands, eyes flooded with tears.

He that Ganges gathered in matted locks,
Concerned, compassionate to common plight,
Reassured them, let me see what be done,
Ah one that destroys on creative height.

Pleased am I, you in my abode to find,
Brahma said to Shiva, I bow to you;
Who said, as Creator ye aught be kind,
But raging art thou; do stop ere ye rue.

Sure, enraged I am but only on me,
Nor yet intend to destroy it, O Lord,
Ashamed, not to know what the way out be,
It's odd I have used no punishing rod.

I've thought for long, succeeded not yet still,
If frustrated, my eyes do emit fire;
Do cool down still, prevent a scorching ill,
Advised Shiva, be pleased, relax Old Sire.

Save these lakes, save rivers, save all this life,
Spare this creation from a pointless pain,

Think of a wise way out from world-wide strife,
Think if life can renew, return again.

Let Time unto three-fold time zones divide:
One, what hath come, and never to return,
One that is vast, unknown, born nor yet died,
And present that unfolds, called 'now' on run.

He hearkened well, all three wise heads of his,
Restrained red rage, recalled his scorching flares,
And absorbed fire in his eternal bliss;
It's better birth and death bear equal shares.

Let humans tread a path— one of a twain:
The path of karma—of good deeds, to earn
Fruits, place in heaven, earn and spend in chain;
Or of no fruits— path of birth nor return.

III

Brahma thence forged a form— a female-head,
Born of impending need, a weird form—
Black as born of darkness, tongue and mouth red,
Eyes burning yellow, like a raging storm.

Uncertain she stood facing what was South,
Mighty confused on her cosmic mission,
And waited to hear a word from Lord's mouth,
Which when came struck, a lightning from heaven.

My daughter, Death art thou on a goodwill,
Thine mission: to kill all life in due time,
Born art thou of my rage, and aught thou kill,
Good or evil, all whenso reach their prime.

Hearing of her mission all life to kill,
Poor maid shed tears of genuine deep-felt grief.
Forever mindful of mankind's goodwill,
The Lord saved— just a few drops on a leaf.

Suppressing her motherly grief, somewhat
Emboldened by Brahma's eternal grace,

She breathed in courage if for a moment,
Said, bowing creeper-like, words wisdom laced:

O thou great Sire, pray hearken if ye will,
I wonder why one would want a woman—
A mother and born kind— to come to kill,
Killing life, O Good Lord, I never can.

I'm scared of sin, be thou graceful to me,
Forget the act, can't even imagine
And shuddered to think of the slain many,
No, can't carry out cruelty so mean.

There may be need this suffering to rid,
Yet, pardon me, I seek thine kind refuge,
O Ancestor, with folded hands I plead,
Not equal I feel to the task so huge.

Let me please thee with arduous tapas,
She said; but still the Lord passed His decree:
Do carry out what thou art born to do,
Worry not, no evil shall come `pon thee.

Naught much can be done on what ordained is,
Get on to thine mission, have faith in me,
Thou shalt incur no sin, count on my bliss,
A trigger, thou art hands of Destiny!

A woman— kind of heart, called `pon to kill,
Feigns if she could utter a word of will,
Protest, pretend, nor procrastinate still,
Say yes, nor no, when served a bitter pill.

IV

And to escape from the Lord's scorching rage,
Meditated—both thoughts and words on mute,
Standing resolved for long years on one foot.
All in a far off tranquil hermitage.

She failed when to soften Brahma's mind still,
Meditated still more for twenty years,

And pleaded, 'spare me Lord but I can't kill
Innocent life, nor stand their grieving tears.

This too when failed to move Him, she took to
Deep silence— of thought speech and inner soul,
To try soften Brahma's unmoving heart;
Said he, 'Life's born to fulfill karmic role'.

Resist not, my daughter to me so dear,
Duty's call cleanses one's inner being,
Divine will shall assist thee; have no fear,
No'ne can blame thee if there's no more breathing.

Go ahead, in men shalt thou as man find,
In women as woman— image of mine;
Life shall grow old, decay— both flesh and mind,
Let it conspire to kill in course of time.

Life shall get born in a perennial chain,
A new life to live, both body and mind,
O to carry on all over again,
Life picks up whence ere was it left behind.

I've saved copious tears ye shed in my palm,
Let them ailments be of a varied kind,
Emotions ill, desire to hate and harm,
They'll do the trick as clock's set to unwind.

No bane, a boon death be, man's greatest friend,
Creation scarce can culminate sans Death,
There's no new beginning if there's no end,
Let Death get born along life's very breath.

And so was Death born in those ancient years—
As boon to life that begets new body,

To carry on with the onward journey,
Soul survives in new flesh and endeavours.

And armed with a new lease of added years,
Life strives forward, or oft in reverse gears,
A journey so long, and so arduous,

Hard to finish were Death not auspicious!

Epic, based on Mahabharata | 01.06.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Book Called Earth

A few billion years' hard labour
Turning a rare piece on the whole,
Comes then man grabbing stellar role
To essay a rare book ever;
But looking at it now
One wonders— wow turning how—
What a sophisticate error
That made the dream of Ma Earth sour,
He that played a crucial role,
Oh what a villainous soul!

Reflections | 01.10.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Burden Of Being

That, ways of heart all others can follow,
Give me the power of words that can explain,
Or give me empathy in heart's hollow
In order that love of life dies no vain;
Pray, make this world a way-bit less me-made,
That, it has time for those stranded at sea,
Give me guts, else, to hold on to its dread,
That, I can keep fears confined unto me.

I hope, world remains open enough still,
And nigh less smug to failing words of plea,
I've no way to appeal to worldly will
That has li'le time O to listen to me.
O let me bear the burden of being,
Remember this life's rule, autumn or spring.

Sonnets | 02.05.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Crooked And Straight

My advice honest,
A crooked tree told the rest,
Never be so straight.

It's no idle jest,
The axe first falls on the straight,
Crooked is safest.

The axe came. In haste
Fell on crooked tree's forked fate,
For firewood you're great!

Haikus | 04.06.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Dame Never The Same

Common sense once rebuffed her close friend—
Sense of humour—no dance hand-in-hand,
But the dance danced looked lame,
The dame never the same,
When patched up, ah what a perfect blend!

Humour | 19.03.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Dance Of A Trillion

A dozen of noughts led by a lone One
Dancing in concert in abandon gay,
A shepherd leading herd of a trillion,
A gaggle of migrating birds on way
From frozen north to weather wintry time
And give birth to crackling little chicks,
Looking for a haven of warmer clime,
Together to chip in with trillion tricks
All in matter of a blinking moment
In an era of a gorgeous tera¹,
O of blazing speeds stray minds to torment,
In power of ten each nought numbered bara²,
And nowhere near its denouement to reach,
The dance goes on, on quantum scale an itch.

tera¹: Ten to the power of 12, or one trillion. A teraflop chip can perform more than a trillion operations in a second. And this dance of speed goes on a quantum scale itch as this sonnet says. bara²: In Hindi is 12 (one dozen) .

Sonnets | 10.02.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Dance Of Life

In gay abandon
I see flowers waltz in rain,
No'ne sees, not in vain.

Poets too so think
A poem when ink,
I see Nature's wink.

Haikus | 07.04.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Death-Wind Of Change

Death! Thou alone maketh man man of now,
And as life's rooted in a renewed lease,
No end of life— a brief interlude art thou,
Dost thou not bestow balmy life new breeze?
O tail-wind of change, O punishing rod:
Blowing up stars, turning them angry red,
Pounding up peaks, protecting like pod,
Making kings commoners, winners wilted.

Fine 'tis pen-painting life in present tense,
And doubtful putting thee in perfect past;
Let me call thee future-in-past now hence,
Thou bloweth op past-tinged infinite vast.
And more do mortals die the more they live,
More they live closer come, death to receive.

- Sonnets | 01.09.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Dollar Debt Spiral

There once lived a worthy with warbled view,
Creatively skilled and called Brummell Beau,
Having invented a business model,
He gave it a naughty name— Debt Spiral.

He got many a suit by his tailor made,
All on credit— his business valued was,
He enjoyed highest of a credit grade,
And so the business grew pulling no pause.

Whenso his tailor talked of unpaid bill,
Beau would three more suits order on credit,
Adding a spiral of debt— way uphill,
Poor tailor was worried no ends of wit.

Our Uncle Sam today treads in his trail,
Its dollar debt breaching the global roof,
Producing a package of Holy Grail,
Nor trust nor faith required nary a proof.

And nations nudged are in green backs to trade,
Sprouting and pushing up paper credit
That if not junk, no more than sub-prime grade,
Backed by gold, goods nor yet goodwill a bit.

And there's no alt, Euro in crisis worst,
Their pledges no better than worthless wool
In eyes, world left with nothing else to trust,
Globe gullible suffering silent fool!

And China may be too eager to wear
The pinching shoes with little trust, least faith,
And as a trade partner viewed too unfair,
So, Dollar's here till one parts— debt or death!

Tailors of world may have a grudge to nurse,
But Brummell had invented male trousers,
He sure deserves his coveted a crown—
For catching world tailors clueless, pants down!

Tongue-in-cheek | 02.06.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Don'ts Into Do's

There comes a man defeated in mind,
Unsure like a dog tail tucked to the hind,
And what ere was an opportune op door,
O looks to him a distant shore.
Then comes a man believing in him,
Walking with lion's gait, sure, somewhat grim,
And what ere was a door closed shut in face,
Looks to him a sure shot— a tennis ace,
All odds-against fought away to deuce,
Then to advantage, all don'ts into dos!

'To a pessimist, his opportunities look like difficulties. To an optimist, the difficulties are like opportunities.'

- Reflections | 10.09.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Doubt Falls On You

One in four if blanks out say from blue,
It's serious; you may not have a clue.
It is no light warning
Say like global warming,
If three of them were fine, then it's you!

The co-pilot who locked his pilot out of the cockpit and deliberately crashed the aircraft of German-wings, and who caused 150 deaths, suffered from a serious mental illness. In fact one out of four people are similarly afflicted, they say.

Happenings | 11.03.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Drama Of Life

Life is like an unrehearsed play
Being played on a life-size stage,
A gamble of lifetime each day,
Game of cards played as if all age.

Every role is duly given,
Given is every single scene,
The script is destiny driven,
The scenery's as ever seen.

The script by heaven is dealt,
By Director of world-wide note,
Never seen, he using remote,
Everything for the player's spelt.

He's still a wide field to create,
The way rolls are enacted still
Depends on actor's own free will,
No use to blame fortune or fate.

Life sure is an unrehearsed play,
Actors are puppets made of clay.

Musings | 01.09.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Dying Moment Declares...

When I peered once at a passing moment,
It looked back, stared at me flustered and peeved,
Looking nigh strange, a moment duly spent,
'I scarce am unlike those ye never lived'.
So taken aback, hit as if on chest,
I demurred feebly at gallows' humour,
But struggled still— this new truth to digest,
A warning bell, a point pressed with hammer?

This no way is advice—gift of good-bye:
Live every moment as if very last,
Lest it should get lost in life's buried past,
Beware; a dying moment does not lie,
Give it presence ye never knew as NOW,
But when it melts as past, let it and bow.

Sonnets | 05.07.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Evening Star

The grapevine had rare gossip to relate:
Dazzling degree, merit and medal,
The speed at which he'd won corporate weight,
How deep he'd pushed career's speed pedal,
How he'd fished in troubled waters uncaught,
Pursuit of goals was his crucial merit—
The chief of which others to dispirit,
To win key battles if or not well fought.
Which, helped him climb steep corporate ladders,
That he withdraw so that others can't rise,
Nothing grew under his scanning radars,
He cornered every accolade and prize.
Such a colossus still, one straddling tall,
He scarce could see his own tumbling fall!

Venus is an evening star that shines for a short time before setting. It is also a morning star that rises to soon disappear in the day light. At one of my jobs there was such a star. He dazzled the skies for quite a while dimming others. But another sun (rather son of the company's promoter)obliterated him. No doubt, he was intelligent, sharp, hard working, and personally honest. But he liked to rule with iron hand and found it hard to delegate and develop those working under him. And when it came to his own career stakes, being overambitious, he tended to be ruthless.

Sonnets | 09.09.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Faithless Of Fair Belief

One faithless and still of fair belief,
One brief-less, still a perfect bailiff,
He that bows to no God
Bows still to moral code,
One in a million with his own brief,
One that walks self-made road,
Walks with no undue load,
Not bailiff, here walks a sound sheriff.

There is a belief in general that non-believers lack moral code. This is because morality, as Arnold Toynbee said, has been hijacked by religion as is belief in God. Sure enough he was greeted by Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus, both known atheists. This little ditty doffs its hat in deference.

Reflections | 02.12.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Four That Think Of Me

Men of four kinds worship me in this world,
The Lord had said in His Song Celestial,
Three of them bring along a begging bowl
Hope, the veiled whispers of wants would be heard.
One wants relief from his enduring pain,
One more comes desiring money and means,
The third a curious bird, knowledge to gain,
Their prayer with pleads and pardons begins.

There's one that feels: divine beliefs be odd,
Man of science seeks to know the unknown,
One even called a long missed myth as god!
The fourth loves me for love's sake, he alone,
Wishes has he nor wants; seeks nor does search,
And finds in me an ever-lasting perch!

In Bhagavad-Gita (verses 7.16-18) , Krishna tells Arjun: there are four Kinds of men that come to me: one in distress, one wanting, curious, and the wise. The first two types we come across on a daily basis. The third type is also not far to seek. A recent example was that of a scientist calling his illusive sub-atomic particle a God particle. The Lord said, 'I love them all, for, they approach me; but I love the last one the most. He loves me for love's sake.

Sonnets | 11.04.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Fourteenth Feb

Silence seems to speak like receding tide,
The eyes reveal when what words often hide;
When flowery feelings spring from nowhere—
From rational to emotional air;
When reason happens to be next to none,
Not that these seasonal birds e'er need one;
When love in air explains strange chemistry,
A factor which is of proximity,
When mere glances take off as if first flight
And as soon land gaining no height;
Time spent in hours when seem like few moments,
And a moment's separation torments;
When your beau's name seems quite your own,
Your own becoming as if long ere known;
When her presence makes world go round,
His smile one reason that seems sound;
When gifts get given, taken, girls or guys,
When a silly gift from mundane does rise;
When concerns scarce them closer cling
While happy times a new chime sing;
When his grave faults trivial tend to seem,
Feminine frailties fetching to him;
When false egos scarce come in their way,
Juvenile gestures make the day;
When whatso happens, happens as if by magic,
And happy happenings devoid be of logic,
Cupid does come to call to high and lay,
Villain being winter's Valentine's Day.

With lasting love nowhere in air,
A new virus' spread everywhere—
Of common cold, cooked up in lab,
And rampant found on Fourteenth Feb!

But old men, a tad critical of youth,
Oft far adrift are from the truth;
I too am old though not in heart,
Might still be viewing truth from far apart.

-Happenings | 01.02.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Fourth Bullet

Who fired the fourth bullet at him?
It all dim-witted to me seem,
I feel upset listening to this.
Should we at all despoil his peace?
Far too late now this truth to find,
His death though sad is long behind,
And in these years more than three scores,
We've hit enough hurting his cores.
If not caste, community, creed,
If not for electoral need,
Nor if in the name of our poor,
Swearing in his name solemn oath,
We've hit him times and times over,
We're all culprit, talk not of fourth.

Let's not worry about his death,
Enough if we follow his faith.
If we help, thousand blessings win,
Immortal would he live serene.

Happenings |03.11.2017|

Aniruddha Pathak

The Game Of Money

To some a tight-lipped game, say poker,
To have-nots, filthy game of lucre,
Money if can't be spent,
It leaves foul, fetid scent,
Like money locked in a bank's locker.

The founder of Amazon Jeff Bezos is world's richest man at dollars 151 Amazonian billion. But beyond a few millions money I think is of little practical value; and a needless irritation, one may add. One might feel as if in a pressure cooker. And there's a fine line beyond which the scent of money becomes flagrant from fragrant!

Tongue-in-cheek | 03.08.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Gift Of Tears

A lot is lost—losses unheard,
And still have saved a price-less thing:
A stream of tears easy that spring,
By women of this wanton world;
A lot is saved, things nigh weird—
Position and power and prestige,
High walls to hold women in siege,
By man-folk of very same world;
And yet, gains regained at grave cost:
The greatest gift of God to cry,
Shedding tears nor making eyes moist,
And art of making heart lighter nigh!
 And reason why his heart is brittle cake,
 No lunch lain free for wanton a man's sake!

- Sonnets | 19.08.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Graveyard Of Senses

A skull bowl for bare needs was all he had,
Glad still, he needed nothing more to add.

And then he saw a man drinking— cupped hands,
Joyous, he jettisoned the cranium bowl:
I can now feel water that on me lands—
The raw cool of liquid so natural—
My joy now reaches a peak not felt ere,
I drink no more— but cherish the Nature.

What ignorant fool I was all these years—
Drinking from a bowl of beggarly size!
Man's senses sure have gone dull, chilling cheers,
Tongue tastes the food that all relish defies,
Music plays on, mind not in tune with ears,
Roses get robbed of beauty in vague eyes.

And human mind at worse—gross to grotesque,
Things made mundane from what ere was so rare,
Like no one else bloom buds, beauty-bedecked
Freshly chiselled anew without a peer
On earth—it has not been, nor yet shall be,
Yet, beauties die cherished by none any.

People pass thru life untouched by its bliss,
Man has a graveyard made of his senses,
The purest joy of seeing beauties rare,
No more alive is it, or no one knows.
And hungry mind still wants ever the more,
His wonderment wears thin the greed as grows.

Mused a fakir with not else than skull bowl,
Alas, man's turned into a greedy owl.

1. Greek thinker Diogenes gave up everything to live like a mendicant, nude of any possessions. He just had a skull bowl.

Musings | 02.04.12 |

The Grey Routine

Dawn dawns, I see the same faces
Talking the same tame talk at walk,
Wearing Velcro-ed shoes sans laces,
Vintage shirts, shorts of same old stock,
Sweat races, footwear grimaces,
Measured gaits, unhurried paces,

And all thru lunch there's no new breeze,
They know, life's canvas is on fade,
But yawn and stretch well-rested bodies,
Life's stuck and doldrums stare ahead,
But tired bones welcome relaxed ease,
At tea they brood on last decade.

Comes eve, leisurely stroll nearby
On errands with a bag in hand—
For day's supply of odds to buy,
Back home by dark with a sad sigh—
Grey routine of grey heads, and bland,
Bare if matches with urban land.

Quiet supper, the two ripe souls
Reflect on life lean of new goals,
TV to induce yawns off screen,
And day ends as began— so lean,
Dreamless life filled with glaring holes,
One more dawn dawns, same tired routine.

Musings | 08.07.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Heart When Hankers

When old, saw him with wrinkles strung,
And worried of a ripe old age,
His pangs of passions still so young,
He¹ thought of new life to this rage.

Asked sons if life-years they could share,
One agreed to part precious life,
And wild no indulgence to spare,
The king lived like a sharpened knife.

This was long ere in ancient past,
When heeding to hungry loins was no sin,
Sex fluttered full— not at half mast,
When signals were clear— red or green!

The king's second wife too was clear,
So were all that eyed mighty men,
So were men mindful of women,
So was every sage, every seer.

For, desires live longer than graves,
They haunt on face of fastened gate,
Passion spares no expiry date,
They burn bright as faggots called craves.

And love, no youth monopoly,
Valentine Day, nor game of dart,
Mellows with age, not in folly,
Flesh hankers heeding to the heart.

1. He refers to king Yayati of ancient times.

Happenings | 06.02.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Hue Of Humanity

Rainbows with seven shades shine in sky,
Man with more— resourceful, what a guy!
He falls short of one still—
That makes him look so ill,
Call it raw hue of humanity.

But what seems so easy to harbour,
To profess or else with feigned fervour,
Though humanity's cause
He seems never to pause,
He fails still O to love his neighbour.

And happy to be hailed as human,
Tries no hard to be truly humane;
Fine, if he goes no far,
Nor shine, be nor a star,
Were he to remain what he's— good man.

Reflections | 07.03.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Hungry Stones

All things return home much like a refrain,
On the way to our country home¹ were we
From leisurely a trip—my kin and me,
We met when a colourful man on train,
As I recall— one in late life, nigh vain,
His dress, no less his looks, indicative,
And we at sea the way he seemed to talk,
Demeanour and dialogue of a proud cock,
Discoursing `pon any a theme on earth,
A Muslim sure from far, not a native,
Though listening to him seemed well its worth,
Yet, something still was there that was not sane.

The Goddess of Learning and Destiny,
It seemed, sounded this man of ports many:
That said, forces were at work in the world
Far too secret, underground and unheard;
Said, Russians had advanced close to us;
English had policies inauspicious;
Feud among some leaders had come to head,
Confused and suspicious who saw things red;
And said our newly acquired friend in train
With a wry smile: What's more of acute pain—
More things do happen in heaven and earth
Than reported are in the news as worth.

The home-bound birds like us that had not seen
The world he had, struck were dumb with wonder,
What with his quotes on science, his comments
On Vedas, verses of Persian poets;
Our young ears, untutored to this knowledge,
Caused our admiring bone to turn attuned,
Sure, a magnet, occult power, an astral
Body some sort doubtless has him inspired;
We listened to him with devout rapture,
Vaguely aware he seemed of our keen ears.

The train reaching a railhead, we waited
In a retiring room, too tired and jaded,

The change of train weighing heavy `pon eyes;
'The train's running late', someone made us wise,
Our wise man when set out a tale to spin,
And my sleep said goodbye with a wry grin:

II

From Nabob of Junagarh² to Nizam's—
Collector taxing duties on cotton,
The change of job had robbed me of my calm,
The stay at haunted place ne'er forgotten
I've to-date, a lovely place though was it,
Deserted now, ere a palace retreat—
The Suista³ chattering in many ways,
Tales and babbles on every single pebble,
Tripping like a skilful dancing damsel,
Ah my unforgettable fateful days.
I still remember flight of a plenum
Of hundred fifty steps to a river,
And a solitary marble palace, plumb
Along the river, and etched as ever
In my mind, ah amid sprawling foothills,
No soul around to whisper of its ills!

The palace, two and half centuries old,
Built was by a ruler of Muslim mould,
For pleasures his, in luxuries enrolled:
Jets of rose water from mountains spurting
To cool rooms amply made of marbles cold,
Young Persian nymphets there entertaining,
Mohammad the Emperor, too tired, blasé,
Arab maids dishevelled before bathing,
Their soft naked feet `pon water splashing,
Singing and pleasing him in many ways,
Whilst wine poured forth as ample as water,
Afar, tears poured forth from a lost daughter.

Fountains no more are found, songs too have ceased,
Nor snow white feet, ever gracefully step
Upon snowy marbles that remain cold,
The vast halls filled are with cess collectors,

And men like me oppressed with solitude,
Deprived of warmth o that is womanhood;
My old office clerk did me amply warn,
'Pass days should you like, no nights if you care',
I waved him off still with a hefty laugh.
Servants agreed to work only till dark,
Which, I ignored, elephant as dog's bark.

The house of ill repute spared was by thieves
Like a nightmare, I'd stay out all the day,
Working hard on long hours till lights turned grey,
Returning at night too jaded and tired,
Thinking of bed, I was unto sleep mired.

III

A week scarce was, the place began to weave
When a weird fascination `pon me,
Hard to narrate, harder still to believe,
I felt like a dragon `pon a lone sea,
Digesting my own self, me in its noose,
Oh with some stupefying gastric juice.
Unknown to me perhaps I started it,
Bit by bit since I came, man indiscreet!

On a dull day, I once came home early—
Well before sunset, and rested in chair
Close to water's edge near a fleet of steps,
The tired sun soon sank, a broad patch of sand
Glowed in the hues of mesmerising eve,
The pebbles in shallow waters glistened,
There was not a breath of wind anywhere,
The stagnant air from spice shrubs on the hills,
As laden was as an oppressive scent
From a despot, all but over-powered me;
And as the sun dived deep behind the hills,
A dark curtain fell `pon the day long stage,
The hills cut short their-light-and-shade mute mime;
There was reason for me with a fair rhyme,
Nor was it time to go out for a ride,
Yet, led as if by overwhelming force,
And leaving every reason way aside,

I was about to venture out on course,
When from a far I heard footfalls behind,
Looking back still not a soul could I find.

I sat down, wondered what an illusion!
And heard again some steps not from too far,
Thence, sound of souls slowly scampering down,
A strange thrill tinged with fear flashed within me,
And though there was no sight before my eyes,
I saw, me thought, a bevy of maidens
That descended for bath that summer's eve.
The valley all dead was with not a sound
In fast flowing river, or in palace,
Naught stirred to break the sepulchral silence
That surrounded; I heard a girlish, gay,
Mirthful giggle, like gurgle of a spring
Gushing forth into a hundred cascades,
Soon, they ran past me in playful pursuit
Of each other, and towards the river,
Alas, without noticing me ever,
Perhaps, I too was yon their spectral sight.
I heard their splash, though calm was the river,
While many an arm jingling with bracelets,
The maidens laughing, spattering water,
The fair feet of swimmers tossing tiny
Waves of showers looking to me like pearls.

IV

I felt a sharp thrill in my heavy heart,
But knew not if the ferment of a dart
Caused was by delight, fear or curious mind;
I felt an eerie, strong urge them to find,
But naught was seen before me, nor could hear
A thing clearer despite my straining ear,
All I could was birds chirping in the wood,
As if a dark curtain made of past stood
Hanging before my anxious pair of eyes,
Fains if I could lift them nigh to peer through,
For, total darkness enveloped my view,
I hoped still, sooner should the curtain rise.

A sudden gust of wind lifted the weight
Of oppression— thanks for life's small mercies—
The still surface of the river rippled,
Curling a tad like strands of a nymph's hair,
The woods were wrapt in evening's sleepy gloom
When there came forth, ah some relief of a murmur
As though it rose from a darkling dream!
Was it real or a tired man's daydream?
Piercing through the centuries gone by,
Vanishing in a flash as moments fly,
And yet, the mystic forms that brushed past me
With quick bodiless steps, loud lifeless laugh,
The sound of bodies splashing in river,
The eerie apparitions somewhat bent,
Wringing their dripping robes awhile they went,
Remained in my mind's vague vision for long,
O like fragrance wafted away by wind,
Dispersed but by a single breath of spring.

Filled I was with the fear: or Muse it was
That gained gratitude of my solitude,
Possessing me in such a lonely wood,
A witch, thought I, visited on a cause;
Whatso be, let a good dinner me fill,
An empty maw is undoubted devil,
Let me call cook; let hefty dinner be,
O lots of spices made smoother with ghee.

V

In time the night turned to dawn, I could see,
It all appeared like queer fantasy.
Light hearted, I put on my office hat,
And hurriedly in my horse carriage sat,
And drove away myself to sink in work,
Returned late, but before it was too dark,
Strange, but drawn as if to my weary house,
Perhaps an unfulfilled desire to douse,
As if someone awaited there for me,
O was I keen that strange someone to see,
Startled looked that dark and desolate path,
My carriage rattled dust giving me bath,

Soon reached my place filled with palatial frills,
Vast as vacant it stood on gloomy hills.

The first floor led to a spacious hall,
Its roof stretched over ornamental hood
Resting on three pillars— massive and tall,
Groaning, weighed down by their own solitude,
The daylight dimmed, the lamps not yet lighted,
The door when opened great bustle greeted
Me, as if a throng of souls were let loose,
Confused, rushing through doors, windows obtuse,
Crowding corridors and space of all shape,
And fraught with fear they made hurried escape.

Seeing no one I stood tense, bewildered,
My hair stood up with half delight, half fear,
Faint scent of attar and odd unguents
Of old filled my nostrils, half blocked by dust,
Drenched was I in darkness of eyes and mind,
Groping with an endless rows of pillars,
Listening to the gurgle of fountains
Splashing cascades on marble floor below,
A strange tune on harp, sundry ornaments
Jingling, tinkle of anklets, clang of bells
Tolling the hours, the din of the crystal
Pendants of chandeliers shaken by breeze,
The song of bulbuls hanging on cages
In corridors, cackle of storks nearby,
All made when a bizarre baroque music.

A spell of intangible weird vision
Then came upon, over-powering me,
A dream-like spell the sole reality,
The world around appearing like a dream,
The real me was not what I would deem,
But looked like strange ludicrous illusion!
And standing in the gloom of fuzzy fluff,
Ah, I all but burst into a horse-laugh.
To add, when my servant brought a lamp,
I wondered if he thought I was rank mad,
But sure a decent salary I earned,
The world around though a full circle turned,

Doubtless, great bards do muse, I imagined,
And well, laugh delighted is, and no sin.

VI

Newspaper read, Moghalai dinner done,
I put out the lamp awake like the moon,
And stretched into my bed wishing to sleep;
A radiant star twinkled through the window,
The Aravalli hills skirted darkling woods,
Gazing intent, millions of miles `way,
Wondering why mortals sleep when I don't,
And the thought amusing me like a child.

I knew not when or how I fell to snore,
Nor how long, but I awoke with cold chills,
Hearing no sound, no intruder to fore,
The steady bright star had set hind the hills,
The moon in stealth had entered through the door,
And nigh ashamed of his act as never before.

VII

I saw no one but felt a gentle hush,
As I awoke she uttered not a word,
But beckoned me along with a firm shush,
To follow her— wordless like a mute bird,
I got up but saw no soul save what goes,
Around nor in the sprawling old palace
Of slumbering sounds and waiting echoes,
I feared every step lest I stir up space,
Past an array of rooms kept ever dark,
We then turned to left taking a long arch,
I followed her breathless walking aside,
My still shadow following that mute guide—
Not knowing where, how far, nor to what end,
Yet, I felt no threat from my guide and friend.

Invisible to eyes, not to mind's clue,
She, an Arab girl, frail but full of grace,
Arms smooth like marble, behind sleeves seen thro',
And a thin veil tried to hide her fair face,

A curved dagger hanged from her slender waist,
I wondered if it was a quiet heist,
One of Arabian Nights and far too sad,
Amidst world of romance far too evil,
Through dark alleys of slumbering Baghdad,
Oh, was my tryst fraught with unknown peril?

My fair guide's abrupt stop broke off my thought,
She pointed a thing below a blue screen,
Her finger `pon sharp nose, a beauty spot,
But too little in the dark could be seen;
Probing more at the glazing marble floor,
A terrible-looking eunuch I saw,
As dark as late night was, blocking the door,
Dozing with out-stretched legs, churning my maw,
And blocking most of our ample passage,
A naked sword lay there ready to rage.

My guide leapt over him in utter ease,
I could catch a glimpse of the scene on lease:
The room with a Persian carpet was spread,
Unseen, someone sat aside `pon the bed
In loose saffron dress; two exquisite feet,
Sporting slippers embroidered in pure gold,
Aside was a blue crystal tray of old
Filled with apples, pears, and grapes aplenty,
A few bouquets of flowers kept ready,
A tinted decanter waiting to greet
A guest, if a pair of gold cups could speak,
As fragrance wafted by in a path sleek,
Intoxicating, over-powering me!

With trembling heart, as an attempt I made
To leap across, he woke up with a start,
The sword fell from his lap with a sharp clang,
A terrifying scream when made me jump,
I saw me leaping from my bed, sweating,
A crescent moon looked pale in morning light,
I like a weary sleep-starved man at dawn,
And my crazy Maher Ali screaming,
As was his daily custom while he strode,
'Stand back, stand back', he yelled winding his way.

Such abrupt was the end of my first night,
But waited there a thousand nights of fright!

VIII

There was a gulf betwixt my days and nights,
A worn out and tired me going to work,
Cursing last bewitching night's weird dream,
Yet, all new nights came O pledging promise,
Though shackles of work were farther from sham,
The nightfall would catch me in eerie thrall,
O overwhelming me in total snare,
Intoxicating and overpowering,
When I would transform to an unknown knight
Of a bygone era, playing my part
In unknown history never ere writ,
My English coat and tight breeches standing
The least in my fertile mind's fairy role,
In red velvet cap, pyjamas too loose,
An embroidered tight vest, flowing silk gown,
Many a shaded scented handkerchiefs,
Musing o'er an elaborate toilet,
I'd sit on a high-cushioned velvet chair,
A hookah filled with rose water in place
Of a usual cigarette, a proud face,
In eager anticipation to meet,
Who else? My first night's sorely missed nymphet,
Black beast, my aversion and dark secret,
But for that spoil-sport eunuch's blocking feet!

IX

Let me not delve deep on what panned out hence,
The gloom of nights deepened still further dense,
And there was time I felt when like a pawn,
My wanderings meandered when till dawn—
A pawn being taken for sacrifice
Through curious halls of the vast edifice,
Where, I would go led by a helping hand,
Chasing the tale, not once still see the end.

Amid the foggy whirlpool of my dreams,

Amid heavy air charged with fragrant spray,
Amid heady smell laced with henna there,
Like a flash of lightning I'd catch the glimpse
Of my fair muse in saffron garments, and gay,
In white ruddy tender feet, soft and fair,
In a close-fitting bodice laced in gold,
The sole object, fulcrum of my dream world,
The wonderland of nether world of sleep,
I sowed wherein seeds— a rich crop to reap.

And I groomed me— a prince of royalty—
Facing mirror, candles on either side,
For a glimpse of that tormenting beauty,
That eager glance, intense passion and pride
Evident in her large dark eyes in pain,
At point of speech, yet with dainty refrain
That made mauve ever more her figure fair,
Young and slim, blossoming like a creeper,
Uplifted in her graceful tilting gait,
A dazzling flash of craving ecstasy,
A suave rich smile surviving still till late,
And she would melt away like fantasy—
A wild wisp of wind laden with all
The fragrance of hilly wilds of the wood,
And putting out the candle, I would fall
Upon my bed forgetting my knighthood,
Eyes closed, body in thrall with rare delight,
Tinged with silent gloom of my concealed plight,
Many a caress and many a kiss,
Many a tender touch of hands amiss,
Gentle murmurs resounding in my ears,
A feel of fragrant breath still on my brow,
As if a sweet perfume wafted for years,
Over-powering memories do as grow;
Slowly a mysterious serpent would twist,
With its stupefying coils about me,
With heavy sigh I'd succumb to the beast,
Overpowered as if by the fantasy,
In deep insensibility only to lapse
Into profound slumber if all else helps.

X

As I was set to go out on my horse
One eve, despite pleads to stay from my course,
Prone I was to take my hat from the rack,
A whirlwind crested from the dusty tract
Lifting dead leaves from Aravalli hills,
Twirling them high along the palace ills,
While a loud peal of a wild laughter rose,
And soon died in the land the sun follows,
Robbing my dare and joy ride in the wood,
It robbed too my queer English hat for good.

The night was old when unknown sobs I heard,
Heart-rending, stifled, right below my bed,
Nay, as if from an unknown nether world,
Perchance from many a sacrificed head,
From darkling depths of a damp grave of old,
A voice piteously crying taking my hold,
Imploring me, 'do something, rescue me,
'Break through what an illusive prison be,
'This deathlike slumber, fruitless dreamy ills,
'Place me beside a racing horse saddle,
'Press me close to your heart, riding through hills
'And woods, and across a dried out puddle,
'Take me to sunny spots from dark, new thrills'.

Many a doubt flashed in my silent mind:
Why of all I, how can I rescue thee?
What passions shall draw thee out and ashore?
O Beauty, from this wild whirlpool of dreams?
Do tell me where didst thou flourish and when?
By what cool spring, in what shady date-groves,
Thou wert born in whose lap, in what homeless
Wanderer, what desert, and which Bedouin
Snatched thee from thine mother's arms, do tell me,
A mere bud wert thou plucked from a creeper,
And placed upon a horse, lightning swift flash,
Far, far across the scorching desert sands,
O to slave mart of what royal city?
Seeing the glory of blossoming youth,
To which chieftain hast thee been taken to,
Placing thee in a golden palanquin,

O royal gift, fit for an emperor.

A pair of slave girls waved chamar4 to thee
As diamonds flashed by from the lamps well lit,
A king of kings must have fallen to knee,
To strip bejewelled shoes from thine fair feet;
While Abyssinian eunuch of a foul faith,
And looking like messenger oh of death,
Though clad like a fair angel somewhat odd,
And standing guard O with a naked sword,
Perhaps, might have secured thine stately room,
Then wonder I, what shouldst have caused the doom
Of thy death, O thou flower of desert,
What swept away thine ocean of grandeur?
What form of jealousy shouldst have thee hurt?
What roots and shoals of intrigue couldst ever?
On what shore of cruel death wert thou cast?
What splendid cruel land? I feel aghast.

Many a query in my reverie
While remained riddled in my memory,
I heard a scream when of Maher Ali,
'Stand back, stand back, all this is fairy tale',
And my servant handed letters to me,
While salaam from the cook looked all too stale.
'No more can I stay in this eerie place',
And packed off to move to my work amid
Souls in body, and life in living grace;
My servant smiled, hoping it remained hid.

XI

Yet, by the eve giddy minded I grew,
And felt as if I had a tryst to keep,
Office work seemed an act of bread from blue,
A better harvest was when there to reap,
I threw all work aside to drive away,
Not stopping till the palace was in sight,
The day as wished sun well, it was twilight,
With hurried steps I took stairs to my way.

Heavy and eerie silence reigned therein,

The dark rooms looking as sullen as mean,
As if they had taken serious offence
Against me who had failed in their esteem,
My heart feeling contrite was heaving tense,
To have half way deserted my fond dream.
No one was there to lay my heart nigh bare,
None who could some forgiveness to me spare,
Aimless I wandered into my blank mind,
And wished I could that royal guitar find
To render my heavy heart O to sing:
'O Fire, this poor moth, vainest that wished once
'To fly away, hast come back broken wing
'To thee, forgive him just this one instance,
'Burn away both his wings, put him to shame,
'Nay, consume him in thine red scorching flame'.

Me, wailing like a clue-less cunning crow,
Two warm tear-drops fell from above on brow.
Dark and deep clouds hung overcast on hills
That day, the gloomy woods and bare river
Waiting were in suspense with monsoon drills,
An ominous calm prevailed all over.
And soon enough all shivered— land and sky,
A wild tempest blew forth O howling by,
Through the pathless woods glaring lightning teeth,
Like a raving maniac snapping chain,
Wishing to unleash hell, terrible pain
To whoso be on hills, whoso beneath!

And not a soul around was in the camp,
Rid darkness from my heart, nor light a lamp,
I could sense a woman lay there on face—
On a carpet below the bed, clasping
Her wounded heart, and pulling hair sans grace,
Blood trickling down, in utter pain, laughing
Still, bursting into a hard wringing wail,
Now, rend her bodice, now beat breasts so frail,
And from nowhere winds roared in from windows,
The pouring rains soaked further her sorrows.

Through night the storm never did cease to rage,
Nor did my fair lady's passionate cry,

I wandered from room to room, a blind man,
Unremitting sorrows my companion,
Yet, no one there, whom could I have consoled?

I heard the same cry: 'stay back, it's all false',
Maher Ali the mad was there, no doubt,
The old tenant of this odd wailing house,
'What, what is false? ' I could not help but ask,
Waiving me off was how he responded,
Repeating, 'stay back, stay back, all is false'.

XII

To office when I rushed to ask old Khan,
'Tell me pray tell the meaning of it all',
And what I learnt from the old man was this:
A story of countless unrequited,
Unfulfilled longings, lurid flames of red,
Wild carnal pleasures raging within walls
Of the palace of ill repute, the curse
Of collective heart-aches of teenage dolls,
Of blasted hopes that made every stone nurse
A red grudge against evil perpetrators,
The thirst of hungry stones growing to gall,
O turning to core into prime haters,
Eager to swallow any living soul
Like a famished ogre on eating spree,
Not one that lived there three nights for a cause,
Could have escaped safe from the cruel jaws,
Maher Ali could— running from his reason free.

'Is there any a way for my release? '
I asked, 'of course there's to a man of means,
'But far beyond tall hills, if you so please,
'And yet, you well know how it all begins,
Tale of an un-blossomed bud at mid sea,
O fated to live at that haunted shore,
There scarce could a more pathetic tale be,
More heart-rending tragedy to the core'!

XIII

But this very moment coolies screamed, 'train',
And scampered we, packing up bags and bales,
The long awaited train seemed like a bane,
That could have been a boon, such were these tales,
An English gentleman hailed our hero
From his carriage and we parted to go
Our diverse ways—to our cattle-class seat;
There was no chance to know who that man was,
Nor yet more light on his tale could be lit,
Indeed, never-ending may prove some pause.

Some truths, some lies of life lie ever so,
May be, he took us as credulous fools,
Too anxious, a painful nerve scarce cools,
Some truths and lies born are never to know,
Perchance the man minted fun at our cost,
And damsel in distress lay buried, lost.

-
1. Returning to Calcutta from Puja festival at native place.
 2. Junagarh²: A princely state in Gujarat.
 3. Suista³: A river close to the palace.
 4. Chamar⁴: From Sanskrit chaamara, a chowrie⁴, or a bushy tail to fan an exalted person, a regal insignia.
- A poetic translation of Rabindranath Tagore's short story

Translations | 02.03.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Indian Soft Know-How

What can poverty of means to world give?
Weal, nor wealth, nor much withal can it spare,
Nor tech-know-how to those in plenty live,
We have some soft assets for those that care.

Life, a quotidian test of adventure,
Survival suspended on daily dare,
Still, cosy we live with uncertain air—
To west, bored and blasé, ah, not a mean lure!

Excited we live life in penury,
Hustling, bustling amid bare life,
Healing hungry maws of humanity,
None dies here of dullness, of boredom rife.

With an attitude of innocent gamble,
We need no casinos, nor betting joints,
No fancy fortune-feigning ensemble,
Come, we give this free of frown—our soft points.

Too sterile has world grown like a hospice,
Cultured austerity hanging in air,
And people too polite, not good as nice;
Come, we know how intimate hearts to spare.

Ready are we our aching hearts to share,
In giving words to feelings when we strive,
We show to world how to live more alive,
And be humane, our bosoms all but bare.

For, world has grown an isolate island,
Hard know-how bridging barricades of land,
Making next-door neighbours like strangers stand;
We still try and extend a helping hand.

We know, the truth of this tough is to show,
Come close in, stay with us, and you will know.

The Invisible Wall

'Ossi' is what the west likes them to call,
The East complimenting West with 'pushy',
No more stands there the brick-and-mortar wall,
Love's lost still in old animosity.

The wall o'er a decade and half back fell,
Yet, an iron curtain still them divide,
Minds cannot meet over the wall of pride,
The prejudiced, hurt hearts can't that gulf scale.

'I'd rather a spouse from a foreign shore
'Bring than one from behind iron curtain, '
Felt one from across the long secured door,
Deep and wide does divide decades of pain.

Here's lingering dislike, there's disdain old,
What venom brethrens nurse for each other!
An open war has turned into one cold
Togetherness in search of fair tether!

'Too hot' for us these women from the West,
'Hard to please, pushy, far too material,
'Everything about them seems commercial,
'From old world do we come and too modest'.

'Too darn dense be these people from the East,
'Lacking any a style whatsoever,
'Forever on a bargain-hunting heist,
'Let them savour their old odious flavour'.

The wall's brought down that there begins a flow,
Heads finding hard still to communicate,
Streets and bridges and trains run to and fro,
How hard 'tis two distant hearts to placate.

Love and passion when at a premium come
In too short a period of years fifteen,
Persists old prejudice placed for long plum,
It's hard indeed, long closed closets to clean.

World has its Kashmir, long-gulfed Koreas too,
And torn-apart people elsewhere a few,
A healer great, a great teacher is time,
If not today, morrows may sing in rhyme.

The Berlin Wall came down some 15 years back on 9th November 1989. But the iron curtain continues to divide the two people that history separated. Only two per cent of marriages every year are between the East and the West Berliners, which under normal conditions should have brought together one-third to half of the couples in a city its size. Yet, they are 12 times more likely to marry foreigners. After the wall fell, there came the euphoria only to die soon. A lingering dislike persists between the two sides. Yet, in all fairness 15 years is too short a period to mitigate the wounds inflicted by 60 years of separation. Time, let us hope, will prove a great healer that it is.

Happenings | 01.11.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Itch To Ditch

Itch to ditch moving in reverse gears,
Each of which getting ripe in two years,
And if conjugal song
Gets short, two years' too long,
And party gets over soon as cheers!

The law makers in Mexico are toying with the idea of passing a controversial legislation that puts a two-year expiry date on marriages. How should we in India react? In metros like Mumbai two out of five marriages fail, contract marriages are not unknown, and the institution of marriage is perhaps crumbling fast; 'till death do us part' seems like anachronism as live-in relationships are becoming norms. But who am I to sit in judgment of what others do? For now, does this Limerick reflect my envy?

Happenings | 04.10.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Journey Is The Joy

Thou art an undying distant promise,
Me a slow traveller on foot
Suffering separation for long,
Dissipating to die on the way,
I see when no end of the endless path.
In getting I lose thee,
In losing I seem to gain,
Let this long discontent be life—
Endless quench, death of death.
In darkling clouds thine lightning outline
Comes to be and soon goes off the sight,
That I can't in eyes capture,
The faint thee oft showing, as oft lost,
Which in the illusion of the moonbeam,
I search in every grain of creation,
And scarce can still recognise.
I travel, discontent my life,
Yet, journey is my joy.

Aniruddha Pathak

The Joy Of Giving

Be it no more than just a glass of water,
A walking-stick alive rendered by daughter,
Care and concern, warm smile, none far too hotter;

Or quality time spent with someone old,
A warm blanket in times forlorn and cold,
In times of need a willing shoulder-hold;

A pair of slippers to feet walking bare,
Not in loud charity to show you care,
Heart-born feelings shown above false air;

Anything given short of counting ways,
Given to brighten up sinking heart's greys,
To lighten load that too heavily weighs;

Give it in cash though kindest give in kind,
A gift of willing heart and well inclined,
A gift coming from soul— body and mind.

Give, the only joy greater than getting,
The only joy rarer than receiving,
Be the joy of giving and forgetting!

Musings | 06.08.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Joy Of Silent Date

In praise nor yet in hate,
In quiet pregnant wait,
The joy of silent date
Never is in debate,
And at the end of date,
It's in staring at gate!

Musings | 18.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Karmic Law Of Life

I can't accuse snake were it to bite me,
Nor yet my boss blame if he were to fire,
If my pocket's picked sloppy I might be,
I might the cause be if my wife shows ire.

An act gets born in womb, a cause in lead,
And every cause has a cause in the root,
Karmic reckoning is a ripened fruit
Grown on a tree sowed by a casual seed;
A stray act we suspect rendered us harm,
Oft teaches a long forgotten lesson,
And could well be a delivering arm,
As it were of a courier in heaven.

It's logic more, much less philosophy,
Yet, ere I learnt, I was all of sixty!

Sonnets | 03.03.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Kiss

One to one, lips speak a unique tongue,
Whisper each to each as if in ears:
O let us forever remain young
In love, so, in moments melt long years!
Let's dive deep unto unknown rivers,
Like pilgrims O at a confluence,
Let's get much as we give as givers,
And live ever as one from now hence,
Lips whispered each to each O so hung.

Musings | 04.05.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Last Curtain

When blossoms glow with autumn's fading dew
And painted get with rainbow's radiant hue,
Opening up with the dawn's dewy light,
Ending the darkling nippy long night;

Red and white Parijats¹ when choose to fall
In a bed of blossoms bewitching all,
The Sapt-parnis² when their fragrance spread,
And whole neighbourhood when turns curious head;

The woods when get nigh bare or leafless lean,
Brooks choose to meander as if not keen,
And the wintry chills when tend to portend,
The aged year reaches eventful end;

And heavens preparing to summon me
Back, if or not I can that well foresee—
My life's autumn chooses when to unfold
Unto cold winter—calling me nigh old,

I may perhaps, what old eyes can, see clear
That the hour of my end is drawing near,
Me in grey wonder on last fall of falls,
When my life's saga its last curtain calls.

1. Parijats: White or reddish yellow flowers predominantly seen around autumn. The blossom is believed in Indic lore to have been brought down from heaven during ancient times. The flowers fall off on their own, overnight, as if a bed-sheet is spread under this medium-sized tree.

2. Sapt-parnis: The darling of most plantations and gardens. The tree has green elongated leaves in a bunch of seven (sapta = seven; parnis=of leaves) , which always remain bright green all through the year. These flowers too blossom around autumn in a bulbous bouquet and are known for their

heady fragrance that spreads far and wide.

- Musings | 04.12.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Law And Lawyer

Uncertain when read letters of laws,
Lawyers draw out sharpened set of claws.
The law and lawyer each
Have a strange kind if itch:
In a warm ash the `ther when wallows.

Tongue-in-cheek | 02.05.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Lost Child In Man

There was time long ere civilisation,
Man's heart missed a few beats whenso he saw
Early dawn's dewdrops, dusk's dazzling rainbow,
Time was when with Ma Nature he felt one.

Time was he was a nature-loving child,
When butterflies, rainbows belonged to him,
At season's first rainfall when he danced wild,
Stars were his friends, as was a dancing stream.

Matchless remained his child-like innocence,
His own he felt was life's passing moment,
Hailed by heaven, as if for him 'lone sent,
Unhurried he lived, fuller his presence.

Marching ahead, moving up to meet wisdom,
How much has man missed, how much more he'll still?
Winning his cause, building a lofty kingdom,
Lost has he his child-like magical thrill.

Oh, where's the child that on the way he lost?
Where's gone freedom to wander with free will?
How dear hast so-called civil in him cost?
How much down-hill shall this man tumble still?

Reflections | 02.09.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Magic Of Life

I feel, love in this world is like a dream
That at times threatens to be mighty true,
Rising higher from the humdrum like cream,
Disappearing then like a drop of dew;
Or at times feel, life is an onion peel,
You need will and vision both ways to see,
And aught with its apparent conflict deal,
For, world is both a myth and reality.
You sure see a plume of smoke but no fire,
And plumes do take many a form and shape,
If fire is not seen how can you the pyre?
Rid all logic— discard that robe you drape.
Life's all magic. Logic has not a clue:
Seed's tree, flower's fruit, or two cells and you!

Sonnets | 12.12.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The March Of Time

The New Year dawns, hope with half wish,
The old seemingly losing dream,
And March marches, chill left behind,
In April spring springs forth full brim,
May-June sizzle in solar noon,
Mercury up like pressured steam,
And monsoon turns grey into green,
Rivers and lakes filled up to rim;
Autumn-fall then take a due turn,
Reminding of impending grim
Of chill again in endless chain;
All Nature's mortal it may seem;
Time marches on to chase its dream,
Seasons stick like a playing team.

The lines with odd numbers run rhyme-less, while all even ones share one single rhyme throughout, and ends with a rhyming couplet— an atypical sonnet.

Sonnets | 05.08.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Marketing Mantra

Getting seems more thrilling than having—
The soul of today's art of selling,
Yet, what you get and crave
Soon turns to what you have,
And that breeds endless thirst of getting.

Today's marketing mantra seems to be buying and begetting. It is much more fun than in having. Creating demand may be good for the economy. Yet, very few resources on earth are renewable or easily replaceable.

Reflections | 01.09.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Midnight's Baby

When jilted she hit like jinxed brandy,
And called her much-married man dandy,
Branding 'midnight baby'
That lived his life shabby,
'No, I was never his 'arm candy'.

A woman jilted sings of perfidy with a wilted tongue. This is what happened to Salman Rushdie, a well-known author. His latest divorced wife has some special adjectives for him. The woman who felt jilted was Pia Glenn. 'Midnight baby' is a euphemism for 'bastard'. Does it make Salman's 'Midnight's Children' of the same class?

- Happenings | 02.11.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Mind When Forgets

Thou missest O mind in thine mindless mirth
That every shade in a rainbow palette
Ye use to paint, and brighten dreary state
Of life, is but by Heaven created.

Oblivious of thine birth, mission on earth,
Ye think: the sweet notes of melodic scale
Thou useth music to make and regale
The world, are but by Heaven created.

And forget when lost in thine puny worth,
In human brain's immense bottom-less power,
That lets man rise and kiss tallest of tower,
Has been by Heaven, not thee, created.

Leave, mind's ego, thine vainest pedestal,
The power ye boast bequeathed is but by soul.

The theme of the poem is 'Ego's puniness against
immense powers of the spirit'.

- Sonnets | 01.08.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Mist Lost In Thrills

Lost in undulating thrills
And not in undue hurry,
Taking lazy time to be
The mist stayed on sleepy hills.

Sipping cups of steaming tea,
Stretching my time a long mile,
In rare chill-charmed ecstasy,
My thoughts lingered on awhile.

Took me to times of life's ease,
To rambling gardens, green teas,
Two months of leisure, lush leas,
Of slow down and added lease,

Of well-earned, much-deserved rest
O from life's vain, hollow haste.

There's something about hills. On Sahyadri Hills at Khadak Vasla, not so tall, but I experienced a few days of mist and my mind dwelt on a long vacation on Ooty hills in Indian South a few years back. These hills I must have visited a dozen times of short stays. But there is something unique about staying put leisurely for more than two months. My exhilaration brought back those memories and this poem was born.

Musings | 11.01.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Moment Whose Time Has Come

One careless spark may a forest fire start,
Or a whole matchbox no campfire can spark.
One careless word can break a tender heart,
A whole epic might as well miss its mark.
Enough might be one well-aimed love-filled dart,
A whole quiver cannot stop a dog's bark.
A hint is all it takes to a smart man,
A word of rumour might ruin all of mart,
Enough's one horse to pull a heavy cart,
Rows of hungry dogs fail a sledge to man.

One moment is enough to win the war,
Which days of long parlours fail to prevent,
The Fate when takes reins of a chariot car,
Mighty warlords fall to fated moment.

This piece draws many a reference from Mahabharata epic.

Reflections | 04.09.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Monsoon Dance

He looked keen to get on with monsoon dance,
Rain clouds arriving late in his kingdom,
He looked around, weighed his chance for romance,
The ladylove perched far, looking lonesome,
Spied at the spot, found him charming enough,
And sauntered close pulled by the pleasant scene,
He preened his décor, groomed his pomp and puff,
Felt pleased, she's prime to spread his pool of genes.

But whereso there's romance there's a villain,
And a snake slithered to the serene scene,
Not much a threat, but an unwanted pain
Pinned down, punished that the dance may begin.
When proffered as a prize, her last of doubt
That might have lingered, lost its last of clout.

I once saw the picture of a peacock tackling a serpent and a peahen watching
keenly from afar, and this poem unfolded.

Sonnets | 03.06.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Murder Most Foul

The meanest of murder, axe nor machete,
Overwhelming greed the sole bleeding knife;
Cohorts of crime, manic men of market,
The fair lady herself— much freedom rife!
To save her skin she this defence did fake:
Infidels oft breed their own tragic ends—
Making out markets seem a sad mistake,
Not knife, she used her own barest of stands.

No, not in fear darling, ye died of hate,
In greed of growth I guess, guilt-edged progress,
And yet, ere ye fall to thine destined fate,
I blame less Lady Greed, more her excess.
If bleed ye must ye shall bleed not in vain,
If too much greed be reined in tight restrain!

This sonnet is in the form of allegorical satire on the goings on at global market meltdown. The sonnet takes its inspiration from Sir Walter Raleigh's 'A secret murder hath been done of late'.

Sonnets | 04.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Mystery Of 'here' And 'now'

Let people dwell in hist'ry as much can,
Let them love time-stealers called 'was' and 'will',
He that loves here and now is happy man.

Both birds, both absurd, flightless as vain,
Buried deep in vale, or lost yon the hill,
Let people dwell in hist'ry as much can.

If what goes never does return again,
And fleeting moments be all one has still,
He that loves here and now is happy man.

The story of man e'er since Time began,
If were to fall in same trap, same evil,
What use dwelling in hist'ry much one can?

Naught whatso changes more relentless than
This twain of time-wasters of wanton will,
He that loves here and now is happy man.

As past pans out on how we choose to pan,
And morrows melt to nought in frozen chill,
Let whoso dwell in hist'ry as much can,
He that loves here and now is happy man.

- Villanelle | 06.10.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Narcissist

I'm a bush stone-curlew,
And this is my fond view—
There can be none like me
In all space, land and sea,
An if one does exist,
Bird it be, be it beast,
Reflection of mine is,
And oh dear, I love this!

Happenings, humour | 21.03.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The New India I Never Knew

More vibrant, chaotic yet confident,
The picture may still look a bit cloudy
Like monsoon's pregnant sky, hopes nigh hazy,
The new India seems to me resurgent,
As if her old spirit has been reborn,
Yet, is there need aloud to blow our horn?

Millions of starving mouths agape no more,
Yet, amid islands of wealth aplenty,
I see a sea of abject poverty,
Million aspirations rushing ashore,
Unlettered heads hanging on hungry maws,
And a new caste cast in consumer cause.

I see scores of far-flung homes without let,
Dreamers therein dreaming for better life,
All watching winds of change on screens raised rife,
Homes thatched, unmatched, but with an idiot set,
Connected, closeted by phone mobile,
A whole population highly mobile!

A mix of potions makes heady cocktail,
Greed there's for growth, wealth flooding over rims,
All seem on wings, but nebulous are dreams,
The restless young minds on the move to hail
New India in an unforeseen hurry,
Out they are old paradigm to burry.

All jostling in for a mere toe-hold,
Where's common man in this tectonic shift?
Pension pushers, of wherewithal, adrift,
Hapless and mute, scrambling for life blind-fold,
Dazed by daily doses of scams, scandals,
Oh lost in storm and boats have shattered hulls!

Ways of my world have callous grown, O Lord,
Bordering on white-collar theft and fraud:
A man is slain, nowhere the slayer is,
A fraud is fraught; fraudsters walk free in ease,

One plucks, a partner packs and profit makes,
One commits crime, caveats partake the stakes.

Happenings | 02.01.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Nightingale One Early Dawn

Ah what a unique singing style,
Thine melody is made of single note,
At spring time gets persistent and remote,
Thine poignant Fifth pulsates from a mile.

Ye bring to my mind early Vedic chant,
A short melody most ancient,
Or folk refrain that never fails to haunt,
Among birds most magnificent.

I wonder if it wert thou to inspire
That, Vedic chants were short and sweet—
Only a few notes rising higher,
A unique feat hard to repeat!

King art thou among solo singers,
Ye need no'ne to accompany,
Thine soulful drone— what harmony!
Full symphony that far long lingers.

Thine Pancham's¹ so powerfully prest,
So pervasive, O Nightingale,
It caresses octave's high crest,
But kisses as if entire scale.

A singer art thou elusive,
Ye sing a lone note and roam alone
No augmented short microtone,
Sure, maestros oft come reclusive.

When monsoon comes, goes when warm spring,
It's fair and fine ye go silent
With none to appreciate talent,
And raucous frogs drown thine singing.

How good still year round if ye sing
And be my morning alarm ring!

Pancham¹: In Hindustani music it is the note Pa, the Fifth of the scale, also

known in West as sol or G. The nightingale of spring, or cuckoo, repeatedly calls out in this note.

Images | 02.04.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Old Man, Me

One, too old to lay eggs— a chicken,
How they eye— wondering as to when,
Expecting me to die
Any time— willing sky,
Oh the way man turns old in his den!

Tongue-in-cheek | 33.02.2019 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Pledges Unpaid

Oh these ugly bidding wars all so mean,
The flagrant show, glimpse of bulging wallets,
Loud trumpets along tight-fisted shrill din;
And auction call that louder ever gets.

Bit strange, this rush to rule at world's aid marts,
When world's rich unwilling to pay wages,
Vie still to come tops on the goodwill charts,
Oh this show off largesse but of pledges.

It is not unlike a beauty contest—
What with rivals out to show off figures—
Each a brag, boast, flaunting to feign his best,
Amid wide-mouth-eagers and fair-leaguers!

Yet, how much help comes from a feeling heart?
And how much mere display, demo and dash?
And what largesse would they willingly part?
What commitment would come in handy cash?

Aid, seldom parted, paid promptly as said,
Pledges have always fallen short of aid.
Yet, if that be the only way to give,
Well, something's better than none, I believe.

Based on what happened following the recent world tsunami.

Happenings | 02.01.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Poem And Her Poet

Death once told poor life defeated by life:
Life's no life if lived on the edge of knife,
No more a struggle, nor is full of strife,
Do ye know how many deaths is Death rife?

Death's all death; the same is not true of life,
Life tries to knot her up snaps when death's knife,
But I've heard a man asking on death bed,
Pray, tell me Death, how long ere I'm all dead?

To him, said death, straightening up his head,
Moments might when look like minutes of dread,
Minutes stretch and stretch into hours, instead,
When hours take days, and days, years, you are dead.

Remember, life's lived moment to moment,
'Tis measured too in a moving moment,
Forget not: Death alone is permanent,
I dwell in life from birth, live life dormant;

There's no freedom in life, nor should death call,
Death changes but the bricks of prison wall,
All quarrels 'tween life and death, big and small,
Settled are, death when proves him far too tall.

Life is a small piece, but a paragraph
Of my poem, said Death, metre nor measure but in half,
Life may decide every new beginning,
But 'tis me that knows the length, knows ending.

Eons pass sans measure for endless time,
While no clocks tick, nor dare their hours to chime,
Boulders of rocks break down whilst time stands still,
O grinding into grains of sands sans will.

While life is stuck with my poem's first rhyme,
Death challenged life to dare the worst she can,
I'm the Absolute trouser wearing man¹,
I wonder how relative would tick time!

1. Death muses himself to be the male principle, the purusha. The poem stands for life and prakriti. The piece here depicts a dialogue between Life, or the matter, the poem and her creator poet, the Death. In Indic philosophy, purusha is the presiding deity, the atman or soul, which is eternal and body is made of prakriti, the material nature, which is death-bound.

- Musings | 12.08.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Poetic View

I looked at what was Nature's rare wonder
And enquired: what do we call this flower?
'A lily', said a gardener
In a matter of fact,
Looking at my pointed finger,
Precise, to the point, and perfect.

Not quite content, a man of science—
Of flowers and flora, their progeny,
Which, at school we called Botany—
Said, throwing light upon my ignorance,
And making far too much of fuss:
'Of Hexandria monogymia, the genus! '

And there followed a virtual shower
From one to whom knowledge was power:
A flower of thousand petals of light,
Of mystery, of many a splendour,
That opens up dark is when night,
And shines with human endeavour.

And that was when I knew:
Poetic view, though like early dawn's dew,
The matter of fact oft ceases to be,
There but shines dewy pearls of poetry,
The head heeding more to man's heart,
The head painting primitive art.

Had I known, would have made no fuss,
Let the flower come from any genus,
Call it lily, call it lotus,
It would charm still no less, all us,
By any gender, any name,
Her beauty would be all the same.

-Musings | 06.09.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Poor And Puffed Pockets

Global girth seems to gain all the time,
And giants garner pie's goodly prime.
Rich pocket the most, why
The poor still poorer die,
Not to own still, pile up wealth is crime.

It's fine if your lemon's a sweet lime,
It's no crime thoughts of 'I',
Do savour your sweet pie,
And pay heed; puncture no poor man's rhyme,
Listen to muffled sighs, spare a dime.

The fight against inequality is not only making little progress but is losing ground. The rich one percent is slated to control more than half of global wealth by 2016, says an Oxfam report. World's 80 wealthiest pockets (85 in 2014) own \$ 1.9 trillion, the same quantum shared by 3.5 billion poor. The poor are hurt in two ways: They get a smaller share of the economic pie, and due to extreme inequality, there is lesser pie to share. Every year the elite at Davos talk of good intentions and the poor in hope listen. The global elite gloss it over all the time.

Happenings | 01.01.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Post-Truth Era

Tad with a sorcerer's illusion
Here comes truth, dappled its dimension,
That can be dispensed with
Like an old man's tired teeth.
Welcome it to post-truth's feigned season.

Truth it seems is fast evolving to be an illusion that can be easily dispensed with.
Lies can be suitably twisted to look like truth. Political faith and belief has
acquired audacity to trump reason. A stage has set in for players with power to
perform.

Happenings | 04.12.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Rich When Over Reach

When Dollar millionaires roam all around,
Who now wants be a Rupee millionaire?
The picture plays same scene for Sterling Pound,
Money inflates, man remains very there.
A mere million has no more the same shine,
The magic happens with hefty much more,
One lakh has gone below the bottom line,
A million may soon see paupers' bare floor.
Today it seldom does what it once did,
When hundred thousand had a handy hue
A sum that smiled but at fortunate few,
Ten times would soon seldom suffice, indeed.

Greed when over-takes need of nouveau riche,
Money must multiply with shrinking reach.

A private UK bank has arrived at a precise figure of Pound Sterling: 2.6 million (approx Rs 20 crore) as the bare minimum to make one a Ritchie Rich. One million, some 25 years ago, would have been more than enough to afford a luxurious lifestyle. Money indeed has a way of walking two steps well ahead of a wannabe.

Sonnets, Happenings | 03.10.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The River Of Life

Walking along a river in good flow,
Sure and steady and forward, deep and wide,
I saw some man-made pools, stagnant, narrow,
That, no sooner were dug out by men, died.
The river looked as ever full of life,
Alive and singing as it moved along;
The pool, like men that it made, full of strife,
It barricaded joys, made isles of wrong.

And in the quiet of my thought, I heard
The song of a steady river of life,
Which, unpatented still is well-preserved,
And I sensed the cause of all human strife:
While no life blossoms if blocked as a rule,
Man seeks permanence in a stagnant pool!

Sonnets | 01.04.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Roles Are When Reversed

As the world's way deep with the life its own,
As few have much time for others to spare,
As people are plugged up, unto self prone,
I also was with me as ever ere.

I still saw, walking in, a bearded mom,
Young enough with some hint of greying hair
Tied in pony tail, pushing his son's pram,
His mother-like care showed no awkward air.

He took a table, his pram facing him,
And soon as settled down, ordered his beers,
His gaze not shifting from his pram-prone dream,
The babe asleep in peace, he perseveres.

Now reaching out to her with adored pat,
And then adjusting baby blanket there,
Perhaps needless altogether, I bet,
Yet, there was none an artificial air.

Plain decency, a dying odd pursuit,
Persuaded me to turn my eyes away,
I still stole glances at the scene so cute,
Comes indeed rare such a father today.

Reality might still him one day stare,
Say, some thirty odd years from this rare scene,
This very man might well be in wheelchair,
But, shall this bundle of love still be keen?

Would he look at his father with fond eyes?
Render same tender care taken granted?
We might find him withdrawn, cold, worldly wise,
Father awaiting death from lonely bed!

Old parents seem an unfair task to son,
That to parents was cherished privilege,
A truth defied until old age does rage,
All of us pass thru this awkward station.

Perhaps parents to theirs were fair the least,
Perchance, they failed to measure, or fell short,
May be, humans aught be like birds and beasts—
Raise the litter; let it thence leave the port.

Musings | 01.12.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Room Was Filled With Gloom

The room was filled with facile gloom,
Though potted plants spawned roses pink,
All else seeming incidental
Contrasted what with dullness without
At this peak of monsoon's wet month.
Life looks nigh incompatible
Matching no man's fanciful whims,
Whilst world weirder is than we think;
The tree in front of my window,
With more yellowed brown leaves than green,
Somehow more reassuring seemed
Than roses pink with life as now.

In kitchen, cooker's protests rose
With flourishing flames from the stove,
Spiteful of cold dullness without;
I wonder if man's best behaviours
Can ever match Nature's endeavours
To rise above defeatist thoughts of tomb,
And I know not if life's more mysterious
Than me seems Nature is wondrous.

- Musings | 04.10.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Saga Of Life

When we come we scarce know life is a play,
Nor know to act and improvise ahead,
And play our parts as ordained and scripted,
Coming and going the exiting way.
We then know that curtain would one day fall,
And figure out, we must our applause earn,
We must our parts well learn, learn and unlearn,
Our act still no claps earns ere curtains call.

And we return with baggage of the past—
That how we wish we can somewhere offload,
We know this cannot go on nor would last,
But we carry on, on a beaten road.
 Poor Him had hoped we would try and go far,
 And some that did twinkle today as star!

- Sonnets | 03.09.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Salt Of Life

Man's repute, ah the true salt of life,
Purest of treasure in itself rife,
A sharp knife's keenest edge,
And man's mirror image,
But unless advertised,
Like a salt iodised,
Even to wife's eyes suffers strife!

Tongue-in-cheek | 45.02.2019 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Santa Sans Festive Gears

Flowing white beard, nor happy cheers,
Pot-bellied nor with trademark gears,
Clear of set symbols Santa appears,
No reined-in reindeer his cart steers.

In a red beret jacket that night,
No one sees a kindly old man,
But a diminutive woman—
Blue jeans, black scarf sharp winds to fight!

A Secret Santa¹ all so rare,
Care, concern writ large on her face,
No vague, festive commercial air,
She showed genuine feminine grace.

Well past many a goodly mall,
Wherein festive spirit seemed loud,
All hotels posh and passable,
Laudable, lost she looks in crowd.

Oh, there can't be enough, she sighs,
Spotting a poor at a bus stand,
As a girl to her frail bosom be-ties,
She's handed a bill— hundred Rand,

As Merry Christmas to her says,
One was taken to a doctor,
Of two being raised without ways,
Yet, a smile sprawls all over her.

Thanks to Larry's¹ heart-felt efforts,
Angels in a nation-wide dash,
Busy helping folks with small cash
O to reach crowds of needy hearts.

Subtlety in a world of splash,
A Santa sans all festive gears
Handing over small ready cash
That earned rare smiles if not loud cheers.

1. One, Larry Stewart, gave away some \$1.5 million over 26 years before dying of cancer in 2007. It was his idea to start a Secret Santa campaign to help with ready cash to the needy on Christmas.

Happenings | 03.12.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Satanic Reverses

The singer of Satanic Verses,
Veteran of three sad divorces,
Now faced is with the fourth,
Time for him to launch forth
The next book: Satanic Reverses,
Or perhaps Satanic Cold Curses,
But no launch—small mercies!

When the fourth wife of a well-known author of *The Satanic Verses*, and other novels recently left him

Happenings | 01.07.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Scare-Crow And Avian Friends

With my voice suppressed, muted, bent and bowed,
Oh what will I all alone tell the crowd?
Me doing a job that makes no one proud—
Me scaring friends from a field sowed and ploughed.
The scare-crow stood there wide mouth, not allowed
To open up his heart, nor think aloud,
Worried of fellow birds, the avian crowd,
Seeing skies overhead, no single cloud,
Poor hungry mouths around would feel unloved,
With them dead, who shall I scare with this shroud?
This bare grey field with everyone's hope sowed,
And me so mute looking as if unmoved,
Oh what else I do but on job feel proud?
And hope He does His— worry for the crowd.

A scare-crow is split apart on the call of duty on one hand, and heart-felt concern about his winged friends, against whose interest he has to work. He is worried about clear, cloudless skies. If it no more rains, what would his friends do? With no crop, what will he guard? He is lost amid these sentiments, but something tells him to do his job. And someone else shall do His. The scare-crow's single-minded worry about his avian friends is expressed here with all the fourteen lines taking one single rhyme.

Sonnets | 05.04.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Seed Of Life

Clouds thunder, roar aloud when I arrive,
Life all around on earth hails me full heart,
And rainbows paint when I set to depart.
It's not me alone still that earth's alive,
Sun sustains and air renders a fresh breath,
Then who among us garners greater faith?

Monsoon when comes, the rain songs of life sings,
Whistling winds with dancing notes fill air,
Enlivening next spring wafting on wings,
Sun peeps, rainbows add colour, notes sound fair,
Rain droplets kiss many a hopeful face,
And oft when clouds scatter in greyish sky,
Nudged by breeze, sun pops out with some grimace
That seems to say: how dare dark clouds defy?
Long may have we games of hide and seek played,
On alchemy this, seed of life is laid.

The deliberations among sun, rain, and air took a little long to settle and this sonnet had to allow itself two lines more before a conclusion was reached.

Sonnets | 01.08.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Self 3: Never Is This Soul Born

Never has this soul been born,
Nor ever of life been shorn,
Nor, once having come to be,
He shall ever cease to be,
Beyond birth and eternal,
Primordial, He's perpetual,
Should this body be slain,
The soul would still remain.|| 2.20 ||

Sanskrit text

n jayte im/yte vakdaict\\naya& -UTva -ivta va n -Uy: |
Ajo inTy: =a¼to™y& pura8on hNyte hNymane =rIre ||Ê.ÊÈ||

Sanskrit transliteration

na j@yate mriyate v@ kad@chitna aya> bh#tv@ bhavit@ v@ na bh#ya*
aja* nitya* sh@^hvata* aya> pur@%a*na hanyate hanyam@ne shar\$re

From among select verses on 'Self, atman' from Bhagavad-Gita

Sanskrit text: Fonts used (Hitarth Hin Jalak/ Hindi Saral-1/Shree-Guj-0768)

Sanskrit Transliteration: Fonts used (Sanskrit Roman)

Aniruddha Pathak

The Self 4: The Soul Of Ceaseless Breath

He that knows this soul of immortal breath
As free from birth and change, decay and death,
How can such a One be slain still?
How, who, O Arjun, can Him kill? || 2.21 ||

Sanskrit text

Vaedaivnai=na&inTy& y AenmjmVyym\|
k9& s pu£q: pa9R k& 0atyit hiNt km\ ||Ê.ÊÉ||

Sanskrit transliteration

veda avin@shina> nitya> ya* ena> aja> avyaya>
katha> sa* puru^ha* p@rtha ka> gh@tayati ha

—
From among select verses on 'Self, atman' from Bhagavad-Gita

Sanskrit text: Fonts used (Hitarth Hin Jalak/ Hindi Saral-1/Shree-Guj-0768)

Sanskrit Transliteration: Fonts used (Sanskrit Roman)

Aniruddha Pathak

The Self 5: This Body, A Garment For Soul

On giving up the garments old,
As people put on others new,
So doth this body-bearer too—
Take up new flesh in place of old.

Worn out garments as man doth cast
Aside, take new that would long last,
So also, dresst in flesh and blood,
The soul takes new in place of old. || 2.22 ||

Sanskrit text

Vaasa&is jI8aRin y9a ivhaynvain gsi j\$r%@ni yath@ vih@ya nav@ni g=h%@ti
nara* apar@%i
that@ shar\$r@%i vih@ya j\$r%@ni any@ni sa>y@ti nav@ni deh\$

—
From among select verses on 'Self, atman' from Bhagavad-Gita

Sanskrit text: Fonts used (Hitarth Hin Jalak/ Hindi Saral-1/Shree-Guj-0768)

Sanskrit Transliteration: Fonts used (Sanskrit Roman)

Aniruddha Pathak

The Self, Atman: 1, Unreal Scarce Doth Exist

Unreal scarce doth exist

Never can unreal come to be,
Nor ever real ceases to be,
Perceived have the seekers of troth
Reality O of them both!

Truth ever lives with the same face,
For all time to come, in all space,
Nor has untruth face, nor yet place,
He that can the truth within see,
The seer knows both this Reality.|| 2.16 ||

Sanskrit text

nasto ivÀte -avo na-avo ivÀte st: |
w-yorip d<Q4o™NtSTvnyoSt] vdi=Ri-: ||Ê.ÉÎ||

Sanskrit transliteration

na asata* vidyate bh@va*na abh@va* vidyate sata*
ubhayo* api d=^h{a* a<ta* tu anayo* tattva-darshibhi*

—
From among select verses on 'Self, atman' from Bhagavad-Gita

Sanskrit text: Fonts used (Hitarth Hin Jalak/ Hindi Saral-1/Shree-Guj-0768)

Aniruddha Pathak

The Self,2: Never Can This Self Be Slain

Truly, if the killer
Thinks him as the killer,
So too if the one slain
Thinks, he has been slain,
None of them doth know still,
The soul be killed, nor can kill.

If He's taken as one that slays,
Or thought of as one that be slain,
Either way one knoweth not still
This soul's subtlest of ways:
This One never doth kill,
Nor can He ever be slain.|| 2.19 ||

Sanskrit text

y Aen& veiä hNtar&y¾En& mNyte htm\ |
w-O tO n ivjanIto nay& hiNt n hNyte ||É.ÉÑ||

Sanskrit transliteration

ya* ena> veti ha ya* cha ena> matyate hata>
ubhau tau na vij@n\$ta* na aya> ha<ti na hanyate

From among select verses on 'Self, atman' from Bhagavad-Gita

Sanskrit text: Fonts used (Hitarth Hin Jalak/ Hindi Saral-1/Shree-Guj-0768)

Sanskrit Transliteration: Fonts used (Sanskrit Roman)

Aniruddha Pathak

The Smile Of Greens

I like flowers smiling to me in glee,
Who seem to say flowers are food to soul,
But I love greens more on a greying tree,
Who breathes life that life remains one whole.

I like flowers for their sweet-smelling smiles,
Flowerless, world would lose some of its worth,
But only leaves liven up far off miles,
Leaves greening no grey, where would be the Earth?

Yet, few can understand the smile of green.
Without leaves whence would come flowers and fruits?
How would life survive ever to take roots?
And woodlands would look grey deserts so mean!

And yet, no one would notso ever miss,
For, as greens go, life would get her last kiss.

Sonnets | 04.11.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Social Media

To poor care-worn with gutsy goals,
They first gave voice to voiceless souls.
Then came when the wary watchdogs,
People's voice languishing in docks,
It went nigh whence it ere started—
Voice of the voiceless was vetted.

Reflections | 06.03.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Song Of Life

I feel like losing me from deep dark night,
Loosening from shackles of gravity,
Wonder, if stars guide me, lead me with light,
If birds land me their wings to set me free.
And if horizons no more hold limit,
Need have I for food, sleep, nor yet waking,
If silver of moon remains softly lit,
Let me swoon with ecstasy when birds sing.
This done, let me ever so higher soar
Amidst countless pilgrims on their voyage,
Now be and no more on a distant shore,
And one day from sky's blue lose my image.

This song of life perfected if at all,
I might sing on D-Day— then silent fall.

Sonnets | 05.04.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Spark Within

The spark supreme when spells,
Deep within when it dwells,
Let it grow,
Let it flow,
'Me in all, all in me' till it tells.

Reflections | 05.12.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Sun Seems To Say

The rising sun seems to say:
What you saw so far was dream,
Ended has your night if grim,
See the red of my first ray,
The night and dream were your past,
With the spell of light I cast,
See if 'now' can be stretched vast.
Future cometh dressed as now—
To sole moment you should bow,
Fill it up full to the brim,
O fritter it not somehow,
See my red, forget life's grey.

The sun rises everyday; it has something to say; but do we care? This time however it is determined. And this piece repeats every rhyme three times to emphasise.

Musings | 01.02.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Swing Of Life Sways

Times change far off and extreme,
Life too, like an early dawn's dream;
Time was, man worried what to eat,
Not what to eat now, digest it;
Ere worry was to deserve wealth,
To weasel now, hang on to health;
From nourishing soul in body,
Man worries, body wrinkled be,
From beatitude, inner beauty,
To hiding crow-bars that would be;
From how to reach a lofty crest,
To survival, rise over rest;
From modest dream and karmic quest,
It's skimming cream de la cream!

The swing of life sways, from one extreme to another.
How things have changed— then and now.

Musings | 02.04.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Tale Of Life

Coming in, we know not life's a stage-play,
Nor know to act and improvise ahead,
And play our parts ordained, as scripted;
Going out, to exit from all one day,
We come to know, curtain sure one day falls,
And figure out, we must our applause earn,
We must our parts practise, learn and unlearn,
We scarce still deserve claps ere curtain calls.

And we return, baggage borne of the past—
That, how we wish we can somewhere offload!
We know this cannot go on nor would last,
But we carry on, on a beaten road.
And hope still against hopes we shall go far—
And get one day the rating of a star!

Sonnets | 03.09.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Tale Of Times

Merciless when the truth is made meek,
Search is made when to hide, not to seek,
Truth when wails under veil—
Emboldened the lies sail,
In disgust the truth dares: time to leak!

This is how it is. In USA officials are grilled in public. But our bureaucrats, our elected representatives (PACs and JPCs) work under a veil of secrecy. And no government wants to change it.

Some right-to-information advocates argue that when Parliament allows media to access its proceedings, why should its committees work behind opaque walls? So, what happens then? Sweet nothing! Disgusted, the truth cries out helplessly, and there are motivated leaks galore.

Happenings | 05.03.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Thrill Of Waiting

Ah to wait and wait!
The thrill in an anxious wait,
Where's when she's at gate?

Haiku | 42.02.2019 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Time Is Now

Imagine on a lone, remote island,
Far, far, amid wilderness and nowhere,
A place no one ever set foot ere,
And there a ship-wracked man should land,

Washed ashore by the stormy tidal waves,
Injured, unconscious for unknown long;
Nature that sings along an endless song,
If it chooses to assail, also saves.

Oh, where am I? What time is it?
How long, my God! What day is it?
Ah time! One thing man may never beat,
From time and space there's escape, nor retreat.

Yet, lone islands have little use for time,
Time that has future, nor has past,
Nor has fair reason nor yet rhyme,
Days, nights resigned to live as cast.

And time, meaninglessness invented,
By, who else, but man ruled by mind,
Whose, true self, long buried half-dead,
Oft plays a feeblest of tune from behind.

Well, oaks and eagles were bemused
By the question on time that he did pose,
Time as a tool this land ne'er used,
The question, well, never arose.

But were they to respond somehow,
Land that lived moment to moment,
Present time that lone was present,
Would've said: what else, the time is now!

- Musings | 04.04.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Tired Tune Of The Old

The old ruled with this golden rule
For long years sans a fair number
That one cares now to remember,
A rule taught in no-question school
That has the same tune for long sung:
Far wiser we are than ye young.

And the youth in a mute respect
Has maintained a cavil-less mum,
And treaded a much-trodden tract
Oh for generations to come;
Who, when old enough with own brood,
Have found this ploy ah pretty good!
And this concert goes on for long—
The tired old tune, a dead ding dong!

Sonnets | 09.01.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Tongue Ever So Young

An eggplant need not taste nor look like egg,
Nor in a hamburger ham need be there,
Where's pine, apple in pineapple, I beg?
Nor yet french-fries in France invented were.
They native are— American pure blood,
Wherein was born the world's every junk food;
All sugar and sweet and nice little treat,
Sweetmeat's no meat, but sweetbread's made of meat.

Quicksand by no means a quick end does bring,
It has slow jaws of death and there's no jerk,
Never is it quick, slowly does it work.
Talking of quirks of tongues, take boxing ring,
Where brawn of every shape and size show dare,
It's bound by an area of a fine square.
Guinea pig is a rodent, small or big,
Used it is for research, nor is a pig.

Writers write and singers have oft times sung,
But hammers are no ham, nor hunger gets hung,
Talk of logic, plural of tooth is teeth,
For heavens sake, why that of booth's not beeth?
One single bird is goose, two make it geese,
Too bad, moose would not multiply to meese;
Teachers have all along their students taught,
But I doubt if preachers have ever praught.

In a play people recites, say their say,
But in recitals sing, or music play;
Strange, motorists always park on driveways,
In dash and drive, drive on all the parkways;
Whether a house in a raging fire burns
Up, or burns down, to ashes always turns;
As it matters little, there's not a doubt,
Someone may fill in a form or fill out.

Marathon nor yet sprint be human race
But it does run a race with no disgrace.
And we wind up a watch to make it start,

And wind up things or down with heavy heart;
Looking over things, one may something find,
But by overlooking, may look like blind;
It's all right staying over for the night,
But overstaying welcome is not right.

Seems, English tongue is designed to confuse
Those that may learn later, say, for instant,
With so many false starts inelegant,
What with look-alikes in use and misuse;
And there are sound-alikes as well to add
To the riot of confusion galore,
While news writers that daily deadlines dread,
What with stop-press, puns confuse all the more.

And there are fond purveyors of what's old,
Archaic and no more in current use,
Poets with pregnant clichés pure as gold,
And liberated from dying disuse;
The tongue still as no endangered one lives,
Nor yet is gasping for breath on death-bed,
In truth, more alive, getting much as gives,
Getting richer, ah right northward to head.

Funny, you feel digesting irony,
And wonder what keeps the tongue all so young?
And vibrant with borrowings so many;
The very foreign gene one deems as dung!

Tongue-in-cheek | 01.02.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Truth Of Freedom

Truth does for sure liberate you,
A voice was heard as if from blue.
As things dual are made in heaven,
A voice of doubt then fired its gun:
Long ere ye relish that brew,
It might make you see the blue.
One may not have even a clue,
But freedom has a hazy hue.
Man oft feels safe in walled prison,
Unsafe, roaming free under sun,
Beware, truth may liberate you,
But two-edged sword is in my view.

Reflections | 08.02.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Tsunamis Within

Some helped; some sighed and settled down with life,
The storm came and razed all on its way laid—
And flattened that in defiance raised head,
Those survived were left searching life from strife.
This is the way world is, shall ever be,
This is the way of life, all existence,
Life in perennial search of new balance,
Normalcy it be or calamity;
But tsunamis in men forever rage—
No mere storm `pon seabed of emotions,
Deeper does it delve than deepest oceans,
Few can tame this dance of death on life's stage.
If man can do little on storms within,
Those without are beyond his powers to pin.

The tsunami tidal waves struck the Indian Ocean and South-East Asian countries following a massive earthquake off Sumatra, Indonesia in December 2004. Hundreds of thousand were dead. It showed, man that tamed nuclear energy, explored solar planets, built massive dams over rivers, and much more, is utterly helpless against the wrath of nature.

Sonnets, Happenings | 01.01.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Twain Called Scare And Courage

The least because he trembles to grey fear
That man should call courage to conquer fright,
Fine if a man at times should frightened be,
Not if he should flight from fear's bleary blight,
Howso brave, a man needs courage no mean
To face, fight, and conquer what he does fear,
And he needs to fear first— courage to win,
That dwells yon fear, yet close enough and near.

King Odysseus, who this truth knew just fine,
Reasoned Achilles to fight the Trojan War:
If ye should fear no one, problem 'tis thine,
Do keep fear close to thy courageous shore.

Ah, soothing most words these I've ever heard:
No man courageous is that hath ne'er feared.

-
1. The poem uses the dialogue of the movie, Troy. The words used therein are: 'You don't fear anyone, that's your problem. Sometimes fear is useful'.
-

- Sonnets | 02.09.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Vote

The avian election was on—
Who the leadership's hat should don,
Crows clamoured what with loud caws, caws—
Born as were with boisterous rotes,
Winter gone, heart with dreams of spring,
The migrants keen to get on to wings,
Some gingerly tried clearing up throats,
Hesitant, they might breach green laws.
Sparrows made noise, but scarce were heard,
Seeing, no other small birds stirred,
Crows continued, cried for a vague cause.
And they were the ones to win votes.
A tradition that still survives—
Power of vote from loud mouth derives.

Reflections | 02.10.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Winner Takes It All

When in school, wide eyed a kid
Three R's me thought were the way,
Looking stern, somewhat rigid,
They made one learned from lay.

Later it was you, O life:
Thou wert the one to know well—
Walking on the edge of knife,
One false step ruinous might spell.

I grew up somewhat way lost,
Life posed me options many
That, never were weighed wisely,
He won— the first to the post.

Learnt, life bows to him that bends,
Not him that scales blocking wall,
Not means, life race is of ends,
The winner where takes it all.

Musings | 04.02.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Witness Who Should Vouch

Every time you open your mouth
To voice words evil or uncouth,
O let them be screened by guards three,
A simple and straight mind nudged me.
Else, swallow them unuttered, raw—
An act that hath upset no maw!

When came the first guard me to ask,
Urgent and upfront with his task:
Are you so sure they are needed?
I turned upside and down my head,
Of course, do ye think I'm a fool?
I countered sounding rather cool.

Fine, are ye sure the words are true?
The next guard did his duty due.
Ensured one more with saintly charm:
Sure, they cause no one any harm?
And one can guess the response well:
So let me not bother to spell.

But 'I' that said so was not him,
Impostor, rather filled to brim,
He was upstaged by an upstart,
Poor Him, confined to cave— of heart,
Oh suffering soul's subdued voice,
Long lost of poise and lack of choice!

He posed queries, he was the guard,
He was the warden, he the ward,
He gave the award, he the bard,
He won the trick but with whose card?
Witness on watch, him truth to vouch,
Ensconced still wordless in a pouch!

Reflections | 08.03.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The Woman Of Ice

There was once a woman— not of vice,
Nice, she'd warm lonely beds for a price;
A poet hired her once,
No, no, not for romance,
Get inspired by this woman of ice!
Poets do pine for muse
That they think be of use,
But oh to get inspired by frost ice!
The poet may have felt,
The ice is known to melt.

What a job, getting into cold, lonely beds! An enterprising Russian woman (Victoria Ivachyova,21)hit upon a profession— warming beds for a price at £65 per night (no physical contact) . She was inspired by a book wherein a poet paid a female typist to warm his bed. It did help him regain his writing inspiration. Well, she must be a woman of ice, as this ditty feels.

Happenings | 03.02.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The World A Cookie Jar Is

I oft feel, mind is like a naughty boy,
The world around a tempting cookie jar
Beckoning one more on hide to enjoy,
It makes it hard to keep men from it far,
And renders perfect reason rules to bend,
'One last time' never once remains the last,
Nor does the naughty boy learn from the past,
The game goes on; it's one without an end.

To be all so naughty some blame the mind,
Some blame cookies for all their tempting woes,
The fault is whilst not far from home to find,
I've seen men spite spring to bring summer close.
Poor man! One that matters over the mind,
And sole witness, watches wordless from hind.

This conflict and pulls among body, mind, reason, and the voice of conscience or soul's voice, is being felt by all of us. And more often the body and mind ultimately get what they want. The soul's voice is suppressed. And the world goes on— a scene depicted in this piece.

Sonnets | 02.12.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The World I Never Knew

More vibrant, chaotic yet confident,
The image still a way bit grey, cloudy
Like monsoon's pregnant sky, hopes still hazy,
The new India seems to me resurgent,
As if her old spirit has been reborn,
But hay, still hectic hums a warning horn.

Millions of starving mouths— agape no more,
Yet amid islands of wealth aplenty,
There's a swathe mired in abject poverty,
Millions of aspirations— all ashore,
Illiterate raw heads on hungry maws,
And a new caste cast in consumer cause.

I see scores of far-flung homes without let,
Dreamers therein dreaming for better life,
All watching winds of change on screens raised rife,
Homes thatched, unmatched, but with an idiot set,
Connected, closeted by phones mobile,
Not all automobiles, but still mobile.

A mix of potions makes heady cocktail,
Greed there's for growth, wealth flooding over rims,
All seem of wings, but nebulous their dreams,
The restless young minds on the move to hail
New world, in here-to-fore unseen hurry,
Wonder, if old paradigm to burry.

In a daze, jostled for a mere toe-hold,
Where's common man in this tectonic shift?
Pension pushers, sans wherewithal, adrift,
Hapless and mute, scrambling for life blind-fold,
Dazed by daily doses of scams, scandals,
Oh lost in storm and boats have shattered hulls!

Ways of my world have callous grown, O Lord,
Bordering on white-collar theft and fraud:
A man is slain, but no'ne the butcher is,
A fraud's fraught, at large fraudster walks with ease,

One plucks, a partner packs and profit makes,
One commits, caveats whilst still partakes.

World is changing so fast, both materials and morals, that one feels stranger in
own place.

Happenings | 02.01.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The World Is Not Vain

Vain is this world, vacuous as deployed—
The scriptures say for long years in this land,
But man feels, world is of no virtue void,
He's happy to come, play the given hand.

This world, wilting though on the wings of woes,
Where things ever change the same to remain,
Like a perennial river ever flows,
Haply we come and go though world is vain.

Old things do when pass, new wind therein blows,
Where life like seasons come only to change,
Where Time only relentless motion knows,
It's strange still no one ever finds it strange.

Life, though like Nature scarce herself repeats,
Man struggles still, unknown new heights to reach,
Creating a rainbow of newer feats,
Life returns to carry on with old itch.

Daily does rise the same westward bound sun
A new dawn from the darkling night's when due,
Sun is the same but is not sunrise new?
A new dawn dawns in newly hued heaven.

And spring comes and goes every single year,
Bringing in new season in same old name,
Bedecked as if in a custom-built gear;
Things forever change remaining still same.

Take a twain of mango trees in full grace,
Every leaf has a mango-leaf imprint,
Every leaf giving the same mango hint,
And yet, no two leaves come with self same face.

And life renews, dies and is born again
In new garment, the soul with new mandate,
With a new mission to be, new refrain,
Yet naught has changed, life still dies of same bait.

To many still, this world makes immense sense,
Many seem lost in life's dreamland so dense
Searching, seeking with inadequate lens,
Few, very few divine life's core essence!

The key me seem is to enjoy the search,
Whatso, whereso happens to be life's perch;
Nay, the world is not vain,
Pleasure there's if there's pain.

1. The vidya school of Indic thought feels that samsaara is asaara, world is vain, and hence should be shunned. But samsarati iti samsaarah, or what moves on, what changes, is samsaara. World moves, changes, and still like a river remains the same. In very impermanence world shows its lasting creative permanence.

This piece has a different take. Most of this world is not for advanced spiritualists. Liberation is a far goal. And avidya is the way to reach vidya. This world is a karmic land.

Reflections | 01.07.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

The World Of Fads

To arrive well on to the scene,
You take denim jeans newly born,
And make them look worn out and torn.
But if time-caused tears tell their age,
You might lose your social image,
And your aura would suffer dent.
Along fashion's fine discernment,
Committed you've a tasteless sin.
Or if your dress is stitched together—
Not designed— to add finest feather,
Or if you're seen in same dress twice,
Christ, heavily cast is your dice,
Gaffes have filled up your faux pas' pot,
In world of fads, hell comes loose if you're caught.

Tongue-in-cheek | 05.06.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Then Dawns The True Dawn

Disciples were seated around,
The preacher then a poser posed,
Their ears keen and to discourse bound:
When do the doors of dark remain closed?
When dark yields to light, night all gone,
And when begins the reign of dawn?

But disciples' dawn had not dawned,
They pondered on darkness of night,
Or else on dawn, brightness of light,
For, li'le of what was taught was honed,
In dark was wrapt their knowledge still,
Their sun was still behind the hill.

His flock from darkness to guide,
The guru then clarified:

If beasts begin to look at par,
And look like same souls as you are;
If in place of women any,
Dawn has dawned if sisters ye see;
And in a crowd of so many,
A sea of brotherhood ye see!

Reflections | 04.07.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

There Are Books And Books, But

A book loud and loose if not lusty,
Read, re-read to last of printed page,
Dog-eared oft gets but seldom dusty,
And dies of tattered limbs ere her age!

While a tome beautiful and well bound,
Like well displayed wall-hanging wisdom—
Like sword and armour of a kingdom,
Dies treasured, oh a tall bookcase bound.

Or may live, not a page turned or churned,
O to die unread of ripe old age,
Or by next generation well-earned,
Yellowed and worms devoured, not in rage!

Yet, a thing common to books or men,
But a few can stand to thorough scan.

Set in anapaest meter

Sonnets | 03.06.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

There Is No New Song

If this world scarce were new, save what was there,
Thoughts born eons ere with bare roots survive,
Whose vestiges the soul from death doth bear,
The gross gets graved, the subtle re-arrive.
We wonder on ways of brain, get beguiled,
Which, struggling to invent, right points spells
From amidst copious points piled and compiled,
But which with mundane logic never gels.
Since cosmic egg aught be oval or round,
Things aught return to where it started ere,
In all cosmic flights infinity bound,
The vast and void the same one spot doth share.
Man seems to be the child of his old chime,
He sings his song with same refrain, same rhyme.

The soul carries subtle impressions from death to new birth, and does not need to reinvent the wheel. We all know when we pursue an idea with all heart and soul, universal energy seems to help us. Man continues with his unfinished journey birth to birth; pursues the same task, same ideas. And hence there is no new song.

Sonnets | 07.10.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

There's No Bad Weather

A mild sunny shine seems precious,
Snow biting rare be Nature's kiss,
Furious, rains can't be vicious,
And spring is nature's gracious bliss.

There is notso like bad weather,
It just seems that man wants it warm
When winter's chill sets out to form,
Man's always a ruffled feather.

What else is season's charm but change?
Yet, change alas causes man pain,
But if rainbows should entertain
What's little rain? Sure man's so strange.

Missing Nature's mirth-filled rich bus,
May be a child is he of fuss.

Sonnets | 02.08.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

There's No Such Thing As Muse□

If kiss ye can the logic out,
One plus one making two is prose;
Eleven petals or of rose
If locked up is logic's cloyed clout.
Say whatso in your heart furrows,
Go where the head-held logic ends,
Provided your heart understands,
Be discreet still of chosen dose.
Much chewed metaphors and ye lose,
Hypes of hyperbole may be fine
If embroidered with your own sign
With innate ease, no trying hard,
And well, dream not being a bard,
And pray, there's no such thing as Muse.

Sonnets | 02.08.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Thine Altruism, O Ant

Thine hard-working mental bent long is known,
Busy ye run endless selfless errands,
Each of thine slender limbs forever fends,
Labour and industry seem in thine bone.

But I reckon thou hast one more rare trait:
A worker though thou art by birth sterile,
Ye groom thine queen with hopes nary to mate,
Sacrifice lets you walk an extra mile.

All of day ye work hard gathering food,
Fighting like a true soldier, risking life,
For good of brotherhood suffering strife,
And not a thought passeth for thine self good!

Ever a vainglorious beast `pon this earth,
Man prides himself to have reached highest crest
Zest in zenith, a much vaunted kind breast,
Little he has to show for valued worth.

Be it a sacrifice or unity,
Industry, be it much-talked-about tact,
Man has a lot to learn from thee, O Bee,
Not just thine altruistic noble act.

Man prides himself for long to be on evolution's highest crest.
But there is life considered lowly in comparison capable of displaying nobler
instincts so far considered to be the exclusive preserve of mankind. The bee is
known for her industry, no doubt, but she is capable of giving selfless service
without getting anything in return, an act of all-truism.

Reflections | 04.07.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Think Big

Two drops of rain once fell—
To be one with the sea,
One said: mere drop I be,
The `ther said with a roar:
Sea am I, drop no more.
Two drops two mindsets spell.

The soul of a man, a spark from the same Supreme Being, has immense potentiality. The four Vedas reiterate this truth in four fundamental thoughts called mahavakya:

- . prajnanam brahma | says Rig Veda.
- . aham brahma asmi | says Yajur Veda.
- . tat tvam asi | says Saama Veda.
- . ayam atma brahma | says Atharva Veda.

The Vedas say that if the soul must evolve and reach the supreme crest, it must aim high. Words may be different, but all the four say the same thing.

Reflections | 05.06.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

This Dilemma Of Mine

If man's born a unique role to play—
Any role— lofty be or just lay,
Is it to live his dream?
Rejoice and rise like cream,
Or just live to his esteem's fair play?
But man's made up of whim,
Ego spilling at brim,
And his true self has too little say.

Reflections | 03.09.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

This Heritage From Earth

Not whatso of this world
You'll take with you, I've often heard,
Nothing whatso,
When you die and go;
And wonder I
About this lie—
In a journey from here to fore,
There's plenty to take from this shore.

I sure would take plenty
Of heritage with me:
The Nature's spring-born splendour,
A child's natural candour;
Take, early dawn's shining dew,
Dying dusk's shimmering hue;
Fragrance released from scorched lands
Soon as first rainfall there lands;
Take meditating distant hills,
Or dancing mist lost in thrills;
The tranquil of silent stones,
Wealth and will that this earth owns;
The spring flowers' fragrant smile,
And a child's innocent guile;
Silent ache of loving hearts,
The twain at last when departs;
Two friends' fecund company,
Strangers keen to accompany;
Trying to hide tears two strangers,
Struggle of parting passengers;
A tired soul's sweetly sound sleep,
An indigent's dreamy peep—
Heavier gets my luggage,
As vast seems this heritage.

Plenty of things with eyes dreary,
Tonnes of wealth I'd with me carry,
All this though my bare empty hands,
When I leave from these bounteous lands,
There's wealth here, not in heaven,

Heritage grateful eyed to have,
Even gods greed an earth-bound grave,
O to get born here as human!

Musings | 15.01.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

This Humdrum Human Life

This humdrum human life,
Sun oftentimes as rain,
Autumn oft times as spring,
Pleasure with ever-present pain,
Happiness hailing strife,
One eye shedding endless tears,
Another fountain of cheers—
A warp and woof of light and shade,
'Pon life's canvas, delight and dread.
Man is in darkness caught
From one grey end to another,
Blind-folded be or not,
He's on a life's speed-breaker,
Day in and night without date,
A fig-leaf in front of fate!
Welcomed one moment, born red,
In time to go, done and dented,
Lost on the way and never found,
Keen he cuts life to come around.
Happenings all of humdrum rife
On an eternal tied-up string,
New, silver moon, autumn and spring,
This humdrum human life,
Celebrated as it spells,
Hailing all heavens along hells!

- Musings | 10.09.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

This Is Progress

Remember I my college days,
The fun of cycling to nowhere
At the leisurely twelve an hour—
A speed enough yards to cover
And better than walking up there
Where no bus plied but horse carriage
Answering the call of that age—
That had little to do with speeds,
An age known for its casual ways,
Happy were folks when with bare needs.

Decades four and speedy wheels now,
Many a charm-less change and later,
I'm now supposed to be somehow
Able to drive faster and better,
What with myriads of moving wheels,
O with tempers mounting steep hills!

Reflections | 03.01.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

This Life's Such A Sweet Tooth

I know, I know this truth
Of life's deserting youth,
Time, youthful desire dies,
Fulfilled when soul should rise,
Phoenix-like from ash to arise,
That all Me-and-Mine when defies,
The seeker in me when applies,
The unknown Infinite to size,
And when my true desire that lies
Somnolent wakes, higher to rise;
When cleavings to self dies,
The Higher Self it eyes.

I know, I've often heard this truth,
But this life is such a sweet tooth!

Sonnets | 06.09.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

This Much I Sure Can

This much I always try and can:
Should someone suffers sun's sharp edge,
Be a small stream cool breeze to fan,
Try, 'pon rocky ledge to calm his rage.

This much I think I always can
If a bird were to come to my terrace,
Let me treat it with human face,
That her trust in men does remain.

If cuckoo's calls I can't copy,
Let me store it in memory
To marvel at my heart's fancy,
She comes when to dwell in my reverie.

If I can let fleeting moments unfold
With the same fancy I look at a tender leaf,
And stretch them all I can to hold,
Life can be lived in eternal belief.

If I can live my life, and live it full,
And wait not, nor hope my shadows to last,
Nor want my seeds to seek the same school,
That's to live moments, past, nor morrow's vast.

So, this much like nourishing sun I can:
Even when all a burn be my within,
Let me from far, if not spot on the scene,
Smile; and smile still forgetting all the pain.

- Musings | 13.09.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

This Much To Bygone Love We Owe

Since we no more together sing in tune,
Kiss nor yet curse, let's set each other free,
Our love that had the warmth of sunny June
Has cooled, if not frozen like arctic sea;
I'm sad, at this time of our life's journey,
Our once fond hearts aught now beat all alone;
Let's shake hands whilst vacating the vows we
Vouched once; how we felt they were writ on stone!

Yet, fate favouring, if we meet again,
Let's not frown, wrinkled forehead nor yet brows
If just one jot of June we still retain,
If not in fair defence of Vedic vows,
Let us stay fair-minded birds—friend nor foe—
This much I feel to bygone love we owe.

In today's times often two lovers wear their love as if on sleeves, and on a slightest setback part. Yet, embers of the old love still burns alive beneath mounds of accumulated ash. This sonnet reflects such warmth.

Sonnets | 06.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

This Too Shall Pass

As one old brownish yellow leaf
Fell, another followed and more.
The tree still shed no tears of grief,
And whereas autumn came ashore,
Its faith in good days the least wore.
So firm in spring was its belief—
In every green sprout, every leaf,
In every tender blade of grass,
That life seemed to say from its core:
Cheer up; this too shall one day pass!

Musings | 12.04.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

This World

The world
We know is vain,
We still as were remain,
For we seldom see things as are,
Take star!

- Cinquains | 04.03.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

This World Of Spectators

Far few actors, spectators so many,
Less living their life than watching world live—
Rudderless in a ship, oar-less at sea,
Living on a lent joy that gathers more than give;
A few playing, a million minds peeping,
Only but few living, all else avoiding,
Living life like court jesters to the king!
How can life lived on a couch joy e'er bring?

Not else that does than watching TV scene,
Shrinking in stature, a mere spectator—
A spectral shadow staring at square screen,
Not but begs— joys from a joy-creator.
 In hope thankless yet this poem I pen—
 One small wren¹ in a world, a teeming wen²!

Wren¹: A small, short-winged song bird brown in colour.

Wen²: Tumour on skin. World is compared to an
 abnormally large and congested city of idle
 spectators.

- Sonnets | 09.09.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

This World's A Piece Of Art□

Easy we see a chunk of rock stone dead,
A sculptor sees therein potential art—
A kind waiting to get liberated
From deep, well under layers part by part;
He alone would chisel it out to shape—
A figurine from his mind's fertile part,
The rest watch admiring, mouths wide agape,
He alone can chip off the needless dross,
Whilst lost are we looking no beyond gross,
Even in art we see no more than mart.

This world would be a pleasant breeze
If faults can we see blurring eyes—
Faults that can be chipped off with ease
O to see the beauty that lies.

Reflections | 05.08.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Those Two Tender Eyes

The early morning's languorous mild sun
Seemed weary from a nightlong tiring walk,
And shared none of dawn's misty dewy mock-
Play with the passing clouds' hide-and-seek fun,
Nor yet was keen for croaky welcome calls
Of fowls from the dunghill fraternity
Behind the river bank's wilting old walls,
Lived wherein town's Muslim community.

And I walked past the river's meagre flow—
Its exposed sands awaited good monsoon,
And green patches, struggled wherein some crops—
Melons shimmered with early morn's dew drops—
Twain of rotund fruits of frothy hot June—
The muskmelon of marigold yellow,
Her cousin: watermelon white and red,
Easy that grew in milky riverbed.

But my eyes, weary of the same river,
Had had enough of these summertime fruits,
Of farms, its flora on the river bank,
Of dry desert of her sandy silver,
Of morning walkers, of labour recruits,
And yea, the dry scenario and still dank,
For, my eyes looked for two-some tender eyes
That always looked vague under open skies.

Two pensive eyes upon frail little frame,
And yet, too sharp and searching for her age—
Of ten or there about— that ever came
From folks known for frenzied, far off image,
Yet, oft few fit in a notorious name—
Only by few is made history's page.
How magnetic can be such soft-hued eyes?
I thought for long sans so much as surmise.

Seated on the mount of a sandy bank
Under the small bridge, the concrete awning
Supplying shade to piles of fruits for sale,

Quite a contrast made her body so frail
A robust bridge and rotund gourds going,
And she a watchful guard lean as was lank,
Not equal to task but there, sun or shade,
But her eyes were in no such labour laid.

I well remember her school-girlish eyes,
And still recall them—vaguely appealing,
Compelling me to look if just once more,
And talk to her along the way to school,
With not a care to face friendly ridicule;
But that remained a wish on a far shore,
Her pensive eyes remained unrevealing,
Yet, a dream interrupted seldom dies.

For, whenso I dwell on her eyes to deal
Amidst a forest of wooded what if,
The time seems to send in a frozen chill
And there falls eternity's autumn leaf.
Nothing seems to have touched my hardened heart
With so much uneasy trepidation
Dwelling in my raw imagination
That wishes her all well from far apart.

Some subtle memories live life to life,
Identity alone dying with death
That blunts their sharpness like the edge of knife,
But remain with new life right from its breath.
That memories of hers do with me rest,
I bring forth this song from my silent tongue,
But nothing aches today more my sad breast—
That this tryst with time had to die too young!

Recalling this episode of my schooling age I wonder today what makes me remember it. Nothing at all! She was too young a girl and I was a callow adolescent lad at that time of school. I don't know if she was attractive, all of ten then. It was perhaps her pensive, tender, and searching eyes. Perhaps a thought: while children her age are in school, she was sharing her family burden. Perhaps it was raw curiosity of a young mind.

Musings | 07.09.08 |

Thou Art A Complete One

Thou art O Lord a complete One,
Me, naught but a value-less nought,
Without thee what worth is my dot?
If not object of abject fun;
I've come therefore to thee to plead—
Do thou consent my life to lead,
Guide me to let me follow thee,
That my worth multiplies by ten,
By the multiples of ten then!
Thou art O Lord perfect one be,
A complete whole, infinity— poornam¹,
Immense potential I've as shoonyam¹,
Sorry, sipped in ways of world deemed civil,
I've made this look a tad like business deal.

1. The mantra: poornamidam poornada... would still mean the same if the word poornam (complete whole) is replaced by shoonyam (zero or nothingness) . It is also valid if interpreted as mathematical truth about is felt here that man though is shoonyam has immense potentiality, if blessed by divinity's 'one'.

Sonnets | 02.03.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Thou Art No Common

I oft shooed thee as birds of barest brain,
Not knowing ye hide a talent so rare,
If rare hands were to nurture thee to train,
The sense of colours ye have no birds share.

Ye have a knack human commands to heed
That maketh thee a bird of choicest breed,
Thou lone, O angel, knoweth a Monet
Say, from Picasso, Peace Pigeon, prized pet!

It was when I saw a huge flock of thee
Taking off from the ground at a command,
Swirling soon in a formation to be,
Showing off skills in flight, and to soft-land,

Trapping birds of rival fleets—what a treat!
I know ye deserve discerning diet—
Of dry fruits and pure Indian ghee— a bit
Rich may it look — a long-corn and millet.

I never knew doves could be trained to tell
A human voice or whistle, and many
A hand gesture to return safe and well
To base, until I did thine talent see.

Thou hast the measure of magnetic field
Of Earth, I was so told that ye know best
Thine spot in space with the power ye wield,
And to return spot-on to place of rest.

Thine eye hast more colour cones than us,
That thou canst see three times as many shades
As humans, making thee a bird precious,
Once set, it scarce from thine memory fades.

O thou perennial guest of my house,
I'd ne'er shoo thee away now that I know
Thou art not like that pesky pest, the mouse;
But hygiene and good habits ye aught show!

And ye make every corner, every niche
In my house, and thine nesting place, a rage,
Thine maternity home all so hellish,
But, pray, a house is no home to garbage!

It's odd, we call thee a common pigeon;
With such credentials, scarce art thou common.

Reflections | 02.01.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Thou Art Such A Killjoy

If ye wish me never that fruit to taste —
Recall your tempting lure of Eden Garden,
You would never `pon world such allures paste,
But help me make my mind and senses harden.
Thou hast appealing traps to life crafted,
Conjured and forged out a forbidden fruit,
Let loose sins weed-like grown in human head,
'Pon sowing seeds ensured they take firm root.

Adam and Eve earliest victims were
In Garden of Lure, mankind's oldest bait,
But scarce have ye made sure that man takes care,
Poor prey to a scheming hunter in wait,
To thee world's field of sport and men must play
Per killjoy's schemes, succumb to Maya's say.

One can't help wondering sometimes seems if God is no better than police that
lets you commit a crime and then comes to catch you. Is not He a killjoy letting
us into, enticing to sins and then punish us?

Sonnets | 02.12.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Thoughts On Mother's Day

Mother—tense and oft passive,
Never needs an adjective,
But little can grammar give
Them that give, never receive.

.....

Never was I, still afraid
Of what she'd have to me said—
The pain always painted red.

.....

Many things she ever said
Little sense to me then made,
But in life's setting decade
In deep waters when I wade,
Ah each word was precious jade.

.....

Ma, isn't it a complete word?
One of kind, common all world,
Few have it ever unfurled.

.....

How strange, I'm left to wonder:
Ere, my eyes would have shed tears
When her I did remember,
Now as well when so ever
Mother I do remember,
Heart joins in, sheds copious tears.

Musings | 03.05.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Three-Year Itch

Cooing, courting, marriage seems divine bliss;
Honeymoon gone kiss feels like cobra's hiss,
Ash filled old fire, low get returns,
A three-year itch prickled flesh churns,
When stoked, fuelled, new passion burns,
And ere you know it topsy turns,
You might point a finger at that or this,
But villain on blame's a conjugal miss!

Divorces are on the rise by the day. The seven-year itch seems to have now narrowed down to three years. Though they are still low in India, there has been a perceptible rise in divorces caused by a villain called incompatibility.

Happenings | 06.08.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Thru Wonder Wends The Way To God

Soon as the soft arrows
Of your early dawn,
There begins to play in each grain
Honey-filled music ever soothing;
O Grant to my small life
Content, nor quench worth a whit,
Let my eyes ever remain in thirst,
Let it fill an ocean of tears,
Whilst you reside in my mind,
And hiding my sorrows
I'd pretend searching you,
While getting to know your every grain—
What exists, what does not—
You remaining in my teary eyes,
Somewhat hazy and still clear enough,
That I see the world through you,
See thine world, though still not you.

Translated from the original in Hindi, Mahageeta,
Aacharya Rajnish, Osho.

- Translations | 16.08.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Tides And Troubles Wait For None

Kneeling under the vault of open sky,
I bent down trying to reach the wet sand,
A fragment of swept-ashore shell in hand,
And wrote upon a patch nigh wind-swept dry—
Whatso that came cascading in high gear,
And walked away ne'er once to turn, look back
At weary words wilting my mental deck,
I knew the tide was closing in to clear.

There followed truth in all its driving force:
Cathartic quite is penning down one's pain,
And cure, to every trouble on the course,
Like rain ending a lingering hot reign!
In every tide its counter's sure espied,
A waxing tide a waning one doth hide.

- Sonnets | 07.07.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Till Eternity Dawns

Lie restful O young night upon her eyes,
Let her weary eyes soothe in silver light,
Pass peaceful by, let no unfolding blight
Of thine nightly passage in cloudy skies
Bestir her dream that with slightest sound dies.
So walk in hushed up steps ever so slight,
In this harsh world dreams be her sole delight,
As a nightlong sleep seems her paradise.

Tranquillity drawn from depth oft is more
Soothing than a warm winter's mid-noon day,
Silence sweeter than songs heard ever fore,
The head and heart vouch together to say.
That she wakes up with no restless tired yawns,
O let her rest till eternity dawns.

Sonnets | 06.08.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Till Salty Ye Remain

To river posed the roaring sea,
O how long will ye be so vain?
Ye pour, waste sweet waters `pon me,
Whilst still flowing further ahead,
Thoughtful, the river said:
Till salty ye remain.

Sestet/Reflections | 18.11.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Time For Lateral Latitude

For long has man looked to his left—
To grey cells gathered left of brains,
To life of logic, being deft,
Anchored on goals of greed and gains,

Movers of markets and machines,
Brains behind caveats that cavil,
Managers moving ends and means,
Civil servants, servants nor civil!

I hope right brain would one day rule,
That hearts heal wounds of a past date,
That, poets come, artistes create,
Let old shepherds go back to school.

For long are we chasing false height
Winging our way up to north,
Time to take to the journey's right,
Time to touch life's lateral worth.

Enough of lee-way to the left,
Time, right its latent worth prove,
Prove, feeling heart is no less deft,
That it can make world forward move.

The mind when like a feeling heart
Thinks, and heart like a thinking mind
Feels, both when have a flying start,
That here on earth heaven we find.

For long has man looked to his left,
Let right now weave life's warps and wefts.

Much of the progress in the world today grapples with growth. And growth as measured by GDP is eaten up by inflation. Also, it fails to encompass all in a wider girth and only fat pockets prosper. For long has man thought with his left brain, not right. It is felt a course correction is needed to make the progress more inclusive.

Musings | 01.02.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Time Spent With You

Time ticked— with me you—
More than passed it flew,
Who cared we'd no clue?

Haiku |33.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Time To Bask In Sun

If seed-time to sow time is to learn,
And harvest time for laurels to earn,
Comes winter when with cold,
Silvery sun from gold,
It's time to enjoy soft hues of sun,
Basking in smiling sun,
Deserving a heaven,
Truism is it from the times old.

Musings |07.11.2017|

Aniruddha Pathak

Time To Connect With Nature

The time it was for sun to set,
My mind went to the setting sun,
To its journey without a let—
Into the vast unknown heaven;
From this unending spatial sea,
What message does time leave behind?
And what is the point of its plea?
The sunrise seems set out to find.
And sunset the time to reflect—
The time with Nature to connect!

Musings | 01.08.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Time To Scale Down

Tonnes of glitter and gloss gasping to race
Up the runway, rising to kiss the sky,
Lifted bare by lean air, pumping up pace,
Or else lands lower down from heavens high,
And with a puff of smoke and sticky squeal,
Touches the tarmac tamely `pon soft wheels,
And brain and brawn in boast man much proud feels.
Yet, birds when bid better it's no big deal,
Forgetting, their big birds gulp wells of fuel,
Shatter ears, silent while true angels fly,
Tanked up on just fruity nectar, et al,
Shaming e'en fighter pilots, mute in sigh;
 And little housefly scarce can help but laugh:
 Dog fights? Watch us do that and more by half!

We all as kids have spent hours watching in disbelief planes fly, take off and land. No doubt, we have also marvelled at the birds doing all that with consummate ease. But only when we grow up do we realise how well the birds do so as compared to the best of flying machines. And yet, most flying insects also do this and more even better than birds, and go unnoticed still!

Men have put all their bets in scaling up technology. Only of late has he focused on scaling down, or Nano-technology, perhaps inspired by microbes. This sonnet was born from this fascination.

- Sonnets | 01.06.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Time To Speak Out

First they came asking for women
Who 'painted were and were dented',
And I kept mum— an indifferent man
That was nowhere by the said taunts tainted;
They came again asking for a woman
That crossed Lakshman's line much painted,
I still maintained mum to me sacred,
Smug, my repute remained radiant red;
Then they came in western values to blame,
To them Bharat and India were not same,
Aloof, I felt there was nothing for me,
Not seeing what I wished not to see;
Some faulted her for not taking due care,
Not pleading to her molesters to spare,
Wordless, witless still, way-lost, lost of dare,
I stood there with a distant detached air.

Emboldened when at last they came for me,
It was too late for bell within to ring,
There was no one around to speak for me,
And found my own silence too deafening!
I scarce did know time there's to be silent,
And time to speak out, not to be pliant.

Aniruddha Pathak

Time To Vouch, Vote For Future

Fine, in past we built boats, stayed afloat,
We talked a unique tongue,
Were in own ethos hung,
Time to stop playing still that old note,
Time to vouch for future, for it vote.

A nation we're still young
Why clutch past, remain hung,
Wallow in glory, gloat,
Repair your shattered boat,
Use no lungs, rise still to higher rungs.

If India is a diverse country, so are a few others. For long have we hidden behind the escape door of diversity and democracy to explain away our tardy progress. For long have we remained lost in past glory. The truth is: we have failed to rise above party politics to think for the country first.

Happenings | 03.01.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Time, Me To Sight

Day ends and there's night,
Light goes, gathers inner light,
It's time me to sight.

Haiku | 03.10.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Time, Then And Now

Time it was when strident phones once rang,
Caged-parrot-like tunes when same song sang,
Time it was somewhat blest
We dialled when, not prest,
Pocket versions everywhere now hang.

Time soon came dials were no more hailed,
Like sailed ships saint-like silent they sailed,
Lost dials apes as tails,
Snail-mails lost to wire mails,
Yet, with all this high speed something ailed.

I recall the time with some raw ire
The phones lost when umbilical wire,
TVs getting cable,
Channels to enable,
But more, not merry, failed to inspire.

Sooner still phones lost their manly face,
And picked up a nigh feminine grace;
From mere telephony,
To multi-task many,
Music and mails and a blue-tooth race!

No more does phone fit all family,
Now `tis one each to fowl and filly,
One each dedicated,
Personal and patted,
Oh driving everyone mad silly!

But time was when they caused a headache,
Long-distance call much like bread on bake,
That turned to a migraine,
And chronic pain in brain,
Mobiles make now cancer-causing stake.

And this grey-haired man wonders again
If progress can come in without pain,
And be not a mix bag—

Freedom, tether nor tag,
If man can begin whence he began.

Each stanza of this poem looks like a limerick, but it is not. The first, second, and fourth lines are set mostly in iambic tetra metre with an occasional anapaest. But the third and fourth lines, shorter in tri metre, are anapaest. The underlined tone is light humour.

-Tongue-in-cheek | 06.12.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Times Two Wear Hard On Me

No doubt you promised, assuring me
You'd come, still, lost I was awaiting—
One, ship-wrecked for a rescue mid-sea,
But seldom can words give fair inkling.
Fearless brave oft live thru times of scare,
Worried was I what if you can't come—
The world's full of trouble from nowhere,
What if changed mind sets you off my dome?

I thence lapsed into what when you leave,
If at all or when you'd come again,
Worse it was than death, scarce you'd believe,
And e'er since, a wreck I am in pain.
Times only two wear hard upon me,
Ere you come and it's time to leave me.

One lost in love gets lost in thoughts waiting for his beloved who was expected as per a meeting date fixed earlier. The sonnet is set in nine syllabic anapaest metre, not the usual iambic penta-metre.

- Sonnets | 02.08.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

To Be Happy Is Not To Be

Man a useless passion is, Sartre said,
And life's futile of foison like most dreams,
And scarce worth all the fuss that has been made,
The more fuss man makes, more futile it seems.

Man feels like hackney horse when happy feels,
Like stallion war horse if miserable;
Trees look happy, so do birds, even eels,
For, little do they care for a laid label!

In happiness, the truth is, man's man not,
Nor when he in love is, nor when he sees
A beautiful sunrise, a lovely spot,
A silent lake, the Nature that just is!

Should there be no happiness 'pon this earth,
To Voltaire's loo1 this fine planet might turn;
Creation besides a monstrous non-worth,
To smirk would turn the smiling face of sun.

Yet, more melancholic man is, the more
Meaningful he feels as does his ego,
Who, when in bliss, far away from his door,
Leaves seeds of misery elsewhere to sow.

But how much happiness does man deserve?
On what virtue he wings, what's his chief good2?
A twain of birds, yet, of feather and verve,
They flock together, together they brood.

In uttering lies I my own self be,
Or when the shoes pinch, and ne'er seem to fit,
Things when go wretched wrong I fully be,
But in perfect fit, I forget my feet!

I forget me, life when looks fulfilling,
If not, futile, as if of no meaning,
And I've Shakespearean dilemma: to be...
O to swim this ocean of misery!

If idle a nurse I be to all vice,
And sure a mother of all ignorance,
Of all melancholy a loaded dice,
But ignorance is bliss of soul at once!

So, to be is miserable to be,
'In not to be I feel truly happy!

1. Voltaire once called our planet Earth 'the latrines of the universe'.

2. Emmanuel Kant once said: Virtue and happiness together constitute the possession of the summum bonum in a person.

- Musings | 12.11.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

To Become Or Just Be

Every man does a life in freedom crave,
Be it freedom from ills of ignorance,
From pangs of poverty, from plenty's pain—
The worries born of too much abundance,
Be it freedom from sufferings and strain,
From deprivation and dread of disease,
From disasters causing the death of his,
Oh, freedom from this and freedom from that,
Freedom from bondage, life's every let,
From time he's born till captive be to grave,

To be becomes then his life's sole mission,
Running away from things the load on chest,
His heady goal and heart-felt obsession
That oft dances in vain as futile quest.

And search he can't what's close— his soul to find.
None ever born is to 'become' happy,
As journey ends man's destined just to be,
Springs happiness, springs freedom but from mind.

- Recollections | 05.12.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

To Celebrate Creation

It might well be a lingering day dream,
An impression of what I've been reading,
Or just my heart's deeply-felt outpouring,
From cave-dwelling times surfacing like cream,
Or lessons learnt from life as to me seem;
Let world mock at my puffed up piety,
Calling it confused mind's perplexity,
Not much of dream— as a poetic whim!
But let it be. I'd still an altar build,
Though not for sacrifice, nor lit with fire,
Let no wild oblations bloom from green field
Culminating a deeply-stored desire,
But no more than to just commemorate—
To celebrate Creator's work, if late!

Sonnets | 09.08.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

To Find The Real Me

O reality,
To find the real me,
First, I must lose me!

Haikus | 06.09.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

To Learn From Every Turn

No spring retains forever its green reign,
From grass I tend to learn my persistence,
From trees the value of quiet patience,
No winter does wither in total vain,
If eyes I have and ears to learn,
No garden is by winter too deterred,
Nor yet by spring is unduly flattered,
And Nature teaches me at every turn
That goodness springs from every evil heart,
Summer there is, I learn, in all winter,
And winter in the heart of all summer,
Evil is frost in good if seen apart;
 So I care spring nor autumn, good nor ill,
 If I can learn from Nature's turning wheel.

- Sonnets | 05.01.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

To Live And Die In Dignity

We wonder if he should have died in vain,
Deprived of donating organs still good,
Begetting freedom from benumbing pain,
Should justice deny Death its civil hood?

But white wigs, with their wisdom-filled notions,
Decided to stick to letters of law—
That man and his death-bed aspirations
Be buried with his head, unfulfilled raw.

Lame to me looks legal right to live life
With no matching right peacefully to die,
With no right to shed tattered rags in ply,
What's freedom suffering in bed so rife?

If a life's not allowed in peace to die,
In mind as in spirit, it's dead well nigh.

A chess player from Hyderabad, and a long-suffering patient of muscular dystrophy on a ventilator, died recently an unhappy man. He valiantly fought, with the help of his mother and sister, a long legal battle but in vain— for a right to die (euthanasia) and donate his organs to save other lives. The courts however ruled that he cannot donate his organs before he was brain dead, sheer technicality. What is death but a step closer to man's long journey, his cosmic destiny? A man cannot his next step take before he is dead. Bhagavad-Gita says: the body is like a garment, and in death a man merely changes worn out garments for the new.

Happenings | 07.12.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

To Live In Lent Amidst Plenty

O to live life of a modest man,
Hope in heart, wish horses on tight leash,
Happy in heavenly little niche,
Wanting less, living full, life Spartan,
Peace in heart, soul patient filled with grace,
Amidst the plentiful money can,
O to pan for a life no cash can,
And prayers to spare a puffed up face!

But man only dreams of austere life,
Whilst ploughing his field nigh impatient,
Cultivate content, nor life of lent,
O until blasé with plenitude rife;
I know, man's mortal made with earth's soil,
He hangs on, hails heaven him to spoil.

A pauper cannot appreciate the joys of paucity, simplicity, and Spartan life. If a poor man is frugal it is compulsion, not choice. So, the poor has to get rich, get bored with affluence, rather blasé, before he can like a simple life style. But why, can't we take a straight road?

A nine syllabic anapaest meter is used here.

Sonnets | 01.08.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

To Love Is To Give

Sacrificing for love's sake for eons
The sun claims notso in return to get:
You owe me, O Earth, a lifetime of debt';
It makes sun a solar king among suns.
And poor Earth, plundered, polluted for long,
She's borne on her bosom many a dent,
Wincing mute at every inhuman wrong,
As true mother she shows no resentment.
And Sun, spent up energy and so lean,
And too faint to light up the solar skies,
His love that had painted the earth bright green,
Shall grow grey, and she, bleeding bosom, dies;
But earth, mothers and their ilk know to give,
With nary a thought ever to receive!

Sonnets | 08.10.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

To My Father

You spent time values of life to impart,
When I no more your finger need nor hand,
Holding me, nor pushing my young life's cart,
Stay close as a philosopher and friend,
And yonder still let me live in your heart.
And do bless me that your grand son I guide
Who, to same values in life would abide.

Musings on a Father's Day | 03.06.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

To My Love

Lo, how the silvery queen of the night
Causes the king of all waters to spill
His passion for her showing in full sight,
The high-tide splashing and rising uphill;
But she shows her visage when, no full face,
He in some doubt withdraws his mighty force,
His over-arching arms loosen embrace,
Love ebbs somewhat and recedes in remorse.

But thou art no such queen of callous heart
To leave me lone in ebbing tides to brood—
In abject suffering when ye depart,
To await thine return in solitude:
So, cause no ebbing tide in my soft heart,
Were ye to come, come never soon to part.

Sonnets | 08.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

To Nowhere And Back

I recall still that station, Signal Road,
The name etched firmly in the memory
Plate in my mind's remote but reserved node,
Like a childhood's oft-heard bedtime story.

I can't forget this journey's pleasant miss,
A distance of forty miles to arrive
With a train change much like a flying kiss,
A kiss that we did miss— a bunch so naïve!

Notso stirred there save hot summer-time breeze,
No one there to leave, for few ever came,
But what gave to the station their odd name,
The arid local trees stood there in ease.

We heard someone clearing his throat in pain:
The sole hand there to whom no task was small,
Man of all seasons; 'Gone', you've missed the train,
'Missed by long chalk', nodded the signal tall.

A few trains that stopped were like fair blessings,
Kind soul, he took us to a place to rest,
Ma and us— six too excited siblings—
Our host was a Neem tree, we her rare guests.

Huge shelter that it was sang a cool song,
Made sweeter by offered fruits, tamarinds,
And a small stream haply running along—
For company were noontime's hissing winds.

Adventure of ours, like bullock cart ride,
With the sweet and sour tamarind's raw bliss,
And yea, help rendered by our friend and guide,
All helped make the train seem not a huge miss.

And by returning bullock-cart slow train
We made returned journey with happy smiles,
The local birds singing evening refrain,
Call mishap or venture of forty miles.

But life's an uncharted, trackless venture,
I feel after three-scores and more years past,
And some may though a longer shadow cast,
Some turn out to be joyous adventure.

We could have taken a direct bus for these forty miles. But to us children, a train journey was more exciting. And to our mother perhaps it was cheaper by a few annas (a Rupee then had sixteen annas) .

Reminiscing | 04.09.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

To One's Belief And Vision

Musicians see
With their ears,
Seers, to whatso
Their vision steers,
Poets thru words,
Feelings and fears;
Some see things
No more than as appears,
But the rest see whatso
Be to their heart nears and dears.

Reflections | 47.02.2019 |

Aniruddha Pathak

To Speak Past A Point

Forced to spell, compelled when to arrive,
Happy seemed with honey from bee-hive,
O to prove he can speak,
Not yet when, what to pick,
'Arrived I've, and am no more so naïve'!

The prince in wilderness, his speech at CII had most corporate chieftains chewing their pencils. He criticized the system of which his family has been at the helm. But if they were looking for solutions, they were naïve, not the prince, who offered mere fables, homilies, parables, folk tales, and empty rhetoric. He likened India not with ponderous elephant, but a beehive. Shrewd metaphor to sidestep accountability! The message: if denied honey, bees can turn on the queen bee! !

Happenings | 09.04.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

To Thee I Bow, O Poverty

Pursuing thee for long,
Thick and thin, right or wrong,
What not have I achieved?
Alive that never lived,
Man vanished from the world,
Unseen, un-felt, unheard,
O Poverty, sans face,
I bow to thine rare grace,
I can this world well see,
But none notices me!

Reflections | 11.08.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

To Wait For Love That Blossoms Late

Like fishing hook missing the bait
Destiny seems without a date,
Or fortune hailed with a closed gate,
A flower blooming far too late,
A stud too shy with mares to mate,
A shooter that cannot shoot straight,
Like waiters that order-less wait
On bare tables and waiting plate!
One is born to greet unknown fate
At an unknown, unopened gate
With a well-come smile too sedate
I pry unto fate's eyes with hate.
So I wait love to be in spate—
In hope, it's spring that blossoms late.

Sonnets | 01.03.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Today Is The Day

Life is to live in joyful mirth
Before is blown out last of breath,
All made of dust when merge with earth,
Let cherishing life be the faith.
Cheer up as if there's no more chance,
Let the welcome drink New Year bring,
Let New Year bring a new romance.
Today's the time of joyous spring.
The fool that forsakes today's wine,
Trying to pack morrow's moment,
Ends spending up precious present,
O drink ere the froth may decline.
If happy can't be now and here,
You'll not hereafter, any where.

On the New Year eve

Sonnets | 04.01.2018 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Today, Gift Of God

O thou yesterday,
A stranger at sea,
Thou art my lost memory.

O thou tomorrow,
As mere dream sans will,
A stranger ah art thou still.

One mere history,
Another, mystery,
Thou art God's gift, O today.

Reflections | 51.01.2019 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Today's Stoics

Our electorates,
Like ocean, patiently wait,
Glad still whatso get.

Haiku | 01.07.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Too Callous, Man's Crocodile Skin

The sea face off Navy's fabled lighthouse,
Which once took every breath did all the more,
The tide once unbridled did no more roar,
Soiled with oil sledge, nor could my spirit rouse.

The waves battered the sticky coastal rocks
Sending salty sprays to shocked beholders,
But seemed somewhat shy of the scornful mocks
Of peeved passers by, of sad bye-standers.

Receding tides the nude rocks when revealed—
Revealed dark drag right up the house of light,
What once teemed with the mangrove's rich green shield,
With flourishing life, lay wrapt with black blight.

Where once hermit crabs roamed with tiny fish,
With limpets, sundry crustaceans before,
Reek of spilt oil seemed to clamp a dark leash,
And Nature walkers of ere shunned the shore.

With verdant mangrove turning death-like black,
The stubborn sticky oil ruling the spot,
Visitors ventured no more yon the deck,
Time I hope would ere long stem sticky rot.

In distant sea I saw yon a rocked ship,
Perilously perched, her shy posterior to coast,
As if blind to damage; her deadly whip
Of Black Death warning: it's no idle boast.

Let pity be to poor species of sea—
Let me more hope: the life that there'd once been,
Robust as ere and resilient be,
Despite man's callous crocodilian skin.

Hope, his greedy plunder upon the parched Nature
Would not keep pace with his footprint's rising stature.

The mangroves that the poem talks about are off Navy's Prongs Lighthouse in Bombay's Colaba, , which I had visited decades back. Later, I read about the destruction wrought by the oil slick following collision of a merchant vessel MS Chitra with another ship near Raigad, close to Vashi coastal areas. A stretch of 100 Km was devastated by the resultant oil spill of around 1000 metric tonnes. I felt as if it was personal loss when memories of Navy's verdant mangroves rushed to my mind for a while. The sadness that pervaded gave birth to this poem.

- Happenings | 01.09.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Travel

Travel,
Travel yet more,
Pilgrimage shore to shore,
In this life and yon; none to tell
Where to!

- Cinquains | 09.06.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Tree Am I Timber Nor Wood

It has been a land commonly lined,
Let no doubt nor dispute dwell in mind,
Said the tree firm that stood,
Know this: I'm no dead wood,
Let on my fallen head deal be signed.

Time once was when you sat under me,
Imagine a sofa made of tree,
Think of a furnished wood,
Both us in pensive mood,
Then think of breeze that once came from me!

Part of past, your common, once I was,
Sentinel as I stood in my cause,
Commonly spread my roots,
Equally shared my fruits,
Mundane laws can't be just to life laws.

So be said of shared love,
O look at me above,
Look at that cooing dove,
Then try look far above,
Then only make your move.

Two siblings in dispute cause division of land, but a tree that stood on a dividing line intervenes.

Musings | 01.07.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Trees Feel No Sorry

Fall brown leaves teary,
Dreaming of young sprouts' glory,
Trees feel no sorry.

Haiku | 15.11.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Trivial If Troubles You

Trivial if trouble you, or defies,
It's time to shed the mask, your disguise,
Look into mind's mirror,
And search for an error
That might be your self-esteem's small size.

Reflections | 01.04.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Trouble Is

The trouble is: too young is man,
And Mother Earth tired like a hen
To steer her brood from daunting fate;
The trouble: too late 'tis to wait—
Till man grows wise to contemplate,
To know he's in a sorry state.
We know what happened burnt when Rome,
Now it is all the dome and home.

Reflections | 05.02.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Trust

Trust, many-petalled a rare flower,
Easy it never grows on bower.
Mistrust blooms, and trust dies,
Never `gain dares to rise,
But should it, shines from a tall tower.

Reflections | 02.07.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Trust No Truth

Beware,
A voice once said:
Trust truths born of within,
As faith a fair child be of heart,
No mind.

- Cinquain | 04.07.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Truth And Lie

Telling pristine pure truth, I still price pay,
He lies all along and still gets away.
While I nurse my wounds ever so quiet,
Triumphant bully like a tom cat,
And victorious he walks vain-glorious way.
So goes this cat-mouse game—
Me in blame, me in shame,
Yet, with feelings so hurt he sighs all day!
Truth and lie long married,
Both seem to be harried,
Bear and grin, for, there seems no other way.

Between husbands and wives a cat-and-mouse game goes on for long. Fun is:
both feel victimised! And there seems no way out.

Tongue-in-cheek | 08.07.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Truth And Untruth

In today's world— coins no more minted pure,
Those minted not worth the metal they're made,
E'en forgers have a hard time to endure,
Why, all else in world's made of paper grade.

In a world where truth has no place to be,
Where falsehood with its head held high walks in
A place of choice and with undisguised glee,
No fiction this— it's a gold-standard scene.

Falsehood, everyone's better friend than truth,
A new age friend today's man lives in bliss,
The once faithful friend, Truth, no one doth miss,
For, spirit of age pervades, spreading smooth.

Hardly when humanity truth perceives,
Falsehood cosy in creature comforts lives.

This poem reminded me of Robert Burns:
The friend of man, the friend of truth,
The friend of age, the guide of youth,
If there's another world, he lives in bliss,
If there's none, he made the best of this.

Sonnets | 04.02.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Truth Needs No Tailor

I'm scared of truths that come in half,
As of those that weigh one and half,
Add to them truths told on behalf,
Said nor by horse, nor yet by calf,
And a house of cards does it fall,
The wordsmiths whatso may it call.

A joke missing the crucial half,
I've found, is not worth half a laugh,
As is half a punishing staff,
Progress painted in half a graph,
As humour that hoists up a wall
No mirth is worth its laugh at all.

Today's David's being too dwarf,
No goliath's can take by half!

Sonnets | 03.02.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Truth Untailored

It's what we know
But never can explain,
What we understand
Yet never can describe,
What may sound simple, straight
To a wordsmith and scribe,
To explain it still
O never is so plain.
Larger than all mental sums,
It is what untailored comes.

Reflections | 10.12.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Truth, No Slave To Discovery

Truth is no slave to discovery,
Needs innovation, nor creator,
Nor yet a path-breaking inventor,
Nor is truth a fiction, nor story.
Truth stays put and can't be created
O on a blank page of mind's diary,
Conjured up, cooked nor conceived in head,
Nor can one write its obituary—
Truth always shines forth, a beacon red,
Untruth's born and no sooner is dead!

Yet, one that finds truth lights up a torch,
And every darkling lie comes to light,
One spark of truth's enough lies to scorch,
Most untruths bury under own blight.

This piece is set in anapaest meter, unusual for a sonnet.

Sonnets | 05.04.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Twain Of Paths Trodden

If there be ways for passing from this world—
One, lit with light o' truth, or utter blight,
Deeds white-light washed, or lost in darkling night,
One of knowledge, other a karmic bird;
One that passeth in light, knowing his ways,
Walking past Pearly Gate, endless light earns,
The other, lost in tangled dark alleys,
He may paradise earn, but soon returns.

The Lord a beacon doth bear of bright haze,
And weareth wisp of lustrous-darkling veils,
That no man is dazed in His radiant gaze,
He showeth light, wisheth that no man fails,
That he doth find hope in his darkling days,
He hath modes working in strangest of ways.

Bhagavad-Gita (8.26)has this to say:

Trodden are twain of paths for long,
One bright, one dark to some belong,
A path of no-return man treads,
Or back to mortal world he bids.

Christian faith says:

God has 70,000 veils of light and darkness; if He were to remove them, the radiant splendours of His face would burn up whoever was reached by His gaze (Hadith) .

Light and darkness are the world's eternal ways.
- Zarathrustra

Sonnets | 09.10.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Twenty One Harvest Moons

A kid wishing it'd not get dark soon,
If it might, there would soon be full moon,
A Harvest Moon at that,
Which, in fond love would pat
Him, when dark nights would look bright like noon!

Aniruddha Pathak

Two Boats, One Oar

Away or home they slept beneath one roof,
Mingling breath in dreams and mighty pleased,
Fond memories mixed with the sweat released,
For, thoughts they thought came from one heart, a proof;
Each hour apart s-t-r-e-t-c-h-e-d like a long passage;
Days spent living apart looked like long years,
And a mere day's dearth felt like entire age,
As space in units of time appears.

And yet in life they did travel alone,
And oft drifted apart in their own boat—
Two bodies but a single soul afloat,
And hoping to moor side by side and prone—
And wanting none more than their boats to ply
In common buoy O rocking gently by.

- Sonnets | 07.12.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Two Cinquains

A fish
Had a fond wish
And aloud did wonder
If there be any sea yonder
But this!

And frogs
Like, long in well...
We know this story well,
But frogs there kept it spic and span,
Not men!

Cinquains | 04.02.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Two Fond Hearts

The night was dark, lonely, chilly and dull,
Lost was a faint and crescent moon in his
Private and leisurely chat with Venus;
Both tried nigh hard to hide their animus
A stranger was alone, feeling amiss
In a boat, heavy air filled to the hull.

Startled by the rowing boat, cold water
Off river, and night bestirred were in sleep,
And stared hard at the hapless pair of oars;
With hard day in fields, tiring farming chores,
The village slept through the night, sound and deep,
Not a soul seemed awake, out to loiter.

And knocks on door when ceased, beating no more,
The two fond hearts beat as never before!

The piece has atypical rhyme scheme. Each sestet has mirror-like symmetry:
abccba.

Sonnets | 02.04.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Two Hearts Beat As One...

The sleepy street looked as if in penance,
Swept clean, bathed afresh by a sharp shower,
The crescent moon hid behind grey
Clouds, looked rather pale in dismay,
So did the rain-awashed old clock-tower,
A sinful as if cleansed by repentance!

The man on furlough now began to run
Till an open beach appeared
Smelling of fish, sea-scented air,
Tapped on a window pane with a shy stare,
And four eyes met in years, tear-smearred,
Two hearts to beat in tune as one!

...but to part

Tales stored for long oh had to wait,
And in time melted, all their words
Of woe; in silence did wither,
In long years chanced to be together,
Lost in embrace till early birds
Came calling at the dawn of their chance date.

And twilight hours more precious were,
Their love-lock now all the more keen,
The long lost love then began burning bright,
Not till was red, but glowing white;
But no dawn had dawned all so mean,
Nor was their parting so unfair!

The rhyme scheme has a mirror-image like symmetry in all the four stanzas.

Musings | 07.08.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Two Minutes Of Fame

Ah to earn two minutes' maiden fame,
And to do whatso that to mind came:
Tear down dress, smash a pot
And do things he aught not,
Even riding an ass is fair game.

yena kena prakarena prasiddhah purushah bhavet |
ghatam bhindhyat patam chindyat kuryat rasabha rohanam ||

This verse in Sanskrit is a subhashita, words well their worth. Truly, what not a man might do to gain two minutes of fame!

Translations | 04.06.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Two Siblings Torn Apart

Two siblings of same womb and seed, sadly
Torn, pulled apart O by parental ill,
One on an alien lap unwilling still,
One in a home and love step-fatherly;
A mom's child one—her sole identity,
The `ther father's with a limited reach,
Both with a vague itch to reach out to each,
Both lost alas in unjust society.
And yet, the gulf between the two seems not
Destined to get siphoned any time soon,
And tender memories like sandy dune
Born be to break up if in life's storm caught.
Yet, should time bring them together in years,
Bond of womb and seed— would it dry their tears?

Sonnets | 05.08.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Two Strangers

Seeing a man in dire state—
Miserable, lonely and ill,
A stranger asked with kind will,
You think I could help you, mate?

Oh sure if you so feel, friend,
Come, and hold my helpless hand,
In this moment out of mend
All I need is friend close to stand.

The stranger waited there a while
And later enquired how he felt:
'Back from a barren soulless isle,
'Never have I been better dealt.

'And from humanity's lost link,
'I have returned as if from brink'.

Musings | 03.08.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Uncommon In Common

Perceive if you cannot the special
In the common most and the trivial,
If you can't love the old, young the same,
Nor in a chipped-off vase same charm claim
You may see in one of fair image,
If you can no special beauty see
In things old, age-withered and wobbly,
Nor can love wrinkles of an old age
By taking whole image at its prime,
Seeing life as a work of fine art
Crafted by the passing, fleeting time,
Thence, heavy of head and light of heart,
You cannot a piece of art admire
As of art, and not one in a mart,
Just as is, whereso is, and not tire.

If there's no beauty in one's within,
It's hard to find in whole world without,
For, beauty in beholder is seen.
Perfection— if it has its own clout,
So has imperfection at its best,
Is not an untended bare forest
Nature's best of art at very crest?

Wabi-Sabi is Japanese art of imperfection based on a premise: the appreciable is not a model of high perfection like, say, a neatly trimmed garden. A little bit imperfection thrown in naturally adds to its beauty.

Reflections | 04.07.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Unload, Make A Move

Nor is man poor, nor is he meek,
What's a few notes and coins but dross?
A mental block, success nor loss,
Forget O mind beliefs so freak.
If very life to live ye lack,
Dusty road, dour feet, walking cane,
What use to ye is bus or train?
Better, Bank of all banks ye back.
Op fields around under blue sky,
Cloistered lanes, nor greedy love,
Nor chasing like vultures above,
No money can nature's joy buy.
Causeless casual's the only love,
Throw away all load, make a move.

Sonnets | 02.11.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Us And Versus

Year sixteen dawned with a lot of fuss—
Of 'us' and the rest all called 'versus',
Like North versus South Pole,
Diamond demeaning coal,
Yet, on Earth are we not in same bus?

Whilst USA entered a post-truth era, the world found its 'word of the year', and India, an expert in politics of populism, perhaps gave a new meaning to politics of polarisation: nationalists Vs anti-nationals, patriots and not, making up a year of extremes that achieved little. Both the Houses lost over 80% of business time. It seems people on Earth no more feels they are in the same bus, Earth being a hurtling down brake-less bus.

Happenings | 02.01.17 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Veda And Voyeur

'Veda' with 'voyeur'— what vying image!
Siblings of a kind sharing same sireage¹,
Veda, a blue eyed scion of Sanskrit,
Latin videre that from same root is lit,
Both meaning but the same: to see and know,
But parted soon a solo path to toe;
The word ere walked from Sanskrit to Latin,
And in course of time English let it in:
Wit, vision and video same root do share,
Though voyeur, off the kind, is quite a stare!

Wit and vision kept close to kindred root,
But voyeur turned to be an odd offshoot.

Sireage¹: Not a dictionary word, it is coined
from 'to sire'. Veda in Sanskrit means to know.
The four Vedas are books of knowledge. The Latin
videre was derived from this.

-The ways with words | 05.10.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Victim Was Killed, Justice Too

O shy maiden, cooking a time-torn dish,
You sail on high seas, always far from beach,
Ensnared in thine lofty principled niche,
When arrive, is not it too late to reach?

I feel thine conscience is still alive,
Ye show lady justice blind. But she's lame.
Stays and delays her single most ill-fame,
What good, in two decades should she arrive?

If there be wrong that whole world has well seen,
The court it seems is not satisfied still,
No crime leaves confession, nor yet signed will,
Time, justice contemplates and looks within.

A victim of justice is good as killed,
But there's one more— whole legal edifice,
And the system, with bureaucracy filled,
And true victim is the very justice.

Ye bank too much on the letter of law,
But letter's fine if it carries spirit,
Blindfolded, justice can still be in awe,
Too much process makes justice no more fit.

Thine chairs sticky seem of privileges,
Ready to threaten with contempt of court,
Lofty chairs too serve public on wages,
No one need sit in an isolate fort.

And here the courts woke up by public noise;
I wish it'd kept its own alarm warnings,
But was reposed on procedural poise,
When stirred it walked when should fly on all wings.

Let courts rid old baggage, all the vain load,
It should still run, let jagged get the rough road.

The killers of Jessica Lall virtually walked away free. Let's not blame just the

powerful and rich perpetrators of the crime. The real culprit here seems to be our legal and judicial system, and the law enforcers. She scarce is the only victim. The true Victim is justice itself. Victim, is our collective conscience as well, and our collective heart hardening fast.

Happenings | 02.02.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Virtue And Vice

She said no, virtues are no earthen wear,
Nor vices hard-wearing metallic strong,
Nor virtues wear off, nor easily tear,
Nor vices weather miles of life for long.
And virtues water-like mild, scarce are weak,
Patient and persistent, quiet they lie,
Whilst vices though rigid are mighty meek,
Blocked, water knows how to walk via by.
Cuts the mild me the mild as much as strong,
Your might clashes with me, scarce my mild cuts,
You know water carves rocks and flows along,
I may be mild, but in need lack no guts.
My virtue, dear, gets no sullied by dirt,
I've seen vices getting easily hurt.

By soft hand can be severed harsh,
By soft hand too the mild like marsh,
Nothing is hard for a soft-hearted man,
For, sharper cuts soft than harsh ever can.
Mahabharata

Sonnets | 01.04.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Virtue Wears A Veil

Virtue wears a light veil,
Vice comes wearing a mask
And gets a ready bail
That makes hard virtue's task.
The mask helps hiding vice,
The veil loads virtue's dice.

Quatrain | 10.12.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Voice Vs Words

Words wear a loose dress,
Disappear without trace,
Voice smiles with fair face.

Haiku | 06.07.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Wake Them Not, If Asleep

Take serpent, or mad-hat king,
A tiger, wasp that would sting,
Take a stray dog, or small child,
Or a fool far off exiled:
These seven if asleep,
Never wake them from sleep!

Translations | 22.11.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Wanderlust

Lust in breast if I roam far from home,
I would reach nary where, forget Rome,
But if I make each coast
My home, I'd ne'er get lost,
For, one day all of dome would be home!

And if I may add, need one have visa, nor yet passport; there are borders, nor boundary walls; where nationalities and patriotism is passé; and all are true sons and daughters of Mother Earth looking forward to being family members of the same Solar system; let that day come when all the dome is home.

Reflections | 09.01.17 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Wanting What Is Not

How ye feel, O fair bird from far world?
A crow once asked a migrating bird:
It's hell being fair bird
In this— an all fair world,
I feel a common sort
Of no special import,
World always wants what's not, mark my word.

Indian proclivity for a fair skin comes loud and clear for even a casual observer. Many Indian gods have been of dark skin: Krishna, Ram, Shiva, goddess Kali, to name but the most prominent. Draupadi, one of the most beautiful women in ancient India of Mahabharata was of dusky skin. So was Satyawati, mother of the epic's creator and sage Vyasa. And the list is long. This little ditty tries to probe into why. In western world of commonly fair skin, people like to tan their skin to acquire a darker tone.

Reflections | 04.04.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

War Or Peace

A planeload of patients, all valued guests,
Among them ailing young, men and women,
For hospital care and cure here, our best,
And doctors ready to do best as can.

More such lost-hopes shall come by land and air,
'Pon treated well haply shall they return,
Rid of ailment, hope in future to share,
Goodwill its compassionate page shall turn.

Patients may carry Friendship's Cross uphill,
Or may not still in long oblivious years,
Fed on flag-waving fratricidal fears,
In hardened hearts enough warts harbour still.

Alas, there's no healing for hardened hearts,
Despite shared brotherhood on either side,
There's no easy wilting of callous warts,
So high hast grown the cross-border divide.

And troubled ties go on between the two
Long as there reign cranks callous sword in hand,
And extremists letting no one to mend,
No war mongers sans stakes can peace rescue.

India and Pakistan: There have been many a war and many a peace parley between the two troubled neighbours. Many more may still come. One such peace effort just failed. There are elements on the other side of the border, militarised heavily, extremists, and fundamentalists, with the army conniving at them hands-in-glove. How long the peace shall take in coming, no one knows. But left to them people do want peace.

Happenings | 13.07.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Warmer Still Is My Native Womb

There was this plateau land on the lee side
Of the world's tallest, coldest mountain,
Oldest, not uninhabited, decried,
Opposing the Central Asian plane,
Rain shadowed of south-west monsoon, most bare,
A dry, harsh desert, moisture nor e'er rains,
Not but sturdiest grass e'er could thrive there—
Some tubers, carrots, radish, hardy grains.

And yet, the land, as if a colony of ants,
Does thrive there and well on whatso life grants,
O gathering whatso victual that makes,
Girls drying dung-made cakes,
Men folk chopping dry wood
To keep the winter warm and somewhat good,
Searching for an unknown faint reason
To live life in a twain of season:
Six months endeavouring to ensure,
That, six months in struggle they could endure.

September comes, crops are just right to greet,
And every house digs up a garden pit—
In time to bake it warm in summer heat,
With tubers, carrots, and odds to fill it.
Sealing it soon with straw,
Insulating with winter's snow—
An insurance against the frozen vows
Be these subterranean silos,
In snow the Zojilla pass shall when seal,
Oh, hardest of Nature's harshest of ill,
The power plants would pause when in cold unease,
Live streams suffering wintry freeze.

But life triumphs as ever to rise tall
When providence casts her ugliest pall,
Learnt have the locals ingenious to be,
Water may when cease, stiff, in pipes to flow,
They heat to keep them on and drippy,
And getting water by melting the snow,

They survive, knowing how to live,
When all birds beckon them to leave,
Migrating to warm, calibrated climes,
Breeding in alien lands awaiting better times.

People subsist still on meagre ration—
Not in hellish human hibernation—
For there is work to do,
Unpaid though, for incomes get frozen too:
'We have to keep stored water warm,
'And shovel snow from frozen roof,
'Cooking, cleaning, washing beside,
'And study when there's time aside',
Life does demand a perennial proof,
They scarce can hibernate when till the storm
Passes; if people passive should lie,
They sure would get frozen soon to die.

Never for planes, they're made for this harsh land,
To nowhere would they e'er wish to migrate,
Be it paradise on earth, Pearly Gate,
And harsher gets their life sturdier do they stand.

The poem dwells on life in Drass in Ladakh, the part of
India's Jammu & Kashmir.

- Happenings | 14.09.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Wart Where Ere Was Heart

From cracks arise a tender sprout
And spread rare joys of shaded green,
Who holds a hand helping her out?
Whose be that hidden hand within?
Enthused darkness— light's companion
Of long: I let her out of stone,
Let her see light, sunny delight,
See river waters, grains of sands,
Chunky crests, all their lofty height,
All the heft of earth and vast lands;
There comes a voice from a deep cave:
Seen I've in stony depth warm heart,
That, human bosoms no more have,
Stones oft grow heart, men alas wart.

In a stony crack sprouts a seed of life; from brick-lined walls grows a Peepal plant. River water flows leaving behind feel of soft touch to stones. Some see the stone; some, life therein. Some live all their life close to their siblings without knowing them well. Strange, tenderness sprouts from stones, but often not from human heart.

Musings | 07.08.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Water That From Sweat Flows

Gardens grow,
Water when freely flows,
Not from wells
Nor yet from nearby springs,
But by love and care
That labour brings,
By water
That a salty sweat shows.

Reflections | 02.11.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

We All Are On Parole

For his fair conduct, goodly grade,
The killer was out on parole.

Easy, for justice to give dole,
The killed when can't come back from dead.

Divine laws might look rather crude,
But justice feels forced to look good!

But, with Heaven's liberal dole,
Reborn, are we not on parole?

A well-known tennis player's sister was killed in 2003. The killer was out on parole due his good behaviour. It was hard for her to reconcile to this liberal justice of mankind, when one who is killed can't come back. The poem then ponders on another truth: We die; get reborn, are we on parole?

Happenings | 09.08.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

We And All Else

Countless creatures repair back to Death's door
Day in and out, and yet those naught yet feign
To feel, they hail from heaven's deathless shore;
What can be stranger still, oh, what more vain?
Men think so since thousands of years and ere,
Here in this vainest world, and heretofore,
This gulf, ah, 'we and them', that 'we are rare'—
Yet, Time digests us all right to the core.

'We' shall rise high 'pon angel's soaring wings,
Evil else, hell-bound, shall grow horns on head,
The ill within us scarce to our core clings,
An alien's smallest sin is gruesome red.

Strange, we and them sons be of the same sun,
Yet, they hell should suffer, we high heaven!

In Mahabharata (Vana Parva) , Yama, the Lord of Death,
disguised as Yaksha, a strange creature, asks Yudhishtir,
known for his righteousness and dharma: What is so
strange in this world? (See the exact verse below) . His
reply is rendered in the first four lines of this sonnet.

ahani ahani bhootaani gacchanti iha yama aalayam |
sheshaah sthaavaram icchanti kim aashcharyam atah param ||
- Vana Parva 313.116 ||

- Sonnets | 03.10.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

We Dream

Some say
The world is vain,
Some feel no, we act feign,
We see things as they to us seem,
Day dream!

Cinquains | 02.03.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

We Like What's Not

If seasons tell me in one voice,
Rejoice in Nature's every mood,
There's no choice— life's lent to rejoice—
Failing to see the truth we brood.
Spring comes on wings of scented breeze
To gladden every living heart,
Straighten forehead's long frozen crease,
To give life push for a new start;
Summer fetches boons dressed as banes,
Nature packs gains disguised as pains;
The earth marvels spreading splendour,
Monsoon comes with mystic grandeur;
Autumn says, see: things one day fall,
Fall, to get up, gather, grow tall,
Call it taxing time, boon or balm,
Winter spreads its peculiar charm.

And still fools of a faulty school,
We always want whatso is not,
Wanting it warm when weather's cool,
Greed neighbour's greener-looking plot—
Lo, gardens give green proof with grin
That envy's dyed in tempting green!

The first stanza is inspired by a few verses from Saama Veda. Man, unhappy made by his mind, finds faults with the passing season rather than seeing the fair side. He seems more comfortable with the day gone by, even the morrow yet to come, than with the present moment which is fleeting by, melting before he knows.

Musings | 05.04.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

We Live In Times Extreme

Times extreme, we live oh on the ledge,
Glut gambolling with gloated shortage,
Farmers getting pittance,
Poor paying in big tonnes,
Profiteers pocketing pounds of wage,
We live in times extreme,
Life on prayer and dream,
And haply history turns her page.

Shortage, of all, of onions and tomatoes, and prices kissing roofs! Only a few weeks back there was severe glut. Markets seem to be largely stage-managed with a surfeit of hoarders, agents, brokers, and sundry layers between a producer (farmer) and consumer. But it is as if nothing can be done.

Happenings | 03.08.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

We Live In Times Of Bing

Time was, a fool was never fêted,
And soon he, his money were parted;
But times are a changing,
The twain, best in them bring—
A fool with money gets elected!
Together they be king,
In mutual praise to sing,
And the music made never bested.
In time we are of Bing,
Money fools— dingdong ding,
Anyone feels like king,
Fly on money-made wing;
Times are here when fools are well-fêted,
Saner sense for long has departed.

Humour | 07.08.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

We Look But Scarce See

I once saw a bird
That I'd looked so often ere,
And found it still rare!

Haikus | 05.03.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

We Scarce Our Soul Recharge

We our mobiles charge,
Be in touch with world at large,
Scarce our soul recharge.

Soul seems to be the sole neglected thing in the rat-race world we live in. Cosily ensconced in body, why soul need be recharged? But anyway, where's the time?

Haikus | 03.05.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

We Smile, Rise From Roots

I may take time to smile but keep it on,
Nor know what life means, nor how it bears fruit,
I know to smile from the red of young dawn.

Sun there be or shade, reason or none,
I greet all with childlike smile— ever cute,
Once I take to smile ever keep it on,

From grown ups do I learn grimace nor frown,
From devil nor from his wicked flute,
I start smiling right from early dawn.

Those to me close, together grown,
I dance with leaves, fruits and guarding brutes,
Born I'm with smile and keep it on.

Bless be the fertile soil and smiling sun,
Blessed be Nature I rise from the root,
I keep on learning dawn to dawn

Until one day I wither, done and gone,
Forgetting not the truth absolute:
Take no time to smile and keep it on,
Start smiling from your babyhood's dawn.

The speaker in this poem is a flower. It talks of its philosophy of life and that of its close companions— leaves, thorns, and fruits apart from sprightly butterflies. It opens the monologue as the bud says, I take my time to smile, but keep it on as I blossom into flower. The guarding brutes are thorns. Everyone's common philosophy of life is: Rise from the root.

Villanelles | 09.10.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

We Take Whatso Can

River shore to shore,
How much in my pot I pour?
Pot-full and no more!

This one is among four Haikus on Guru.

Haikus | 08.07.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

We Too Aught Go

In world of greens we're guests, you know,
We need frown none, none should we fear,
As all, we come— one day to go.

As greens invited in this show,
Greeted, glorified, to all dear,
As guests we too aught go, you know.

As greens here we know every woe,
Know as well how weeds grow high gear,
For, they know they've no time to toe.

Yea, come uncalled, wild we weeds grow
Nor are we your peer nor are near,
Nor a welcome guest, we well know.

Weeds are ones whose merit lies low,
World is green, for, we dance all year,
Ere known, all plants as weeds lie low.

Yet, garden's garnished place and so,
It's better if weeds from here clear;
As guests we our welcome should know,
As guest we come, as guest aught go.

In my definition greenery includes even weeds. In fact, I have a special liking for wilds and weeds! This Villanelle is dedicated to all weeds. There are three speakers in this poem: In the first three stanzas, it is the garden plants especially grown and nurtured. In the next two the weeds and wilds take over and express themselves, while the last stanza is spoken by the gardener.

Villanelles | 10.09.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Weakness Thine Own Sin

God struggled if whilst making a woman,
We know she scarce is made the way man is,
Similar mould, same clay, no matching ease,
And harder He tried toiling under sun.

No man's from Mars, no woman from Venus,
Truth is: no woman treated is at par,
She's lived a life of also-ran by far,
Venus seems man's whim, his pen's pointless fuss!

A myth that long prevailed, prospered as dealt,
Yet, women care no straight jacket logic,
To them it's heart that transmutes all magic,
Quiet does she pay for how man has felt.

Bearing man's seed never martyr her makes,
If she raises the brood it's her domain,
In motherhood man has never claimed stakes,
Yet, price of privilege is not but pain.

Of course, these seeds are centuries ere sown,
We do have reigning queens, Opra Winfrey,
As man, a woman too may be power-prone,
To men mom-sis, well fine, wife in no way!

She knows, a way out is no burning bras,
Bushy armpits, hirsute flesh, nor sporting pants,
Nightmares haunt, this male bashing is all crass,
And caveats are out with all known cants.

So, march with men, chest drawn and upright head,
Hand in hand if need be, never behind,
In touch, oft knowing when to brace ahead,
And high time ye know which way winds the wind:

You'd better beware of a Martian Gang
Who cavil, hard it is her ears to earn,
A dog that barks and bites— but hard to hang,
In letting sleeping dog lie, lies my fun.

From rooftops to rant, nor itching for fight,
Nor proving thee better than Martian men,
But putting to practice thine rights as can,
So, better stand tall for thine hard earned right.

And last thing ye do: feel frustrate within,
For, feeling weak has been thine own past sin.

A centenary of International Women's Day has little to show for solid success.
Suffering a collective guilt, frustrated, I can't do much better than pen this piece
in protest.

Happenings | 06.03.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Weather

All can a lesson learn from weather
The way cryptic tongues it can weather,
And still never agree
To change but a degree,
Nonchalant still remain
If or not it would rain,
And not a scruffy ruffled feather!

Tongue-in-cheek | 06.01.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Weekends With A Pause Button

Wish, weekends had a button for pause,
Wish, no clause nor law stops this good cause,
Weekends ah on a freeze,
My lazy bones to please,
Wish, my wife's wish no different was.

Humour | 23.03.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

We're Not For We Think

We sure are what we're, for, we think,
Mind said, parroting a thought pink.
But a voice said, body,
Mind, nor talent man be;
A lady wearing mink as is no mink.
Thoughts make man no more than aware,
Nor body nor yet mind death spares;
We're we because we are conscious,
The Self is what makes us,
The rest are only parts and spares.
We are not for, we think,
Much as books are not just ink.

And yet, when a Greek philosopher said, 'we are for we think', he was not wrong. Mind plays multiple roles mind is manas (mind) , mind is aham (ego) , mind is buddhi (intellect) , mind is chitta (awareness) , and mind could also be the soul or spirit, depending on the role it plays.

Reflections | 01.02.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

What A Decade Can Do To Her

Upright and tall, among trees she was pine,
The temper of snow and fire in between,
Sweet and fragrant as rose has ever been,
And full-bodied like a red table wine
Savoured all thru dinner and far beyond,
Her cheeks ever showed a reddish white tinge,
Demeanour of a fulcrum and deep hinge,
Causing young dreams to dissipate in fond
Hope. But when I saw her in a decade,
The beauty of ere was less evident—
Her proud patent of past had sort of spilt;
Fains if she wert, I wondered, same sure maid
In no mood to condescend a consent,
Nor yet let a deserving wooing wilt.

Sonnets | 01.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

What Can Be Better Than That?

The river of my life if flows in spate,
What can I want more than that?
If someone loves me still to this date,
What can I want more than that?

If someone comes like an early rain
Bringing to my life pleasant smell of earth,
What more can I wish to gain?
There is little in world of greater worth.

Chilly smog has spread all around—
In heaven, along all the ground,
And someone shines like sun, warming,
What can be better than this sunny spring?

Someone is wishing when his life to end,
And a stranger comes like a long-lost friend,
Out talking, ready his life to mend,
Who can think of a better helping hand?

Amid many a better pen than mine,
If you still read, and read to my last line,
Ah, what can better be for me?
Naught else can make me more happy.

-Translation | 01.10.12 |
of a Gujarati Gazal by Kiransimh Chauhan.

Aniruddha Pathak

What If A Child's Born With Grimace

Not a moment of gloomy a grimace,
Sad looking face, nor yet curt countenance,
All-knowing smirk, nor haughty arrogance,
Wonder wherefrom flowers get such good grace!
Yea, some do grow on wildly swelling weeds,
They still a unique wild fragrance far spread,
Whilst human weeds spread forth their foulest deeds;
Neighbourhood blossoms forced are to turn head.

Yet, a child's born with angel's easy grace,
But goodly grace unto grimace soon turns,
This human bud as grows to get grown face,
And this grimace gawks till childhood returns.
With grimace of a frowning unicorn,
What if one distant day a child is born?

As buds grow into flowers their innocent fragrant charm further spreads. But a child born with a goodly grace acquires grimace as she grows. This sonnet wonders what if a child loses her natural grace.

Sonnets | 09.02.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

What Makes You, You

Not tiny grains of earth,
Nor waves nor drops of waters
That makes a mountain's worth,
And an ocean what matters.
What makes you, my dear life?
Endless details, nor dots,
Acts nor feelings nor thoughts,
Then what makes you so rife?
Made are you rife with something
Special, that makes a li'le perch
In life of a lasting search,
What makes among seasons spring!

Yet, no'ne asks spring why `tis spring,
A spring is spring, or nothing.

Sonnets | 04.07.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

What Might Happen Happens Still

Good and evil when churned ocean's bottom,
Hailed was venom with the nectar of life,
Fair and rife in life well-mixed come with strife,
And crown cometh with thorns of a kingdom.
Men often look like roosters crowing shrill,
Feeling proud for reminding sun to rise,
Yet we know: sun rises to scorch through noon,
And would set to the depths of midnight's moon,
To arise once again as dark night dies,
Sure, things that might happen do happen still.
Cause and effect seem a self-seeding chain,
A thing that comes to be, having come dies,
Man loves to bear his cross, a pot of pain,
He thinks a sole beast he's `pon earth so wise.

Sonnets | 04.04.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

What Poor To Prosperous Can Give?

What Poverty to Prosperous can give?
It has weal, nor wealth, nor withal to spare
To those in perpetual plenitude live,
But soft assets they can to those that care.

Their life, a daylong test of adventure,
Survival subject to day-to-day dare,
And still they live, though in uncertain air—
To west bored to blasé `tis no mean a lure.

Excited do they live in penury,
Hustling, bustling amid bare life,
Healing the hungry maws left half empty,
Yet, no'ne dies of dullness, of boredom rife.

With an attitude of innocent gamble,
They need no casinos, nor betting joints,
Nor fancy fortune-feigning ensemble,
They give this free of frown—all their soft points.

Too sterile has world grown like a hospice,
Cultured austerity hanging in air,
And people too polite, good nor yet nice;
But they know how intimate hearts to spare.

Ready are they, aching hearts, still to share,
In giving words to feelings, how to strive,
They show to world how to live more alive,
And be humane, fully bosom to bare.

For, world has grown an isolate island,
Hard know-how used as barricades to bend,
Make next-door neighbours like strangers to stand;
Poor still try and extend a helping hand.

The bug of greed has spread all thru the world,
And the poor here no exception does claim,
The daily struggle has everyone hurled
To pits, and poor do have their share of blame.

And still enough they feel they have to spare,
And say this with ado nor yet false air,
The truth has no compulsion proof to show,
Go close and stay with them, and you will know.

Musings | 05.07.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

What Price Progress

What price progress

Created when, God meant them to be free—
The earth and water, air and fire and space,
Together that made all things in this place;
Man thought: wow, here's my opportunity.

Limited Earth, and all so precious,
Was fancied first, and came under his hold;
It took time whilst before the rest were sold,
Kindly Nature had made them copious.

Man wondering on ways to make land scarce,
Claimed empty space by building monuments,
Dwellings, to wield it within walls no sparse,
Boundaries, fences, legal impediments!

Of light and fire, he made them both man-made,
And contrived to cater to false demand,
Leaving out sun and air later to fend,
He bent when harder got to go ahead.

And when his greed grew greater than his good,
He plundered Mother Earth— his livelihood,
Spoiled water and air with foul attitude,
Poisoned plant life, green woods, lifeline as food;

And bottled water in order to sell,
What Nature made aplenty he despoiled,
Bothering to bow to no warning bell,
Nor yet from atrocious acts he recoiled.

Such luxury clean air has of late been
That bottled air gets sold—at greedy price,
Class hotels charge fat fees if air were clean,
Sure, man's fate to me seems a loaded dice.

Spoiled has he what God gave in goodly grace,
No wonder his future seems in distress.

Man has managed to ruin all the five elements. God meant them to be free, but man found ways to sell them. What would he exploit next? It might be human creed, character, and virtue, which he no more seems to value!

Happenings | 07.01.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

What The Palm Foretells

Life's born, palms folded,
And left open is it dead,
In-between palm spread,
Give, give, clamours greed so red,
Life's fear to lose, dread!

Senryu | 10.11.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

What Worth Wealth?

She fussed and for long fumed without clue:
How can they wipe out all my value?
Devalued ye sure were,
Vishnu said, long time ere
When gold lost out to paper's vague hue,
And pray, wealth has value
No more than we imbue.

The Goddess of wealth fumed when high value currency notes were demonetised in India. But then Vishnu revealed the bitter truth: All wealth has a paper-thin borrowed shin. Wealth was devalued long time back when gold and metallic coins lost out to paper. And paper, with surface value, can always be devalued—demonetised.

Happenings | 01.01.17 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Whatso Nature Has Made

If a full moon looks stunningly handsome,
So be the new, if only in mind's sphere,
So be the crescent, all phases that come,
All Nature's made has a beauty so rare.
Sun sure is what with light healing my heart,
Yet, sunset hailing night casts its own spell
To contemplating minds that inner dwell,
Whatso has He made marvel be of art.

Repulsive fails to light up mental hall,
Man's innate pursuit might be for the good,
Trite and trivial still be his port of call,
A strange unseen shaping his attitude,
Everything has beauty,
But not all can it see.

A couple is enjoying a quiet evening together under Nature. Wife says: human pursuit is for the visible and beautiful. The husband agrees but has his own take on the subject. In the end they arrive at a common ground: Everything has beauty, but not all can it see.

This sonnet is not set in the usual octave plus sestet (8+6 lines) . The last two lines are short with 6+6 syllables (together making an equivalent of one line of the usual iambic pentameter) . In other words, the sestet effectively is of 5 lines, and the sonnet of 8+5 lines, not of 14. But there is reason for this deviation.

Let us look into the enigma of sestet, and the logic of a form arranged harmonically*. Excluding the last couplet, there are 12 lines. The octave is of 8 lines, and the sestet of 6. Thus, 6: 8: 12 are harmonic in their relationship. Yet the sonnet has 14 lines, not 12. So the logic of harmonic relationship is a bit ad hoc.

But there is another theory of proportionality that offers an ideal ratio proposed by Pythagoras. Let

AC= whole sonnet of 14 lines

AB= octave, BC= sestet.

Now, BC: AB= AB: AC.

|_____||_____||
A B C

1 8 13

Here, the illustration does not show clearly, but A to B -s 8; B to C is 5; and A to C is 13.

The logic is: the smaller is to the bigger, what the larger is to the whole. Yet, to be mathematically more precise, the ratio has to be eight to five, not eight to six in order to have a Golden Mean*. Six is preferred for symmetry. After all a poet has more latitude than a mathematician, or even a musician! Six also happens to be the first perfect number, the sum of all its divisors ($6 = 1 + 2 + 3$). But so what, I would say.

Now, we can have 8+5 lines for a perfect sonnet and still retain symmetry. Five and eight are two consecutive integers in the infinitive series: 1,1,2,3,5,8,13,21, ... (Fibonacci Series: the subsequent number is the sum of the preceding two) . With 5,8, and 13 the ratios are more perfect.

*THE PENGUIN BOOK OF THE SONNET
Edited by PHILLIS LEVIN

Sonnets | 11.12.2017 |
Topic: poem, sonnet, nature

Aniruddha Pathak

Whatsup Flowers

Man in perpetual search for a pal-ship,
Loves courtship of crowd, nor yet living 'lone—
That a tailwind, no whirlwind powers his whip,
And a good friend from not is seldom known—
A pal whose lap a good pillow can make,
Upon whose shoulders a few tears be shed,
To sail a ship as if in tranquil lake
To goals in sun a friend that renders shade.
Yet, amidst friends flooding one's life today,
Good weather chums, buddies of weather vile,
And those that hide-and-seeK in friendship play—
Of type dime a dross daily that we pile;
If fragrance whatso WHATSUP buds can't reap,
How'd they ever blossom any friendship?

Sonnets | 7.10.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

When Art's Its Own Reward

A poet, head heeding to no hard rules,
That walks tall leaning on no staff of cane,
Penchant for pen, passion with no refrain,
A student of own self, taught at no schools;
His pen no offspring of self-inflict pain,
Let ace swimmers come from no shallow pool,
Let wanderlust in no local parks cool,
His prolific pen dries not, should ink drain.

He knows, wild flora weird fragrance spread,
Their blossoms in bushes boast of fond friends,
Though far afar from plucking, prying hands;
Much so, like wild flowers he earns no grade.
It is when art retains reward its own,
He learns to remain fresh like early dawn.

Sonnets | 03.07.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

When Birds In Distress Call

Ironic it seems to me not the least,
Nor to those living in strange little worlds,
Few birds when breathe in our callous cold midst,
More bird-watchers wake to trail our lost birds.

If I the blue cap of the rock thrush miss,
Miss whistling calls of drongos¹ e'er so pleasant,
Colours of parakeets, all avian bliss,
The least I do is: live up to my lessons learnt.

The house sparrows— our all-season good friends,
E'er on a pair of busy brownish wings,
Oft daring too close to our sullied hands,
Have dwindled; but cell phone ever more rings.

And where has the pied bush-chat gone?
Perhaps Indian magpies and robins' way;
Cuckoos, sunbirds, thrushes sing all alone,
And seen are only on a lucky day.

When her haven on earth has all but died,
Whence can the paradise fly-catcher come?
Easy though flies are still supplied,
Where's her fond food— the breakfast worm?

What else when pesticides prey, killing aplenty?
When we care fewer green spaces to spare
In our blind zest for an exotic tree,
Let no natives grow, nor for grown trees care.

We build tall where fields were, where meadows were,
And lakes, if not levelled, are dug deep,
Which when shallow welcomed the wings from air;
No wonder, whatso man sows aught he reap.

Sure, ironic it sounds the least
To find a gang of crows chasing away
A large kite on wings, a brave birdie beast,
And droves of dead-pan doves drooling all day—

The sole heritage we deserve to keep,
Not else but what we sow we reap.

Drongos1: A local bird of the size of a bush thrush, greyish
dark, with a tail like an inverted Y.

-Happenings | 01.11.12 |

Aniruddha Pathak

When Death Is Upon Me Close

Death's when upon me close, whispering cold
Grey wisdom, but of too little avail,
I know I'm death-less soul, no body frail,
And death's change of garment worn out and old,
I too know, soul kills nor ever is killed
To re-live old frustrations fanning fires,
Woken up wants, wishes, dreams of desires,
The soul's here to till fated farming field.

Yet, hard it is to rid my me and mine,
To leave a field tilled and toiled to raise roots,
Whatso scriptures might say, desiring fruits,
Of no avail's wisdom howso divine,
 To soothe my heart in its desperate wail,
 And wonder if divine courts grant a bail!

The spiritual wisdom that the body is no more than a garment, that the soul is immortal, that one should rid all me and mine, and do one's duty without wanting fruits, is all right for the soul that has evolved well. But for most of us who know predominantly the lower self, the ego, death is still very frightening. We often read scriptures to an old man on a death bed. I wonder still such 11th day spirituality be of much help. The poor man is desperate to go or get a bail, as it were!

- Sonnets | 02.12.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

When Faith Stands Tall

Logic may not one and two equal make,
Nor can fasten a square peg in a circle,
No power's known rules of cosmic law to break,
But I've seen will-of-faith making miracle.
If faith pursues and plays a long innings,
The cosmic will aligns, works from behind,
To give acts of faith favourable wings,
Provision nods pushing with some tail wind;
A toss of dice might have the same face drawn,
Perchance it can't but be the way it is,
An event happening on a long lease,
As-is where-is bestowed, like it or frown.
Yet, ways of Nature howso yon man's head,
Paved are with logic scarce obvious made.

A task is when pursued heart and soul, faith when persists struggling to endeavour, soon things seem to fall in line; unknown forces seem to help, and nearly a miracle happens. No logic can explain how, but when faith stands tall, logic bends.

Sonnets | 02.01.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

When Fragrance Smiled Like Flower

As flower does with fragrance,
He pulled me with his
Gravity's one glance.

Aniruddha Pathak

When He Left

Left leaving dollar dreams still unsigned,
Inscrutable a smile well behind,
His soldiers staying put,
With arms and army boot,
Borders still disputed, ill defined.

And yet, the expected hundred billion dollars were nowhere.
The pressure on the borders was especially mounted, and no
talks on settlement. What earlier was 100 billion dollars has
now shrunk to twenty over five years, all pledged and loosely
promised and subject to conditions galore. He left leaving
us guessing and on tenterhooks, gulf at the borders staring
still as before.

- Happenings | 15.09.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

When Heart Conspires With Head

A poet, head rid of all rigid rules,
And walking tall warded by a stiff cane,
Pen put in his penchant hand would walk sane,
Heart singing new songs scarce learnt at old schools;
For art by nature is no child of brain,
As swimmers are made in no shallow pools,
As wanderlust seldom in parkways cools,
Nor does a fertile pen dry should ink drain.

How does a wild flower her fragrance spread?
The blossom on stray leas still has fond friends,
Far, far from picking up and prying hands;
Freedom, untouched, keeps poetic heart red,
Less relied rest when rules, rich spectrum lands
To fertile pens, when heart conspires with head.

Rhyme scheme: abbabaabcdcdc. Somewhat fainter does a Volta occur from the 9th line. Otherwise the entire piece projects one theme, as supported by the fact that there are only four rhymes for all the fourteen lines.

- Sonnets | 04.07.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

When I Came To You Last

When I came to stay last, my child,
What a bundle of joy you were on tiny toes!
How the time stopped for us before it filed!

Like a bud in early blossom you smiled,
The blossom one day to become full rose,
I recall when I came to you, my child.

When we met next, my child, I was beguiled
To see the same bud blest with sharper nose,
How the time stopped for us before it filed!

Your fairy-like smile, ah ever so mild,
Like your mother's your age, and which still shows,
I noticed when I came last, my dear child.

Many an imprint that have in me piled,
Ever your fond memories would disclose,
How the time stopped for us before it filed!

It is to my imagination wild,
Whenso my soul suffers her lows,
I'd come to stay as I did last, my child,
How the time stopped for us before it filed!

* Format: Villanelle

- _ Five stanzas of three lines each plus one of four
- _ Length of the line not restricted
- _ Each stanza ends alternately repeating the first line and the third, of the first stanza.
- _ In the last stanza, the last two lines are the first and the third of the first stanza.
- _ Repetitions in this manner enhance the mood.

Reminiscences | 11.04.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

When I Saw You Last, My Child

When I visited last, my child,
You were a bundle of joy bare on toes,
Time had stopped and memories isled.

Like a bud in blossom you'd smiled,
Blossom beginning to become rose,
I recall when I came, my child.

Next visit and I was beguiled
To see, the bud had a sharper nose,
Time flows my child, never gets piled.

Your fairy-like smile as always mild,
May be your Ma's your age now shows,
And bit on father styled, dear child.

Impressions rush, long in me piled,
That my mind shall slowly disclose,
How time stops, rush at times my child.

It is to my mind's eye so wild,
Whenso my soul suffers her lows,
I open up that file, my child,
Time never stops, memories get filed.

Villanelle | 08.04.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

When Night Was Night No More

Past lonely long years she hears knocks on door,
Too late the night slept when dreaming asnore,
The heart tells her, 'wake up it is no dream,
'Head tells: him that made thine life ghost-like grim':

Was not I musing of him all evening?
Of course, early night too was spent singing
His tune, in hopes to see him in my dream;
The heart too eager was to welcome him—

And yet, her head seemed a tad hesitant,
Re-living the last-straw of that instant
When he parted never to meet again,
Yet her restraint was weak as was in vain.

Her body was aburn with injuries,
And wounds caused by the hurting acts of his,
And yet, how strange, the wounds conspired to please!
Her heart was heard humming his memories.

Her feet pulled her to rush open the door,
While still her weary head was not quite sure,
But hearts have a way of winning such race,
And heads find it far too hard to keep pace.

She felt happy at her sweet little plight,
Her heart heaved as knocks heightened at the door,
As she rushed to open the door that night,
In dying hours when night was night no more.

-Musings | 05.08.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

When Not Getting Up Rattles More

Man oft has felt drained, a spent force,
Striving a hard nut, failing still,
A pony on a coursing course,
Huffing on a hailing steep hill,
Left, a fiend of failure to face,
Damned if balks, damned if dumps the race.

As man's not made of purest metal,
And success is enticing lure,
A mixed alloy fighting life's battle—
He fears as much frustrating failure,
As cockiness of a cock-sure,
Not getting up from a fall does rattle.

Success, a deity that need be appeased,
By sacrifice alone this goddess' pleased.

One might have heard: the fault's not in falling; it's not trying again. Yet, real life renders no such cut and dry situations. This sonnet is born of this discomfort.

Sonnets | 08.01.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

When Survival's Mercy Enough

Means just to muzzle up the maws that churn,
Each day dawning with a new-born surprise,
Days and nights both longer turn and return,
Moment stretches long ere deprived it dies.

When younger still, my day's wages were like
Cream upon cake, on bread a sweetened spread,
When my husband alive was oft to strike
Some work, and most days were bright orange red.

The rice brew I now sell seems to decide
If darkling clouds descend or there be shine,
My daughter's coming makes a silver line,
But survival has long been a rough ride.

No, never him nor have I seen a school,
Our daughter, nor ever any a neighbour,
The wages hard if daily routine rule,
And schools looked like wage-devouring labour!

Yet, enough cheap rice for all month I get,
Some kerosene to cook, sugar for brews,
To sweeten black brew for me and my pet—
My dog and I both endure karmic blues.

We had no land, nor yet a shelter fair,
A stroke of luck when we had to migrate—
A long way from Bihar— a no mean dare;
Penniless in some ways seem fortunate!

We're not alone, and fate seems a fair friend,
Life's not a game always of even sums,
We all ere lived in lush green woody land,
We're now amidst a sea of shanty-slums.

But things elsewhere no better are than slums,
Our cities look to me like hatcheries,
Most people survive on no more than crumbs,
Those that make more money mint more worries.

My daughter when I die shall shed some tears,
She has no cause to look up to my death,
I've seen some dying amidst suppressed cheers,
With this solace, I'd breathe out my last breath.

For, who knows, life could have been even worse,
We now at least get to eat some rice brew,
It's blessing if morrows unfold from blue,
Money and means could be no less a curse.

This poem is based on true story of a poor woman now in her sixties. She is a migrant from Bihar, now in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. This poem is a tribute to millions of survivors like her. Nothing seems to make much difference to their wretched life. It is their sheer survival instinct, perhaps sense of fate and philosophy that keeps them alive. To them survival is mercy enough.

A tribute | 02.11.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

When Tamas Triumphed

Triumphant, tamas on a pedestal,
Pathetic looked the face of a candle,
And what happened, bit odd,
Truth pushed to hide in pod,
Curtain when called, scene was hard to handle.

Tamas: Area of sloth, untruth and darkness in man's within.
What happens when a whole island of darkness stands triumphant, and poor
candle that tries to illumine all along is blamed for darkness? The past is totally
forgotten and a curtain falls, as it were, on the candle's lifetime of contribution.

Musings | 06.08.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

When Trivial No Inconsequential Was

Trivia scarce all its life trivial was,
It meant 'three paths' and looked learned,
And was no stuff derived of trifling cause,
A combo word of 'tri' and 'via' made.

What shame! A word of scholarly image,
Connoting to the liberal arts three
And leading to a bachelor's degree;
But age's known to malign sharpest of edge.

When people ere at crossroads met,
Gossipy titbits oft did exchange, that
Wielded the word its meaning new,
And trivia took a trivial hue!

Ah from trifling to marginal,
To small and inconsequential,
To things nigh insignificant,
To petty and unimportant!

A word, good manure for human brain is,
As teasers help brain cells to irrigate,
Delay Alzheimer or put it to ease,
Oft stretching man's best-before date!

So, words too come mortal as do men,
Like men they age, seldom be as began,
What crucial ere is turns to trivial,
And trivial turns consequential.

The word 'trivia' has acquired today a meaning quite different from what it meant to begin with. This little ditty tells how it all went.

Scholars in the Middle Age were called trivialists. They studied what was known as trivium, the lower division of a university course comprising Grammar, Rhetoric, and Logic— three basics of the seven liberal arts.

The higher division had the remaining four arts: Mathematics, Geometry, Music, and Astronomy. The word trivium from Latin meant a cross section of three roads. The former three subjects were considered popular arts, and the later, science. From this, trivial began to acquire a new shade of meaning: unscientific, to popular, to commonplace, to even humdrum! Today it means: of little value or importance, trifling, marginal, even petty, and frivolous.

-The ways of words | 01.11.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

When Wombs Were Pots Of Nectar

Time was when thou wert valued over men,
Whilst beasts of sacrifice were largely male,
Time was feed stock of cattle was female,
As hatcheries supplied are but by hen.

Wombs over all else did therefore matter,
West be or east, be it past or present,
Wombs likened are as pots full of nectar
In times as when life was immortal meant.

In times of attrition, many a war,
Death by famines and dearth, death by disease,
Life hanging perilously on short lease,
No wonder births were valued ever more.

A tree of life wert thou for family—
That'd wither dry without a fertile womb,
And ye merged therein like rivers in sea,
And central did remain beyond the tomb.

So sheltered thou wert from battles on hand,
Ye often played a virtual woman shield,
History replete is in every land,
What women can build, what women can yield.

A seed could well be supplied by a sage,
Some even summoned gods for such a seed
To carry on with exalted lineage,
Ye always played a crucial role indeed.

Mahabharata replete is on this theme,
Instances so many here to repeat,
Where ye were counted to carry the dream,
And add to progeny in ways discreet.

Parashuram a brave warrior was, and priest,
Axe in hand he killed many a cruel king,
Yet, Balik hiding behind women's wing,
He managed to survive to breed like beast.

The Greek, Achilles, was raised in girly guise,
Safe from warlords itching to battle Troy;
Sword and spear revealing female disguise,
He did fight to win— this dresst-as-girl boy.

O weary wombs ye once were female founts,
But things have turned full round in today's times,
She that shielded men now faces male crimes,
O that spares no sane thoughts if passion haunts.

And look within, O brute sex if ye can,
Would ye have ever survived sans women?

Ode | 02.07.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

When Words Fail, Similes Fall Short...

Some paint charisma of their charming love
In glorious words and gorgeous glitzy verse,
Some keep love's cutest likeness in a purse,
Or in whatso ways their fancy may move.
Yet some, nigh like history's mighty Mogul,
A monument for their love were to build,
Shimmering marbles might ere long get dull,
Or some think of hundred odd things a field.
Yet I would, no thanks, by none of them mine—
I know she's a jewel forever rare,
I'd just say: she by self her own doth shine
Like luminous star, no more to aver;
When words fail, metaphors falter in faith,
The most I would, 'ah she', and hold my breath!

The poem was inspired by one of John Davies.

Sonnets | 07.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

When You Pressed Me To Pen A Poem

When you pressed me to pen a piece—a few
Good lines the least for a well-meaning friend
Soon to leave, leaving me starrng at blue
Skies, blinking stars and blank paper in hand,
And I was left brooding on things and ways:
Poems are no stray gifts picked from shelved piles,
Nor am I one that can spew out vain praise;
Unsure I stared still— at ceiling and tiles.
Yet, had you been a daughter just, you see—
Not one with an escape loop of '-in-law',
I'd have fished out one from the deepest sea;
And half-tried still, I doubt if you it saw—
The piece that can a daughter-in-law please,
Some wishes born are to be wish horses.

Why can't a daughter-in-law be a daughter? Rhetorical, yet, it's
easier said than try make it happen. From this dilemma has this
sonnet been born.

- Sonnets | 08.05.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Where Beliefs Bathe By The Sea

The sea of footfalls move on by the inch,
Firm-footing way along, holding dear breath,
You too can join if can stand to the stench,
Be one with holy crowd's unsullied faith,
Give way to weak, to their lofty beliefs,
Help poor, help ripe of age, without what-ifs,
If you can keep your head high, move ahead
On the narrow causeway's realities,
Can dodge prying crows hanging over-head,
Flocking for food, shun photo-hunters' pleas
For a quick snap, and keep your fervour still,
Feeling rancour in heart, nor yet ill will,
And faultless pure can keep your pious breath,
O breathing whilst bare but faith-filtered air,
Haji¹ Ali thence pilgrimage be rare
Spiritual trip for thee whatso thine faith.

Walk up the tomb, durgah, of a tall soul,
Perform vazu², not just cleansing hands-feet,
Rid impure thoughts and feelings a whole,
And as sun moves to its diurnal retreat,
Let your serenity seek depths within,
Despite all noise and stormy Worli sea,
The way I've been touched by the sacred scene,
May it maghreb¹, puja², or prayer be.

1. Haji Ali at Worli, a Muslim religious place, on a small island by the city of Bombay.

2. Vazu², maghreb²: Muslim prayer rituals.

3. Puja³: Hindu worship.

Musings | 03.03.13 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Where's The Face You Once Knew?

Early morn sleep deprived, and of life,
You oft struggle to get up from bed,
After a late night and heavy head,
It's indeed hard playing spouse to wife.

You carry on still— the same old role,
Convincing or not yet, life's a stage,
Pleasing none, pursuing the same goal,
It gets harder hanging on to hedge.

Rushing as always to work, new tasks,
And spending yet one more thankless day,
Playing and pretending, wearing masks—
One each for every role you ought play.

Playing boss here, an ideal colleague
There, a co-operating team-mate,
And what's most demanding one to fig—
A hard-working hand O to stagnate!

Evening with friends, mates in water holes,
As many faces as there are masks,
Pretending and playing out odd roles—
As many roles as are thankless tasks.

Home 'gain thence and dying to relax,
The day's done nor yet be on the sail—
To parents a good son you much lax,
To children, a hold-all hard to hail!

In bath for cool shower
At last, time to be you,
In front of old mirror,
Where's yet the face you knew?

- Introspecting | 09.05.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Which Of The Two?

A dog barking wild at back door,
A wife yelling at the front,
Ever frantic their groan and grunt,
Which door would you rush first and fore?
Of course, the door at the rear,
For, once you let him in,
As it'd to any appear,
The dog would soon stop barkin'!

Tongue-in-cheek | 12.12.04 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Which Way The Tough Go?

When things get scorched in a parched desert,
Left, but this advice of an expert,
'The going when gets tough,
'But the tough gets going'.
Enough of such false spring,
Enough such stuff to know,
But who's called such bravado's bluff?
Who knows which way the tough did go?

Tongue-in-cheek | 05.08.05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Whilst Life's Lilacs Wither

It's time lilacs when wither in hot sun,
When butterflies fail to flutter
In my ageing, wilting, unkempt garden,
Hope finds when no fragrant flower,

I see a child in mother's lap
Listening to a voice of love,
Cherishing aspic nipples' sap,
A joy like this never fails to move.

I long, scenes like this for long last,
Her lullabies back my childhood bring,
Whilst life passes by to be past,
O to leave a lingering feeling.

Like a leaf browning up turns childhood,
And memories long lost still dither,
Mind lapses into old times to brood,
My life's lilacs whilst still wither.

Musings | 04.07.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Who Am I, Dear?

If this home by home-maker is made,
He mused on this existential dark:
Who am I, one that brings home mere bread?
The truth stared at him ever so stark!
Mute witness that from home duties shirks—
Purusha watching Prakriti slog,
You pride at pinching prime homely perks,
She said, well ensconced, lime-light to hog.

If voice works on words and life on breath,
Eyes on sight, sound waves vetted by ears,
Mind on thoughts, if from heart cometh faith,
O what work-apron this spirit wears?
I'm the soul: the sole conscious being,
Soul does a key job of enabling!

A man wondered: if she is a home-maker then who he is. In Indic philosophy, purusha is the doer, the spirit, a conscious being; and prakriti is material nature. But she uses the term here to mean someone useless around the house. In the sestet the man ponders, and then arrives at his own reconciliation as the couplet shows. The sonnet, with a lighter tone, is set in anapaest metre.

Sonnets | 05.07.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Who Causes Quaking?

His foundation shaking,
Man turns to God praying,
Desperate like a doe,
But little does he know:
It is God who has caused all quaking!

Tongue-in-cheek | 11.07.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Who This Marvel Made?

Ah lovely, what a marvelous piece?
We oft say when we see
Anything of beauty;
Yet, daily we see this world of His,
Never ask, created who hast this?

Reflections | 03.11.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Why Man Is Riled

Dawn dawns ever mild
Like a new-born child,
Man wakes, for no reason riled.

Never reconciled
To his own demons,
And then blames heavens!

One can imagine how the world would be like if all wake up every morning like a newly born child— calm, composed, and content.

Haikus | 11.05.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Why This Endless Search?

Religion if has too little to sell
To a man that but by spirit is driven,
Here's him, who, nor with hate runs from a hell,
Nor yet has heart hankering for vague heaven.
For, hell haunts everywhere, not just on earth,
And heaven he knows has limited lease,
Though enough of ordeal, birth still seems worth,
The horrors of life's hell may never cease.
No one has seen abodes of lasting bliss,
Where eternity springs perennial joy;
He that knows to plug to spiritual buoy,
Lo, myriads of mirth on earth be all his.
To me, in a life of limited perch,
What use I wonder this vainest of search!

Sonnets | 05.08.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Why Trees Turn To Sun

Why trees turn to Sun?
Tune up to heaven
Should mankind them shun.

Haiku | 04.07.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Why Worry

There was once a man cucumber cold,
Unworried what his life may unfold,
There's no need to surmise
In morrow's mould what lies,
If nothing, lifetime's lessons in gold!

Worry not what future has in store for you, this ditty says. If nothing that you expected—not success, the failure gives good experience, lifetime's lessons in gold.

Humour | 08.07.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Whys Of Life I Know, Not How

In gone past, nor in one to come,
Get attuned with the passing breeze,
Try your present moment to freeze,
Live in present time's sole kingdom.

Yet, I've some past moments to savour,
To re-live wistful memories,
And there does waft a tempting flavour
O of my dreams and reveries.

I know, I know, in now's life's wow,
Present's the time I must revere,
And yet mind's mind and it aught waver,
To its follies man has to bow.

Fine, living in present time's now,
There's no why, but there still hangs how.

Sonnets | 23.11.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Will Over Time's Writ

Temples nor tombs nor churches built to stay,
Nor pyramids that human spirit hail
For senile centuries long could prevail,
Bridges and dams would all one day decay;
But mankind's words of wisdom would still sail,
I've stood in childlike awe and ever will
Of this great survival of human will,
All else against time when get slowly pale.

A great killer's time, everything gets spent,
But words of mouth survive, teacher to taught,
Father to son as knowledge's freely sought—
One thing whereon time cannot leave its dent;
A triumph me seem of human spirit,
Of Vedic heritage over time's writ!

Tomes of knowledge has hardly survived on printed pages, nor ancient manuscripts on hand-writ leaves, nor have words writ on stones and structures survived the scare of time. Never could today's modern magnetic discs and tapes give us guarantee that the memories captured on them will for long prevail unharmed and un-erased by Nature's elements. Nothing can stand the will of Time, a greatest killer and creator at the same time. Against this backdrop, one cannot help wonder, how India's Vedic knowledge has largely survived for so long.

Musings | 01.04.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Windows Make House

May be, holes it is that makes a house,
Be it for mankind, be it for mouse;
Holes from where comes fresh air,
Whence to look everywhere;
Just as we cut holes to make a blouse!
And windows I would say,
(Walls and roofs in no way) ,
Make what we call a house,
Just as home's made by spouse!

Tongue-in-cheek | 03.05.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Winter

Scene I

With heavy winter wear,
Woollies, cries galore we endeavour,
Fight winter with cold creams and all might,
Winter wins still how so brave we fight.

Scene II

With stray, torn sacks of jute
The poor strive, mouth on mute,
Trying hard the biting cold to beat,
And for sure, winter wilts in defeat!

Reflections | 14.07.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Wintry Chill

Anxious, ill at ease
I waited in wintry chill,
And waited for long,
And when she failed to arrive
The chill spread in heart.

Senryu | 17.02.2017 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Wise Beyond School

Forgotten had he all learnt at school,
And declared was he soon a great fool.
Failed had he every test
Memory-based at best,
Yet, was no memory-laden mule;
In every field of life,
And proof there is so rife,
Exception is it that maketh rule.

Tongue-in-cheek | 02.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Wishes Adrift On A Beach

Some wishes reach
A ripe old age,
And still remain virgin,
Some might get fulfilled nigh young,
But most remain for long hung,
Left to age in hope of some green,
It's sin to keep wishes in cage,
Or leave adrift on a beach.

Musings | 29.12.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Wistful I Still Yawn

The nightlong dark's gone,
Birds sing hailing dawn,
Wistful I still yawn!

Haiku | 02.01.2019 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Woman And A Wet Spell

Ah a woman and a wet spell,
Ditto like rains she's mighty cool
And proves to be from a tough school,
Between the two we know rains well,
Seldom do we know a woman.
Our casual eyes may find her wet,
Though she may be far from it yet,
Not her, all else we try we can
And manage rather fairly well;
You scarce have enough of her seen
From without nor yet from within,
There's no end to her magic spell.

She conveys well though hardly speaks—
Or so has man now come to feel,
And quiet whilst a storm she kicks,
She's enigmatic onion peel,
You might well peel and peel all life,
Onion she remains all the same,
Nor you win, subtle nigh her game,
Nor is there end to crying strife.
She means nor by the words spoken,
Nor yet like poem kept token,
Is she confused or be clever?
No one shall know if forever.

Easy perhaps man may tired get
Much before can her understand,
For, more he struggles trying at,
Deep in quick-silver he might land.
Suicidal so is it to try,
All we can— smile a smile so wry.
The joys of rains oft come with fears,
And confined to season they are,
Not just an all season a star,
A star is she that has no peers—
She's one, good to look at from far,
Not too close, she's ready to spar.

Like rains she would ease us, or tease,
Drench us wet, or leave us all dry,
Or smother us with love well nigh,
Like windstorm she goes, not like breeze.
And oft scoring well over rains—
All-season overcast remains;
Yet, in man's doldrums a fresh breeze,
Or a lifetime's weakness of his!
With water Shiva we worship,
In her ocean we are like ship,
Beware, many have gotten drowned
O facing her righteous frown!

Tongue-in-cheek | 09.09.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Woman Of Essence

A soft interior masking outward dare,
Lies behind hard crust vulnerable core,
At home family never makes it fair,
Away, deemed easy prey to lurking lure;
All conspire to make her cake hard to bake,
Creepy colleagues meander where she works,
And sycophant lurks irritates and irks,
She feels like fish in showcase, out of lake.
Clamouring at home for pricey this-that,
Resentful kids are ready to revenge,
Poor grades and conduct an alibi fat,
A mother not at home's still somewhat strange.
As much glitz and glamour as there is gore,
Her success still to me seems myth much more.

Sonnets | 02.10 05 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Woman, Know Thyself

If ye think you can whatso can men,
Ye cause not a whimper in men's den.
Let me this to thee tell
What few would ever spell—
Ye know not, O Fair Sex, what ye can.

Thou art no dung-hill hen,
Nor cocky are all men,
To let your latent spell
Ye need shout nor yet sell,
For, man seems thine great fan.

It is still largely a man's world. Most women may know this, and their secret aim seems to be equal to men. This I think is their undoing, their aim being no tall enough. Women know not their immense potential. What they perhaps lack physically, they more than make up in many a way.

Musings | 02.01.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Women, Their Feet Firmly On Earth

Women, their feet firmly on earth,
And homemakers of immense weight and worth,
Givers of bundles of joy, not just birth,
Raising home from house, barnyard to warm hearth,
No mean management— magic nigh,
A rare career cast in a sunny sky;
No less than scaling Himalayan peak,
And a job above man's— all seven days a week;
Take manning space shuttles, no undue airs,
Take looking after nation's knotty cares;
Oft storming open male's reserved bastions,
Guiding ships to safety of home stations;
Shattering the ceilings long made of glass,
She proves her mettle with a cut of class.

They give their best walking whilst a tight rope,
Forging family wrongs to right— with hope,
Or making home the envy of heaven,
Behaving still as if not much is done;
And women of rare ilk when home front choose,
Business nor ever career, no excuse,
Bring home still tonnes of dignity well worth,
A career no mean—of home and hearth;
Take those that make room for motherhood
Over glare and glory as they would;
And many more that take a blissful break
From their career's tempting track;
A complex, creative run one's home is,
Challenging and rewarding to many,
Raising Gen Next with epicurean ease,
Can a corporate coach e'er match any?

But why, I wonder she alone homemaker be,
Whilst breadwinner only but man we see?
I foresee, not too far, a better mix
In melting pot, whose time I think ticks.
And whilst both can be goodly breadwinners,
In homemaking she sends men to cleaners.

Happenings | 03.03.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Woody Putts: A Bouquet

Too easy it was golf balls to drive,
Easy was to take off and arrive,
Hell, could not drive that car
Far— nor my even par,
And the whole world calls me far too naïve!

... ..
Birdies and eagles were once well done,
Trophies and medals, my name in sun,
And now this hole in one
Is making me undone!
Where's the fun of hitting a hole gone?

... ..
How'd one crash into a fire hydrant?
A huge tree, not a puny li'le plant!
But he was no more good
To tell iron from wood,
Such 'las was the fall of a giant.

... ..
And dropped was he our Woody Tiger
From a premier event called Ryder1,
Making his record worse,
Parched purse, career course,
Every remark somewhat more snider!

1. Ryder: A European golf event

... ..
Nightmare it always is to drive
In the dead of a sleepless night
To escape a marital fight,
And no place on earth to arrive!
Sigh, sigh,
But why?
Most us can't tell pasture from lea,
He for once wood for tree!

... ..
Hollywood fan nor was a figure,

Wood still gave a film renewed vigour,
The new film being made,
As goes Woody charade,
Named is: Scratching Cars, Lying Tiger.

... ..

Sixteen², and counting still going on,
On the escapades of the old don;
And the bet is of course:
Would he go the full course?
Eighteen holes me seems not far too yon.

2. Number of babes he philandered with

... ..

Pray what is Tiger Wood now left to brood?
Birdies, eagles nor holes-in-one seem good,
All holes seeming hollow
He would not now follow,
Oh saving one and only one—
The whole of his home ere haven!

... ..

What does the Tiger scandal prove?
Swing in glory to your success,
Earn thy earnest all dough I guess,
Ye may loaf around and roam all the Rome,
But never mess with that hole³ called sweet home
That be your gravity's sole groove!

3. Hole: Though is used in the sense of personal pad,
a sort of waterhole, it also alludes indirectly to golf,
and to Tiger's philandering ways.

... ..

Beware attitude may or not be good,
But not caution-to-wind romantic mood,
Beware hallow hangs heavy on the hood,
Under any raiment every man's nude,
Ye may a Tiger be of Woods,
Beware there be babes in the woods!

- Happenings | 03.12.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Words Are Birds On Wings

Words are birds on wings, ideas that bring,
Ideas brought, haply they hop to wing.
Freely thence the songs soar
As free birds, words no more,
And yet wiser we still to words cling.
As if boat-less at sea,
Wordless few pens can see,
Nor sans words can poets ever sing,
Oh words, words, mortal man's undoing!

Reflections | 04.09.17 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Words Spoken And Not

Inner voice, sacrifice, you may quote,
Quote that I care no chair, let them note,
(Sotto voce) :
Let someone warm the chair,
A turban of thorns wear,
Haply who dances to my remote!

The veil is lifting at last. First it was Sanjay Baru, Who exposed truth in his book, 'The Accidental Prime Minister'; and now it is Natvar Singh shedding light on the remote control that was. Forget the halo carefully created; forget 'inner voice', and the air of renunciation and sacrifice. A case it was of power without accountability. Sure, better a king-maker to be than king.

This limerick imagines what the lady at the helm might have thought through in her mind—sotto voce and aloud.

- Happenings | 18.08.14 |

Aniruddha Pathak

World's Fine If We Are

It was late I managed when to find
Filing up things in a neat folder—
Things I thought were far from fair order,
But in fact were fairly well aligned,
It was me that walked with stiff-shoulder.
If I had kept open my closed eyes,
Had I been to worldly wisdom wise,
Had I tried walking on a firm ground,
Had I known when to start, when to end,
Had I learnt to bend, not just defend,
Had I not been a square peg, but round,
I'd have seen me as an offender.
Man willing can see far,
World is well if we are.

This sonnet uses anapaest meter,

Sonnets | 03.01.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Worry Not My Friend

We at our life's evening shall meet—
Together we two— brown old leaves,
Munch on old memories made sweet,
See, if the tree for us two grieves;
Meet we can't for more than days few
Lying prone in an earthen pit,
Never for the lost time shall rue,
And be when manure, loamy bit,
Help give rise to new life in it,
We'll cherish friendship's fecund feat,
Worry not, friend, we'll one day meet.

Two leaves on a tree cherish great friendship, but can't meet. And they wait for the time they fall as brown leaves— the only way they can be together as one.

Musings | 08.08.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Worrying

Worrying, we oft share
A secret with a rocking chair—
Back and forth, to and fro in air,
And still reaching nowhere,
The chair stops not rocking,
Nor yet we— worrying!

Reflections | 06.02.09 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Would It Rain, O Wise One

With monsoon clouds for long hiding behind
And showing no silver lines sent from moon,
Nor pouring copious waters therein lined,
Nor showing myriads of moods of monsoon,
The valued guest getting tangled in blue,
Or more likely nursing some unknown wrong
Of which, a fair guess be made nor a clue,
May be, it liked not the welcoming song.
So, with hopes freezing into wintry vain,
Pondering over skies, prayerful eyes,
People asked a chameleon that looked wise:
Ye think these clouds are good for goodly rain?
But looking heavenward for help instead,
And clueless still, he stood nod-less of head.

Monsoons in India make or mar the year. And desperate people would depend on desperate means to know how monsoon would behave. One such way in olden past was to ask chameleons, who seem ponderous and serene and wise and have the habit of nodding their head.

Happenings | 01.07.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Ye Earthlings Shall Perish Like Corn

Look unto your mind's mirror and reflect,
Time's upon you to change, time 'tis to care,
Conserve, mend ways and do repairs long left
Loose; you have plundered this fecund land bare;
Nay, abused your Ma that spared you her womb
By mining her in an unfair tillage,
Pushing close your Mother Earth to her tomb,
Take heed, you've ransacked her O in pillage,
Spoil not ripe age by pawning her youth's prime,
Look through the mirror of your intellect,
Note wrinkles of guilt on your face, and act
In earnest and undo your callous crime.
Were you to prove unfair to her fair name,
Ye shall perish like corn, in utmost shame.

Sonnets | 09.11.08 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Ye O Life Favour, Nor Frown

Thine ways may be as wanton as they come,
Known art thou to favour, O Life, nor frown,
Opportune times if come few fortunes crown,
I've seen thee braving ill times keeping mum.
And there are those that always sanguine be,
Relishing fruits, ripe or not, few or rife,
Whilst there are those in abject misery,
Entwined in wishful wants, life torn in strife;
Yet, O Life, ye never discriminate,
Man's freedom to opt for a red from blues,
From twain of paths at T-crosses called fate;
He savours or suffers, but gets to choose.
Let fate favour or frown, grow wanton weeds,
Man has a wide field to sow choicest seeds.

This sonnet seems to move from Volta to Volta throughout its length.

Sonnets | 02.10.10 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Ye Pull All The Strings

No use O from battlefield to preach me
That world's no vain, nor is life a bad dream,
Soul never hunts, nor ever hunted be,
Life aught be lived still on heaven's sole whim.

Eternal if the soul be as say you,
If death be no foe that kills, but is friend,
A smart gimmick to beget garment new,
Just as is served, man still plays given hand.

And plays on till the death new life to gain,
Forever new lessons to understand,
And still, poor life aught sing same tired refrain,
The same old tasks in a new dress to fend!

And so doth life meander death to death
To make the same mistakes, commit same evil,
To die slow death right from very first breath,
Don't ye feel destiny's unfair to deal?

Your flute is a symbol of life,
Better teach me way out from strife,
It is life ye loved all along,
So let me see life's a sweet song.

Life-joys ye say go hand in hand,
An if Liberation be bliss,
And still the other way should wend,
What use this world, what use life is?

If world seems a field fraught with battles,
At best a shelter for odd night,
No one in a life-long camp settles,
And do his deeds that ye deem right.

And O ye let me all the mistakes make,
Make me dance like dolls whilst ye hide the string.

From one who has done a serious poetic translation of Bhagavad-Gita, here is his

tongue-in-cheek interpretation of the text.

Musings | 10.08.11 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Yon Of Eyes

Limited the known,
Unlimited vast unknown,
Mankind's not alone.

Haikus | 04.06.06 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Yon Of Yon Dwells Truth

Looking for new perch
Life ends, ends no search,
Yon of yon dwells Truth.

Haikus | 02.05.07 |

Aniruddha Pathak

You Lived Long And Well

You have shown how life's late eve should transcend,
The silver of century-kissing years
Turning rosary beads from end to end,
Watching four generations' joys and tears,
Going thru how life moves in varied gears
With changing times— forward, fast or reverse;
Weighing with your values, times good and worse,
You've taught us life's lessons joys, jeers or fears.
Now that you're there in time but not in space,
Wheresoever this mind's eye look for you,
I find traces of your leftover grace,
For, memories rush in to render clue
That you've not just lived long but also well,
And that I'm sure for long will spell its spell.

Sonnets | 02.09.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

You May Propose, I Dispose

No we're prime, persisted the senses,
Riled red, agitated
For a prime place ahead,
Ego felt, it's him that disposes.
Soul warned all: hold thine hackney horses,
Me not willing, you can't
Even live a moment,
Better stay within your defences.

Reflections | 01.07.15 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Your Memories

Oh your memories
Let me no far get,
Edited out, still stay stet!

Haiku | 08.09.18 |

Aniruddha Pathak

Your Mood Of Late, O Rains

You drain your all to quench parched hills,
Man manoeuvres others to fell,
Heaven's gifts for profit to sell,
You rain, a scorched wounded heart heals.
What use boons be to thankless man?
If boons paid back are best one can
Would not this planet be heaven?
Yet, to hell's creed he seems driven,
Aware, you doubtless sure would rain.
Your nature is to drain and drain,
For eons gracious you remain,
Whilst man is as has been— a pain.
Yet, judging from your mood of late,
What if you leave him to his fate?

Monsoon musings | 03.09.16 |

Aniruddha Pathak