

Poetry Series

Domenic Marbaniang
- poems -

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Christian Poet from India.

A Close Shave

The misty envelop has now dissolved,
A close shave from a nasty snare.
Amidst wildest wars unresolved,
Salvation from the raving rage.

The doubtful dilemma of deceptive distractions
Has taken up wings and flown away,
The world has expressed its final disapproval,
It can't accept God's brand anyway.

My soul takes wings of the eagle
And flies across the open sky,
It beholds the world of humanity entangled
In lusts of flesh and lusts of eyes.

Also, pride haunts the heart of humans,
Nay, say hunts them on the deadly trail.
It pounces and falls on the souls of such persons
That turn away, misled, into the path of hades.

But, save these from the fire,
Mark this as your cause,
Seek first God's chief desire,
And you shall suffer no loss.

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Matt.6.33

Domenic Marbaniang

A Tale Of Something, Or Nothing, And God

In the beginning was God and nothing.
Then, God created something out of nothing.
But, soon that something forgot she was once a nothing.
And, forgetting herself and God, she assumed herself to be everything.
And, assuming herself to be everything, she died to everything else and God.
After many days, when this something had run out of everything she got,
She came to her senses and "Who am I? Where am I? " she thought.
Then, she realized she was a nothing without her God,
And so returned to her original place in God.
In the end was God and something.

Domenic Marbaniang

Amazing Love

Amazing love of Jesus
Never minding my scarlet stains,
He holds me up in His arms of glory
And covers my heart with His unfailing grace.

The sun may despise my heart of darkness
The moon from me may cover her face.
But never has His light once failed me,
He holds me up in His heart's embrace.

I'm wrong, not once I've fumed over
My heart in doubt His Name disgraced.
But still can I but love my Jesus,
My Lord, my friend, my only praise?

The stars above me hung in silence
As thoughts confusing marred my face.
Yet, deep within me was His assurance;
He'd love me through the end of days.

I'll doubt myself, my Lord I'll never
Who saved me by the cross of shame.
Each stripe He took, my soul delivered
Each dropp of blood, my life reclaimed.

'...having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end' (John 13: 1)

Domenic Marbaniang

Beauty For Ashes

I've seen beauty, I've seen strength;
I've seen them all pass away at length.
I've seen such class that influence the masses;
But I've seen them die and turn to ashes.

My ashes remain at the foot of the cross,
From whence I've risen to gain against loss
A life eternal, a life all new,
A life that's known by only a few.

Now, I'm ready to write a song,
A song to the Lover who forgave my wrong.
He calls me out from the wandering masses,
He loves my soul and gives me beauty for ashes.

"To give them beauty for ashes..." (Isaiah 61: 3)

Domenic Marbaniang

By The Gate Called Beautiful

THERE'S A BEGGAR sitting by the gate called Beautiful,
And he needs more than just silver and gold;
The priests scoff by,
The rich walk by,
The people throng by,
The children ask why
This beggar's sitting by the gate called Beautiful.

There's a preacher coming to the gate called Beautiful,
And he ain't got any silver or gold;
But, he won't lie,
And, he won't shy;
For, he's the kinda guy
Who'll just stop by
This beggar sitting by the gate called Beautiful.

A priest gnarls by,
'Wretched beggars defacing the Temple! '
A vendor calls by,
'Come, you fella! Got any change of coins? '
A youth rocks by,
'Hey dude! Got good style ha; keep on rockin'! '

The beggar's not listenin',
He's eyes are on the preacher transfixed;
He stretches out his palm for alms;
The preacher grasps his arm,
'Silver and gold have I none, ' he says
But what I have I give to you;
In the name of Jesus of Nazareth,
Rise up and walk, I say to you! '

Boy, he jumps up and dances,
Cries, 'God's power touched my bones! '
The crowd cast baffled glances,
'Wasn't he a cripple a while ago! '

What a pulpit, O Master Carpenter,
You grant a fisherman who left his boat!

See how he blazes one fiery rhetoric,
One sermon wins 5000 souls!

The priests get angry,
The captain is mad,
They run down in hurry,
With Sadducees sad;
They all are sayin',
'What happened's very bad! '

They put them in prison,
They drag them to court,
They warn them 'Listen,
'Don't ever preach this sort! '

Ah, don't show them your paperguns,
They ain't some timid blokes;
They've seen their Master risen
From the dead to die no more!

Such were some events one day by the gate called Beautiful,
A beggar got more than just silver and gold;
The priests still cry,
The rich still sigh,
The people stop by,
The children ask why
There ain't any beggar by the gate called Beautiful!

Domenic Marbaniang

Christ Is Born!

The world hustled and bustled in its own way as usual.
The little stars flickered and twinkled way up in the sky.
The angels huddled and bundled in a way quite unusual
To gaze into the glowing face of a new born boy.

One said, 'See how tiny He looks in those swaddling clothes,
The Prince of Heaven has crossed into earth's deadly orb.
He who made Solomon rich has chosen for Himself a manger,
The Head of all things is born in His own world like a stranger! '

Then a gong rung hard and an angel called, 'To the shepherds! '
And in an instant they were out of Bethlehem into the suburbs.
One angel declared to some grubby men, 'Unto you Christ is born! '
And the angels rejoined, 'Gloria in Excelsis Deo! Peace on earth, good will to
men! '

Domenic Marbaniang

Delay Is Not Denial

Once upon the tumultous shore
Of raging waves tossing by
I thought of all the worldly lore
That taunted and made me cry.

'God' they said 'is just a bore'
'Who's silent or anything but not.'
This did hurt me to the core
For I believed Him and all else not.

But then I saw the waves become a door
Of new blessings that keep pouring in.
God tarries but delays not more
Than we can take and in Him we win.

Domenic Marbaniang

Ego Masks

Everyone's great, or so one feels.
If no such feeling, can anyone live?
The desire to rule is not very bad, not at all.
Only misdirected.
To have dominion was man created.
But he can't even rule his own spirit.
A slave to passion, a slave to the world,
Unruled passion, kings of destiny – but still slaves,
If one can will, but one can't.

I'm better than most, better than all.
If none such feeling, won't I continually fall?
Vainful ego, vain contentions,
Ego-contentions, Ego-war,
Ego-affronts, Ego-masks,
Ego-presumptions, Ego-affections,
'I' must prevail, 'truth' not.
Downroad destruction.

Imagination, warped reality, self's own construction.
Ego (I) spins a world of its own:
Everyone has a world of his own.
Where world's agree, favors arise.
Where world's collide, wars arise.
Worlds are egos, Egos wear masks.
So are all agreements, masked.
Behind the veil hides the unknown, which ego finds not.

And falling forwards,
Faces the world behind its mask, created by the world.
And the world wears masks.
But it has its own world, its own understanding.
Yet behind the dynamic – flux of these worlds
Lies the unknown, static, stately, still, who knows?

It sees its face in the mirror of its world
And sees the mask.
It takes it for its face
And so takes its world for its face.

Therefore, worlds are egos, I say.
You never see the truth; for truth is itself masked.

But remove the mask
What remains is the unknown.
The mask is better than the unknown.
And where one is unsure of the truth,
There teachers prevail.
And the teachers wear masks, give masks.

'This thing cannot be known, except it were given to you by the Father.'
'Lord, search me and try me.
Send forth thy light and thy truth.'

Domenic Marbaniang

Faith

The heart of faith has no presumption,
It simply trusts His Word.
It stands secure, and in His Promise
Finds eternal worth.

The eyes of faith will never tire,
Though deeper gets the night;
They hope ignited by the fire
Of God's Eternal Light.

The dreams of faith are dreams of glory;
Not earthly name or fame.
A child may write another history,
If he's of God ne'er ashamed.

Faith will worship God forever;
For faith alone, in truth, sees Him.
Faith is an unceasing river
Of praise and worship to the King.

Faith listens and faith obeys,
Faith moves on and never stays,
Faith is strong and faith grows stronger
And never falters in His ways.

Faith offers its all to God
Not a thing to itself left;
For faith's true rest and meaning
Are in the bosom of His chest.

Domenic Marbaniang

Flee Lust Arms!

Lust's arms are a tangling web.
Its gazes alone conjuring,
Frail souls to fall and ebb
Into Hell's unquenchable fury.

My soul was high upon the crest
Of holy thoughts and musings.
But sooner were its yearnings wrest
To idolatrous lurings.

Wild, drunk, and debauched turned I,
As lust its blood-drenched sword out drew.
It left my heart of love all dry,
As loveless lust sought more for new.

Lust's arrows are sharp and heavy
Piercing through man's entrails.
Then leaving its victim void and weary
It falls away with no avails.

True, remorse does first sooth the wound
But foregoes as lust keeps the strike.
Oh, that man would no longer play the fool
To follow lust's charms and lose his life.

The flick of the moment, the slip of time
The act of a fool in the daze of night.
Lustre ephemera, murderous wine.
Son, run from lust: stand not to fight.

Domenic Marbaniang

How Old Have We Grown?

How old do we sooner become
Forgetting things that were yesterday new;
Looking behind, we're surprised again
That our thoughts today aren't that new.

Memories of profundity fade into obscurity;
Memories of goodness are ever new;
Still, memories of transgressions prick the heart;
While memories of mercies remain true.

How older have we become?
How farther from childhood grew?
Still the child-like dependence hasn't disappeared,
The childish frettings aren't that few.

We are children of You, O Father,
Our eyes look longingly to You.
For only You can discern our desires.
And our hearts always come back only to You!

Don't wanna miss Your voice in the morning,
As our eyes cast the spell of sleep away.
And, when we get back to bed in the night,
We desire Your presence with us to stay.

If we go wrong, O Jesus,
Let Your cane correct us, though we bitterly cry.
For, we know that sooner the cries'll be over,
And You'll sweep us back into Your bosom of love.

How old have we grown, how less dependent?
Well, never so old to never be dependent.
How younger do we remain, how far fit for work?
Where Spirit ignites passion, there never catches rust.

Domenic Marbaniang

I Stand At The Edge Of A Cliff

I stand at the edge of a cliff,
Lord, how many times I've been brought here!
The winds sway me and the valley pulls me down;
I turn cold and numb, and can fairly clutch me on.
I stand on, confused and bewildered,
Not knowing, now, where to go.

Still, my anchor is cast upward,
Though it's not always that I can see the rope.
The winds sway me and the bottom pulls me down;
I turn cold and numb, but You still clutch me on.
I stand on, confused and bewildered,
Yet knowing that You know where to go.

Domenic Marbaniang

Man Beyond Nothingness

A particle afloat in the ocean of infinity,
Yet, so conscious of self in profuse vanity –
Lofty though his thoughts may be, they're all profanity.
Man is nothing, made of nothing, that's his identity.

Emptiness craves for sensation beyond sanity,
Like a black hole eating anything in its vicinity,
Such is the tale of empty, chaotic, gravity;
Man is nothing, made of nothing, that's his identity.

Lost in a world of baneful, belligerent brevity,
Filled with protests of ignoramus sincerity,
Tossed between lines lacking any clarity,
He lives, dies, and is buried in utter poverty.

The Son of God came down from His celestial city,
He left Heaven and donned the garb of humanity.
He lived, loved, and served in all simplicity,
Then died by the hands of those professing religiosity.
But, He arose the third day, breaking death's jaws of fatality,
Alas, the shame of those who die in their hostility,
For the Son of Man is ascended to the Throne of Supremity –
And all knees will bow before the Name of His Majesty,
Before the One who is given all authority,
Because He stooped down, emptied self and defeated vanity –
God girded His loins to serve sinful humanity!
What is man but a finite speck of futility,
Driven o'er surges, surrounded by fests of calamity;
Unless the Son of God had loved us, we wouldn't have any identity!

"For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren." (Romans 8: 29)

Domenic Marbaniang

My Lines Have Fallen In Pleasant Places

A candle lights the distant horizon,
It silhouettes sharp my contours of day;
Its fire engulfs all solar traces,
And forces my wish to espouse its way -
My lines have fallen in pleasant places.
(2Pet.1: 19; Ps.16: 6)

The colors of the rainbow witness the story
Of ignited anger and torrential rains;
The skies couldn't also withhold His fury,
Except He stopped for He knew my days -
My lines have fallen in pleasant places.
(Gen.7: 11; 8: 1; 9: 13; Eph.1: 4; Ps.16: 6)

One stooped in honor of truth and love,
To heal my wounds and bear my pains;
He plunged beneath this temporal surface
To save my soul, to blot my stains -
My lines have fallen in pleasant places.
(Phil.2: 6-8; Isa.53: 2-5; Ps.16: 6)

Before my mother could hold me in arms,
Your love had touched my innermost parts;
I've trekked the mountains and walked through valleys;
But Lord, it's You who hold my paths -
My lines have fallen in pleasant places.
(Ps.139: 1-3,13-17; Heb.13: 5; Ps.16: 6) .

You poured Your precious oil of unction
And set me apart by Your own holy will;
Before I could ever use my senses,
You appointed me to hold this quill -
My lines have fallen in pleasant places.
(Gal.1: 15; Jer.1: 5; Ps.16: 6) .

I'll run the fullest course of life
And fight the finest fights of faith;
The world now all its force releases,
The Lord keeps pouring out His grace -

My lines have fallen in pleasant places,
My lines have fallen in pleasant places....
(2Tim.4: 7; Rev.12: 15; 1Cor.15: 10; Jn.1: 16; Ps.16: 6)

Domenic Marbaniang

On Being A Star

You need tougher stuff to remain a Star, though a distant invisible one; most so called Stars are misunderstood fireworks; they blaze and disappear sooner from our skies. But what crackle they make in all their pompous display.

Celebrities and icons, upheld and adored by myriads.
How sooner does your vigor die, your fire go away;
Perhaps, an overdose of heroine, or some fear of rejection;
You burn with your stardom as fireworks up in the sky.

Retain your calm, get underframes of truth and grace,
Despise not others, do good and learn good to praise.
For, if you stick to passion, it'll eat you anyway;
But, if you stick to wisdom, it'll keep you all the way.

Domenic Marbaniang

Passion

The sun lifted his arm to hide his reddened face,
The winds ceased and the earth jolted in confusion;
The universe blackened; history was blotted out.

The One who held this vast universe by His power
Now hung motionless in body on the Cross -
That cursed pole obliterated by His crushed frame.

Puny little powers had wielded powerless hammers
Driving nails, lifting Him up for all eyes to see
What salvation God ordained through this cursed tree.

Two thieves for company; few friends, more foes
Waited, as time fled, to watch this end;
Time did end; history choked.

The quivers quivered as bitter arrows were disengaged;
Sin rattled against that Love immutable and true:
O Mockery, you had never so hatefully grimaced
Than when He prayed,
"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do! "

One sinner cursed, the other his sins confessed
And sought a hope this world never knew;
Glory shone from God's battered face,
As to him He said,
"Verily, you'll be with Me in paradise today, I say to you! "

Then, from those torn lips flowed words of sealing
A woman whose breast He leaned on
To the disciple that leaned on His:
"Woman, behold your son! "
"Son, behold your mother! "

And, darkness covered the land for hours three;
Chronicles and almanacs wriggled in disbelief;
Time dropped her hands all mystified,
As He cried,
"My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? "

What pride mars the hearts of sinful mortals,
Their evil enflamed by their wishful desires!
One blinded man whispered, "He calls for Elijah! "
Another mocked, "Now, he needs help."
We plunder our lives for goods of godless pleasure,
We plummet our souls into hell's horrendous grave;
Then, we look at the Crucified Savior,
And whisper to ourselves, "He needs help! "

The agony was over, the agony released;
He knew it was over and felt the peace;
Then, He said, "I thirst! "
Lord, I was the cause and the reason why You thirsted.
The liquid that most composes this earthly sheath
Was drained from Your veins to wipe my shame;
You thirsted in order that I may never thirst again!

They lifted to You that venomous vinegar
To burn Your lips, to blunt Your pain.
You turned Your Holy face in refusal,
Your thirst was quenched when You quenched my shame.

Then, He cried "It is finished; "
The Law and the Prophets brought to an end in Him.
One Act of Jesus Christ of Nazareth
Nullified religion, culture, and every human whim.
The wisdom of the wise in their wallets,
The power of princes in their pockets,
Let forever be confined:
He's done with these, I'm done as well;
I'm crucified to the world through Him.
The old is blotted out, history has changed,
The transgressor is no more; see, there this saint!
Man no longer has works; these are acts of the Cross,
From where alone flows each disciple's works.

What cry now rends the heavens and the earth!
What voice echoes through the corridors of space!
"Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit! "
The only Obedient Son died to live again!

The veil of the temple was torn asunder,
The earth quaked and the rocks were split;
His material case broke open; the path of heaven was paved.

The centurion fell to his knees in wonder,
The crowd beat their breasts and cried;
Silence! God hangs motionless, the penalty is paid.

As the sacrificial lamb brought to the altar,
As the sparrow over running waters slain,
He poured out His boundless love and drenched me with grace.

Lord, what is passion and how much zeal's enough?
Your Passion displayed passionately the ultimacy of love.
The world's fully obliterated, it's only You all now!

Domenic Marbaniang

Peace

The copters up grinned as down dropped the bombs -

"How easily have we humanity erased! "

"No, it's not we but they who pilot us

That have first erased humanness from their own hearts! "

The copters bladed away as bullets ripped the air -

"Metal kills metal as men kill men! "

"No, metal is lifeless, men are alive;

Only metal kills men and metal alike! "

"So, these men are as us without mercy or shame,

What made them so lifeless, what power what name? "

"Fear, anger, hatred, and doubt

Are the negatives that deaden their hearts."

A little girl below (running with her brother in arms) :

"Cry not, my brother, my little dear doll,

The copters will go away and with it all noise! "

"I want my mother, I can't see her around! "

"She is now in heaven, and sees us here down."

The girl cries...

"O mother, O mother, we're left all alone,

We're left with no mother, we're left with no home! "

The copters returned with more anger and ire,

They poured all their fury in brimstone and fire.

The girl ran for shelter with the toddler in arms,

The bombers rattled after unaware of this all -

For, as the smoke and the dust rose into the sky

The eyes of truth were curtained.

The next morning, a Priest wails:

"Why God, my Master, did You all this allow?

O terrors of darkness, what else you seek now? "

GOD answers:

"This history is yours. It's you who'll write
The story of man devoid of His God."

"The story is sad... it's still You who allowed -
the guillotines, the gas chambers, the fiery clouds! "

"If it was I who should have governed the earth,
Then why create man to have dominion on earth?
These are your inventions, your wisdom, your resolves
That drive these divisions, that compel these discords.
It's you who for religion hate each other and all
And become more repulsive in the eyes of God.
It's you who for your mission of justice for all
Give in to the religion of violence and harm.
It's you who for riches of this fleeting world
Have exploited your brothers, your own flesh and blood.
And, shall I not requite this faithlessness of you all
Who abused your power while stewards in My house?
I'll return your violence into your bosom,
Your withdrawal of justice, of mercy and compassion.
For, the end of all things will surely come,
Men shall be judged for all they've done.
For, what could be rewarded unless it were done;
But, you've chosen hatred and love you've shunned.
O, turn now from evil, turn now from shame!
Turn from judging each other by some name!
For your hearts are fashioned all alike,
But, evil is a venomous viper that strikes;
So, beware and make amends, make peace with all first,
Cease from all violence, from treachery and lust.
Then, shall righteousness spring forth from the ground
And bless you with assurance of glory from above."

The little girl comes in between...

"God, I see Your answer is so true and so wise;
But, we've lost our mother, we've lost all we had! "

GOD answers:

"You've lost not your heart, my daughter,
You've lost not your child-like faith.
One day and sooner after,
The world will get a bold shape.

Then, you shall reign in glory
Over princes, rich and strong,
And they who are now stronger
Will then be proved wrong.
Keep this heart of yours as innocent
As I've made it with my heart;
I'll return to give you justice,
I'll come back with my reward."

Then, GOD vanished into thin air;
And, the copters bladed through the air again.

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Domenic Marbaniang

Praise & Slander

Praise and slander are both fruits of magnification;
The one focuses on virtue; the other, on vice.
The one supplants the other or versa vice.
Thus, bias judges by exaggeration
What feelings are aroused by sympathy,
And striking a note once, then twice,
Then times a many, grows voluminous ever,
Until revoked, stilled, transformed, removed.
Then does feeling spur reason to find more reasons
To back what it feels, and gets stronger thereby:
This all to prove that man knows a little
But speaks much more,
And one only sees as much as one feels.

Domenic Marbaniang

Protect Your Heart

Throw not a stone in the dirt,
For it'll splatter back on your skirt.
Wipe off the daily dust,
And let not your iron rust.
Do not let the despiser inside the gate;
For his breath is a baited bait.
Protect your heart with all precaution;
For it alone first deserves your caution.
(Proverbs 4: 23)

Domenic Marbaniang

Rule My Heart!

The sun doesn't fail to discern its east,
Neither does it wander from its west;
How meticulously, Lord, You rule the heavens!
Unfailing Lord, rule also my heart!

You give the birds their shelter,
You give the lilies their shades,
You bless this earth with dew from heaven,
O Gracious Lord, bless also my heart!

In deepest oceans, where darkness prevails,
Your mercies are constant ever;
Neither science nor fiction can ever change
What You have fixed in nature.

But, what a contrast is man!
Falsified by sin, confused in sorrow,
Childish he remains, shifted by winds around!
Each idea blown impels a reaction,
Each egoistic flow propels a revolt,
How stubbornly do these thoughts engross
A heart that's molded by its own flames.
Diversity, how frail you are!
You can neither crawl nor stand.
For, when from Truth you were unchained,
You fell to ways that lost their path.

Let Your Truth prevail, O Lord
O'er every segment of my life!
Let Your Spirit rule over
Every space of my heart!
For these laws of nature may be dismayed,
But Your goodness endures forever!

'Your mercy reaches unto the heavens, and Your truth unto the clouds. Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; let Your glory be above all the earth.' (Psa 57: 10,11)

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Domenic Marbaniang

Slumdog Souvenir (India)

No man is a dog; nor a dog, a man -
One can only be treated so.
And yet these metaphors are bad -
Which I now intend to show.

There are dogs on street and dogs at home
So, a street man can't be a dog,
For then would men at home also be dogs;
Though never Bull or Alsatian; for all are one.

A dog's got no moral sense; a man has at least some.
And even if he had none,
The categorization is worse, and not less;
For, a dog's still known for its faithfulness.

The street boy might become a millionaire,
And a millionaire, come to the street;
A shack is still a home to someone;
A cover from the heat, a rest for one's feet.

A child still laughs in the slum
A baby still cries in the palace
An eye still awaits one more dawn
While one wishes the night would prolong.

The slums have their dogs; dogs of different breeds.
Some belong at home; some rover on the streets.
But slums and all settlements are known for their men, women, and children;
Though rich or poorer they be;
They are one of us;
And in God's sight each is precious:
Each one still one in a million,
Each one still a millionaire.

Jesus said that as a man who found a precious gem sold everything in order to buy it, so is the Kingdom of God. That is why, Christ came into the world to save us from our sins. We are all still precious to God, though the world sees it differently.

The Rain

How blissfully dribbles the rain
Fuming over surfaces, flooding the drains.
Drops after drops, their unceasing train,
Make little oceans along the lanes.

Ho! A child darts over the muddy banks
Then sweeps into a messy swamp.
His cries exhilarating draw in the ranks
Of shirtless soldiers surfing the swamp.

What peal of thunder, what cloud now bursts!
The sky's now blistered to heal the earth!
The wind brings shivers, the flood brings dirt!
Yet, all together, they vanquish the dearth!

See, the pearls now glitter
In the shimmering sun;
As colors bend over,
The rain is done.
Well, ask the farmer,
It's not all done, Oh! It's not all done!

Domenic Marbaniang

The Rainbow

WHEN the gentle sky sobs her tears,
You paint your bow and calm her down;
When some distant flower has lost all cheer,
You spray your colors and remove her frown.
Your inverted smile on heaven's face
Reflects on earth with boundless grace;
We're filled with bliss, with hopes of tomorrow,
When on the sky, we behold your rainbow.

You beam your arc over sunshine and rain,
And pass sunny pleasure through the prism of pain.
See, little children, they jump and dance
When they see rain notes on your colored staff.

Domenic Marbaniang

The Remorse Of Ashoka

The young warrior stood motionless
On the bloodied ground where battle
Had raged yesterday with vehemence
Of heat and sound; of flashing metal
Clashing, slicing, piercing, battering,
Flying, falling, striking, slaughtering
Men and women in the battle of pride,
Filling the air with blood curdling cries
As bodies fell one after the other with sighs -
All now calmed; the violence, stilled; the battle, won.

'But, what did I win here?' the Prince thought,
As his eyes gazed around the tormenting scene
Of strewn bodies that had once valiantly fought
A battle of dignity and the right to be rightly free;
'What have I gained now?' the Prince sighed,
'An open grave, a banquet to worms and vultures,
A treat to hyenas.' 'It's not so,' the devil lied
'They deserved this for being against your culture!'
A little child came walking with tears in his eyes;
'My remorse shall equal all my sin,' the Prince began...

'For every act of violence that I have done,
Ten thousand acts of non-violence shall I return;
For every hand of cruelty that I did wield,
Ten thousand hands of kindness shall I yield;
For every single child that I did orphan,
Every child of the world as mine shall I reckon;
For every beast that this war has slaughtered,
Every beast of the field shall henceforth be preserved;
Let my remorse be so great that never a life I will annihilate;
May trees and beasts, as all humans, now freely live
And breathe peace in this Land of Non-Violence.'

'You are a fool to make such a pledge' the devil replied,
'Another fool for a Prince after Siddhartha, who shunned
The delight of palace for the wilderness' plight,
The heroism of war for a monk's bowl of rice,
The light of victories for a patch of worthless lies;

And what will you gain by all these?
The enemies will gain their upper hand -
He who refuses to slaughter will himself be slaughtered -
Then, you shall repent and relent; but, it shall be
Too late! For Fate will have switched her wand -
He who doesn't listen to Time shall by Time be bartered -
So, be bold, O Great Maurya and do your duty;
It is the duty of the Kshatriya to slay the enemy;
Let Ahimsa be the delight of the weak herd
Who can neither string a bow nor wield a sword;
Leave non-violence to the monks and the nuns;
Let them pursue remorse, holiness, and all that is weird;
But, you must pursue power by sly and force;
And make all efforts to follow the violent course
Until you have finished with all and all is won,
And every inch of this land has become yours! '

'Begone, O Prince of Vices! ' the Great Maurya roared,
'I will have none of yours; for, you are a concocter of lies:
What I have purposed I will with all my strength do;
As I said, the path of kindness and non-violence shall I pursue.
This shall be my penitence; this shall be my lot;
This shall be my inheritance, my only reward;
This shall be the evidence of the change of my heart
That I do what I do desiring no other reward
But the good of all, dharma as ahimsa, peace on earth.
My hands will sow kindness and reap kindness in return;
My eyes will sow goodwill and reap goodwill in return;
My thoughts will sow benevolence and reap benevolence in return;
My life will sow righteousness and reap righteousness in return -
Thirty-fold, sixty-fold, and hundred-fold; wasted, none!
I can barely atone for the sin I have done...
Yet, no more! What's done is done, may Justice do His work!
I shall return to acts of kindness; to kindness is Ashoka won! '

Domenic Marbaniang

The World A Master Tradesman

I agree that you are charming, desirable, and fulfilling
Mild or violent though I be your presence is mesmerizing
Kings and paupers, young and old have never been able to evade you
For you are charming; charmingly murderous.
You rend the heart from the mind, and kill its thousand eyes
You bend the heart to the flesh, and fill it with a million lies
Visible desire, invisible snare.
Lust of flesh, death of mind.
O World, the master tradesman
You give us what we want
At the cost of what we need.
□

Domenic Marbaniang

Time And Transcendence

Past is left behind like a frozen piece of concrete;
Future ahead is spread out like a giant misty sheet.
The parted Past is of us a part; Future, still transcendent.

Invisible Future yanks us out of Past's grave-like sleep;
It pulls us to its infinite bosom of possibilities deep.
Death is a terror to those who have failed to be transcendent.

The flesh cleaves to the dust to return to the dust;
The spirit reaches upward to the starry sky:
Ego shall fade, so shall every pulsation of lust;
But, the wise shall shine like the stars of the sky.

Domenic Marbaniang

What Is Truth?

What is truth? What is falsehood?
The mind knows; the heart doesn't.
Logic sees; feeling doesn't.
Truth is truth when the heart sees it,
Feels it, knows it, believes it,
Till it becomes a part of me, one with me.

Truth must be one's passion,
The fountain of life, strength, and energy.
It must be water to the thirsty,
Food to the hungry,
Medicine to the sick,
Wealth to the poor.
Or else, truth is a stranger
That keeps no friend.

Everybody sells 'truth', but are they all real?
Objects with the same name, but different colors, shapes, sizes, odor.
What is the standard of truth?
Who will specify the mark of truth?
Where is its hologram? Does it have a master?
If one claims to be its owner; how do we know that's true?

Domenic Marbaniang

Who'll Break The Ice? Or Water The Moon

Let's break the ice and water the moon
While windstorms hurl our lands into oceans,
While sandstorms react with angry heat,
Let's cover land and capture the skies,
Let's rocket through our farthest horizon,
Take a giant leap through a crater deep;
Perhaps, one step away, a new world lies;
And in this shifting luminary a future thrives.
So, let's break ice and water the skies.

But who'll break the ice for a lonesome child
For a helpless youth, for an anxious mother?
Who'll bring light to the darkened world,
Having eyes and lives enlightened?
Aren't you, O man, called to be the neighbor,
To bring hope to the world around?
For, we may conquer the skies, yet be destitutes inside;
We may travel as light; yet be haltered by the night;
For, what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world,
But loses his own soul?

Domenic Marbaniang

Winds Of Change

'Days have changed' said an elder.
Crafty change takes a stealthy stride.
And even before the eyes could wonder
Supersonic change does steal the ride.
Neither allowin' to predict nor ponder,
Another change soon whizzes by.

'It's Future Shock, ' said Alvin Toffler.
'Inevitable process, ' said Harvey Cox.
'It's last days, ' said Paul the apostle -
On winds of change the world now rocks.
We're living 'midst lights and thunder,
Camera truths and lusty lies.

The tower of Babel looms sublimely higher,
Now built of neither brick nor clay.
Floors of fantasy built one upon the other
Defy the heavens in total array.
But Babel comes tumbling down asunder
And men depart as flurrying flies.

Lie is a multi-headed monster,
Unsatiated, ever-seeking some new
Fancies to placate its infernal hunger,
Spinning changes and choices not few.
As insatiable desire flares up stronger,
The hurried heat is its death-sigh.

This world of wars, wishes, and woes
Now finds in it her most fearsome foes,
Lawless winds of change on fire
Burn this world with venomous desire.
But rough winds corrode mind's apt power
To tell the difference between truth and lie.

Truly, a vision for change t'wards the good is noble.
One must leave the wrong for right;
For fanatical falsehood breeds contagious trouble,
And falsehood can't with falsehood fight.

Fanaticism is a blind surrender
To unchecked views that might one day die.

□

But, truth's unfrightened by bullet or ink;
Neither does it rot nor stink;
But while men's fancies expand and shrink,
Truth's eye will never wink.
The wise take courage to stop and think
How change changes by the brink
Of eternity, another world to link
That'll bring to the just living waters to drink.
Icons, Idols, Images now fall and crumble
Before God's own Son and our True Life.

Domenic Marbaniang

Wisdom - Intro

During our walk through the course of this life
This one thing we often realize
That the world is made of fools and of the wise,
So opposed as darkness is to light;
Thus, also does Proverbs all people classify
As those who love truth and those who fact despise:
But, calamity and destruction are in folly so disguised
That only the wise can through wisdom them identify;
Yet, the key to wisdom is not hidden but is openly testified:
The fear of the Lord is wisdom summarized;
The irreverence of God is folly maximized.

Domenic Marbaniang