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THE FIRST LOOK
AND OTHER POEMS



THE FIRST LOOK AND OTHER POEMS

OF

SIVA SAMKARA SASTRI

Rendered into English
From the Original Telugu

BY

P. S. SASTRI

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SAHITI SAMITI
REPALLE (S. INDIA)

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P R E F A C E

The renascent Telugu Literature of the twentieth century is the age of Sri Siva Samkara Sastri whose creative art has been before the Andhra public since the end of the First World War. A typical representative of the age as he is, he carried with him a rich tradition, inherited, acquired, and vigilantly preserved. A profound acquaintance with the best that is known and thought in the world, a sympathetic assimilation of the classical spirit, an acute awareness of the value and dignity of the individual, and a self-conscious realization of the spiritual values, characterise his poetic career.

Sri Siva Samkara Sastri has been the innovator of many beautiful literary forms in modern Telugu literature. Opening his career with sweet lyrics, he came to offer in a swinging, bewitching rhythm many narratives, monologues, lyrical plays and poetic dramas. Throughout, his insistence has been on the rhythm and beauty of the common spoken language of the people, just as in the realm of thought this preoccupation lies with the fundamental human values. In a significant sense, we have a pure poet in him; and as in all pure poets, he too reveals a mystic vein that casts an ethereal atmosphere over his compositions. It is no exaggeration to say that Telugu literature has once again come to breathe the living breeze after many generations.

It is difficult to make a selection out of the various poems of such a poet; and much valuable material has to be given up for the time being. In rendering some of these poems, I have been, as far as it is humanly possible, true and faithful to the spirit and rhythm of the original. And I believe that the reception of this slender volume would encourage me in introducing some more poems of Sastri to the English-reading public.

P. S. SASTRI

The University, Saugor,
November 20th, 1952.

TO

My Father

P. SRIRAMA MURTI

Who introduced me to the aesthetic world

And who inspires me

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THE FIRST LOOK

I

It was a morning clear and bright
When all the leading women stood
In sweet Brindavan plains of joy,
With one prolonged excited mood.

One elder dame there gently breathed:
'Let's go and see the tender boy,
It's pleasant news : Yasoda dear
Has laterly been a mother of joy! '

Relieved by lovely golden spires
Were floral vase and works of art,
They chose as gifts they would present
To welcome home a loving heart.

'At last Yasoda dear begot
A boy with a gentle flair!
The parents bathed in loveliness
Must have a boy too fair.

'With wide and lovely mother's eyes
The boy may thrive to be!
The fresh and green image of love,
We all will gladly see.

'A boy takes after his dear mother
If he were born with luck :
So we do hear the elders say;
Let us not run amuck ! '

These were the sounds a maid did breathe
As they all moved in a rhythmic march,
Well decked with brightest gold jewels
That danced to tune with a swinging arch.

The anklets sung melodious airs,
While bracelets kept the balmy pace;
And all arrived at Nanda's home
Where men revealed a gloomy place.

Dejection reigned in lordly prime
Under the shade of outstretched boughs;
Another did allow the maids
Full grim and fearful looks to rouse.

With eager longings dear and great
They came from off Brindavan lands;
The lowly whispers soon upset
The joy that moved along the sands.

'Sweet friends', they asked with eager minds
'Why not get in? What makes you wait?
The babe is safe, we hope; Is it?
Is there inside some evil fate?'

A maid looked round and with a sigh,
She heaved and breathed in pain:
'The two are safe, the boy is black;
Midnight he chose amain!

The dawns have come to greet the babe-
He is denied the sight;
There is no way to make him see
The lovely world of light.

We dare not crowd inside the house
That shows a pallid plight;
Let calmness reign, for time may move
And set the eyes aright!

They heard and all were soon upset:
With faded lights and bitter tears,
Like statues all lay motionless
And stared with strange misgiving fears.

II

An aged dame came faltering out
And saw the silent gloom,
Which moved the springs of a fading heart
She spoke like one in doom.

The wisest best physicians now
Have seen the ailing vice;
Their best medical lore was called,
Ointments washed the eyes.

'There was no bloom; again they took
Their precious lore to task!
The same result did greet them all:
They pined to have a wash!

'In slow degrees the sight will come,
Was all that they could say!
And moved by shame and fruitless lore
They left us all at bay.

'All those the doctors gave away
 Could get the vital wick;
Many a time some saved charm,
 We hear, did cure the sick!

'The child may well have been possessed,
 Some evil spirit may
Be hovering about the babe –
 It's fearful, I dare say.

'The father now has sent a few
 To bring diviners now;
Please wait till some message can come:
 I trust the child you love.'

The old venerable one left
 Then talking with a flair;
And soon they saw the sacred batch
 Of great diviners there.

The youths were leading them direct,
 While they with fixed mind
Moved fast and entered straight the home
 The latest curse to find.

The women there began to dream
 Of sweet and blessed news;
And they were gently freed for a time
 From gloomy thoughts and views.

III

The twinkling eyes of all the maids
Moved round and round the gossip's state,
While all diviners slowly left
With pallid forms and limpid gait.

The Gopis saw depressing looks
And felt worried, lost deep in doubt:
How can the boy observe the world?—
They restless grew and moved about.

Sudden it was that they did hear
The tuneful sounds that came to raid,
From golden bangles fair and sweet;
They turned and saw the fairest maid.

She was Radha : a silken cloth
Redeemed in lovely yellow hue
Was on her slender shoulders bright;
Her bosom heaved in a cloth of blue.

Her fragrant sweet abundant hair,
Like one bewitching cloudy bower,
Was well relieved by sacred leaves;
She waved a sportive lotus flower.

There was a mark of splendour laid
On her sweet forehead fair and wide;
A blushing paint transformed her face :
She shone in angelic youth and pride.

From off her graceful spiral neck
Many a golden chain did swing;

And every swing did make them dance
Like rolling rhythmic waves of spring.

The bracelets tuned a heaving sound
While both the arms in pathos lay;
In the dancing chains of burnished gold
There was an agitated sway.

The anklets kept the tunes to time,
The girdle moved in rhythmic grace;
As all the sounds did feast her ears,
With fixed mind she ran apace.

Well bathed in the tender morning rays
A golden doll she seemed to be;
The blazing splendours of jewels
Revealed the flash of lightning free.

The tranquil hues of pleasant rays
That freely flowed from her, gave rise
To an angelic form of radiant light,
And flung them all in sheer surprise.

They stood aghast, neither moved nor spoke:
They stared at Radha's form amazed;
And through the open welcome door
She stepped inside as they were dazed.

IV

The pastures shone with golden hues
While all the trees began to bloom;

Full blown Kadamba gave the flowers,
Punnaga trees dispelled the gloom.

There was a rain of fragrant bloom
From all the creepers, trees, and bowers;
In one moment they all did pile
A small hillock of varied flowers.

In the lake that Nanda built of love
The lovely lotus blossomed there;
At every glance they saw a bed
Of tender flowers too sweet and fair.

The trumpet flower, the sweet musk rose,
The fragrant lovely jasmine white,
And all the rare and diverse flowers
Bequeathed their odours sweet and bright.

The winds were charged with fragrant smells;
The blossoms lay at every place
That Radha's lovely feet had touched;
There seemed to be a floral race.

The cows ran after their young calves
Which then began to seek them out;
The lowing bulls were active too,
While peacocks danced and danced about.

The Cuckoos sang a choric song;
The song birds filled the lovely shrine
With their melodious airs and tunes,
And seemed to hymn the songs divine.

The men and women had a will
To go inside: their minds did haunt;

They did approach the door and heard
The sacred sounds of Vedic chant.

With eager steps and swelling love
They came and saw to their surprise,
The new - born babe without a wink
Look deep into Radha's strange eyes.

Those were the eyes that gave abode
To solar splendours great and bright;
And in the eyes of Radha dear
They found the source of lunar light.

It was a cloud of strangest blue
The song birds saw within the shrine;
It there revealed the solar hues
As they did hymn the songs divine.

The Gopis grew excited, sang;
They lost themselves in sweetest joy,
And danced the sportive cosmic dance
Around the maid and the tender boy.

PRATAPA KUMARI

Hamir Singh

It is strange, nowhere this august town does show
Even the slightest trace of festive grace
To augur this event, most lovely maid!
And your retinue there looks dull side ways!

Immortal beauty! tell me soon the truth:
Here's the sword drawn, my noble soldiers stand
At hand, I smell deceit and treachery;
Where did your cunning father hide his band?

O sweet-eyed one! I feel ashamed to ask
A little more: there's a golden band around
Your slender waist--are there any hidden swords
Put the band aside, do not feel shy, unwound!

Your father leads all those deceitful ones,
And thus compels me now to take this case;
Are you then given away to save a land?
Have you, sweet maid, come here with love too fair?

I've wed you now; do not delude yourself
That you can feign all love till death does move!

Princess

This humble maid did hear your name
And thence she's rapt worshipping you.....

Hamir Singh

I spoke too harsh caught in the vale of doubt
And pained you great: I offer one with love...

You are a golden deity now for me :
I yearn your hand, refine me now, my dear!

Princess

I hear your purest speech, am dazed -
Am I still fit to face you true ?

Hamir Singh

Goddess of Peace! stand not depressed in vain,
Clasp me, we float like angels there; come near.

Strange, why does your lovely face turn pale ?
Why are the wide eyes filled with grievous tears ?
Why should those drops of dew decry your brow ?
Why this strange transformation ? Have no fears.

Princess

When you do hear my luckless tale,
Your self-respect is at strife :
The flames of fury will indeed
Consume this frailest life !

Hamir Singh

My heart is yours filled well with sacred love:
O, Beauty's child ! Why should you fear and flee ?
Thus do all fears and doubts I scare away -
Wherefore ? Don't run, forgive me now, be free.

Princess

The banner of your fame is stained
For ever, ever still,
By this unseemly marriage now
That binds a hero's will.

Hamir Singh

Worried I stand, my mind is torn asunder:
How can this marriage stain my life and shrine ?

Princess

In valour, fame and noble power
Your line's unique and great:
To-day your honour broke too well
For, me you did not rate.

My father here beguiled you soon,
Gave me away; you pressed
Not a whit - I am the stake of Peace,
A maid like a devil dressed!

I stain your glory dear, your name
Lies tossed like a feather now;
Bathe here that sword in my blood alone
And let me die in love !

Hamir Singh

There's nothing now to fear, speak now the fact;
Beloved, now lead we a life divine !

Princess

Long, long ago- this is that fact-
As a child I stood engaged-
Before the marriage bells did ring
He fell in the field enraged !

Hamir Singh

Hold not my feet, arise, my dear, my sweet!
Give up the anguish now, rest here a while;
There's none, no one that equals you on earth-
You shall remain my sweet! Give me a smile !

THE BEACON

(Kumbhamir Fort)

Princess of Jhala

Never could I dream that things will be thus :
To-day this evil one here hath brought me-
How free can I become, O Lord divine!
Lord of the poor, pity me, set me free.

No stranger has access to such a place,
'Tis a citadel built by a royal vow;
And none save thee, the lord of hills and vales,
Can show a path to a lonely maiden now.

It was a time of dreams of pleasant joy.
There flashed a vision of the lord of my heart;
And as I closed my eyes, bereft of love
This spiteful rude monarch has cleft my start.

What shall befall ? I fear and tremble here;
What be his wish ? Why should these aged peers
Think now of a maiden young ? If evil he chose
And made me cry like a common wench in tears...?

Well may he feel I'm still a virgin pure,
Command me then to wed him here and now :
There sinks my heart in anguish deep and great;
Can a maiden's grief his rough advance remove ?

Were he to persist without a ray serene,
Without pity, should I not breathe my last ?
But there my lord will ceaseless cry and die:
Oh, why am I with a maidens' life here tossed ?

And if unmoved this king is out of tune,
What valiant prince can face him me to save ?
My dear, dear lord, whatever befalls my lot,
Devoutly shall I cleave to your feet and crave.

Kumbha Rana

(Entering)

A ring of maids awaits your grace
In the pleasant home of sport near by,
To hear you speak o'er a cup of wine
That brims with cheerful smile, too shy.

But restless grow my fleeting eyes
To see you lost in a thoughtful mood-
You will be tired, why do you rise ?
None save your bondsman here has stood.

'Tis not a king that comes to you,
Here is the slave that gazes now
On the lovely limbs that bloom and shine
Like Vasanti's sweet flowery row.

Do they the maids await your pleasure ?
Do you find this palace homely too ?
Free from doubt and fear, I pray,
May you vouchsafe a word or two !

You may command, it can be had-
Inform me now all that you will;
In a trice with faith and loyal love,
This Lord of Mewar will here fulfil.

Are you then shy and restless too ?
Do you feel that I lost all thought

Of you ? Am I devoid of love ?
 I come with love, too long I sought.
 Take me not as a stranger, maid,
 Should you forgive me this delay;
 I wait too eager for the time
 I can in joy clasp you away.

Why should your lovely lotus eyes
 Look to the floor in a frightful trance ?
 But free from shyey doubt and fears
 Make me immortal with a glance !

I plead in vain as though to a stone,
 And you are silent, fixed; and why
 Can you not look at me in the face ?
 Are you surprised ? afraid ? too shy ?

If still you would cherish silence,
 I may perforce clasp you in glee
 And kiss your ruddy face aglow
 And set the springs of speech quite free !

Princess

(Faltering)

The wheel of virtue moves at your command-
 Is it but proper, Sir, to speak so wild ?
 Is it not strange to lose the righteous path
 No sooner you behold a forlorn young child ?

{Kumbha Rana

These ears at last are feasted well
 At the lake of sweet and rich honey,
 While this my frame is deeply moved
 And stands like a plantain tree !

You are the fairest damsel, dear;
 There's nothing strange : clasp me about-
 Were the Three-eyed Lord to see you once,
 Even he will love you and come out!

Princess

Alack the day the aged toss too wild
 In the restless waves of lust too deep for fears !
 You are the Lord of this wide, wide Earth
 And fondly talk too loose to a slave in tears !

Kumbha Rana

Dearest, should you consider thus ?
 Here did I come to serve you, sweet :
 Believe me true, and grace my life-
 Or swear I will and touch your feet!

Princess

King as you are, swear not; what can I do ?
 Sympathetic you are; and still no ear
 Is given to what I say; Is it wise to snatch
 A maid from serving her own parents dear ?

Kumbha Rana

We do follow the law of old,
 We know too well the virtuous way;
 We only did that which the brave
 Esteem in every clime and say.

Crime it may be if stealthily
 I brought another's wife along;
 You are a maid and fit to wed-
 We know the law and ne'er go wrong!

Princess

Dauntless you are, a scholar great und wise,
 An aesthete, a poet of note, aged sire;
 And yet you yearn for the hand of a virgin new-
 Pray why is there this fretting fond desire?

Kumbha Rana

Enough of this mockery, dear;
 No folds have crept, the hair isn't gray,
 And manly I'm, vigour's still there;
 Is it that youth has gone away?

I yearn for you with a purer heart
 That brims serene and full with love;
 I long your tender lovely hand-
 Clasp me; make me immortal now.

Princess

There's the venerable old queen,
 How can she bear a co-wife's sight?
 Have you thought over those moments
 That follow from such evil plight?

Kumbha Rana

Leave aside that harmless doubt-
 Here in this palace none can slight
 You now; for you will rise like the dawn
 As the noble empress as of right.

Princess

Have I a right to grace your lordly steps?
 You are a fount of sacred mercy sweet!

Pray, lead me now aright to my parent's home:
I cling with a heaving sigh to your dear feet.

K u m b h a R a n a

Here is the land these hands have won,
There lies the kingdom spread to the sea;
And you may stay as the reigning queen,
All's yours, rule me, accept my plea.

P r i n c e s s

Great king! not a thing is here I need from you
I cannot wed; but stay I shall as a maid.
Pray, lead me now aright to my parents' home :
On bended knees I pray, do not upbraid.

K u m b h a R a n a

Thought there is none, no sense even,
In all you said; I stand all dazed;
Young girl, should I say this too oft ?
I shall wed you—stand not amazed.

P r i n c e s s

Foremost of heroes, sir, you always bathe
In sweet prosperity; should a maid remain
In anguish deep ? Is love not reciprocal ?
Have now pity and send me home amain.

K u m b h a R a n a

What may be holding you enchained
To paths ascetic, I know not.

THE BEACON

P r i n c e s s

There was a time, an exposition great
 You gave of Jayadeva's songs of love :
 A sweet, vigorous mind was there revealed ;
 Can you not comprehend my meaning now ?

K u m b h a R a n a

A gush of love, passionate, deep,
 Blinds me : I pine for thought !

P r i n c e s s

I dare say naught that smacks of deep revolt ;
 Already did I give my heart away.

K u m b h a R a n a

'T was love that made me say too much
 In blindness ; little did I know...

P r i n c e s s

All feeling lost, and shy thus left behind,
 I have revealed my heart : send me away.

K u m b h a R a n a

Another pang : I've brouht you here-
 To send you back, 'Tis base, you know.

You will not stay unheeded here,
 Live free and happy, near yet far ;
 If, if you come to change your mind
 Accept my hand, O ! honoured star !

(The king Exits)

P r i n c e s s

That fear somehow has left this bosom now ;
The king indeed is noble, good, and great.
But I am locked, alas, in a fearful fort ;
How deeply there my lord doth grieve my fate !

Forlorn and lost like a Parrot here am I-
And when and how can I be freed from this cage
And reach you there ? Is sorrow writ too large
On a maiden's brow, when fates were caught in rage?

There is the shrine of a sacred heart in me ;
May the flame eternal shine of purest love ;
Should he, my lord, not know this heart serene ?
I place this flaming candle there above.

(Lights the Flame)

Too deeply rooted in my heart are those
Your sacred feet, I always serve with love :
O flame, tell him, the lord of this lonely heart,
That he should save a life he vowed to move !

CHAMEKAMBA

(A Monologue)

I

Here are the offerings delicious, fair,
Your dear disciple yearns acceptance now:
I offer you heartfelt devotion pure.
A long time after you have cared to grace
The humble home that now is sanctified
By graceful mercy of the greatest monk:
Let us get in and talk of things at ease-
Let your pleasure alone direct the day:
But here is the sun that blows his fearful heat,
May we not move to the thickend mango shade
Where waits the marble seat designed for you ?
There, there you can discourse of good and truth.

I' ll bring a fan - why no ? Is it the shade
That would suffice? May the branches gently blown
Be fanning you :

I am at your command.

My dearest master need not say so much.
Bid me do, and I' ll do all I can;
If it be for the Jain monastery,
I' ll get it done at one moment's notice-
Can there be higher joy for me than this ?
Have I to take a sweet message to the king ?
I will convey your words this week alone.
Attached to Siva cult the Brahman king

Has no dislike for other great Orders:
 He treats us all alike and we do live
 In peace and love that flow from royal breath.
 He loves his cult and lives religious too;
 And yet tolerant of the varied faiths
 He reigns supreme too deeply loved by all.
 Last week he could bequeathe one rich village
 For the lovely Jaina shrine that I took up-
 In righteous acts he stands with all alike.
 To let the Jaina monks live well near by
 I'm asked to plead their cause ; and yesterday
 I could my plea submit; a tranquil mind
 Gave thought profound, at last he was convinced;
 And soon the pleasing orders will be giv'n.
 Oh, so you came for this! Extremely glad!
 Will not a word to this disciple do ?
 There's nothing here to praise me thus, my lord,
 The king by nature has a righteous heart.
 Yes, yes, it's true, indeed, it's love for me
 That makes him help the Jain monasteries.

Let me feel happy now, have these mangoes;
 Your sacred sweet visit brings me delight
 And makes one feel attended well by fate:
 I offer now my prayers pure, devout,
 To you, to all those monks that move with you.

I take your leave, - Should I stay ? what for ?
 Yes, you can speak : Why should I angry be
 At what you say, at what a preceptor says ?
 Yes, it's true, if these can well remain
 One only Jaina nun like me, a sneer,

A fatal scandal, soon will blight us all!
 They look at me and jeer; the Brahmans there
 Consider me fall'n and lost for e'er.
 Their words, their scandals too, do not touch me,
 I lost all shame and took to self-control;
 If only farther, I can move away,
 I can win back my name: but that's an If!
 That was a pleasant, sweet auspicious day,
 My body, mind, and heart and soul and all
 United took the solemn vow of truth,
 And I became a nun; the Jaina faith
 Holds me along whatever wind there blows.

The path of virtue won your sacred soul,
 And you were always strong in self-control;
 If I can follow you and lead that life
 Ah, what you say is it within my reach,
 Is it possible now for one lost child?
 Pray, do not ignore this weakened mind:
 How can I now discord this present life
 And get transformed? Can one ascetic be,
 And yet fathom the sweet mysterious love?
 A pure love never knows satiety here
 Like fire consuming all oblations dear,
 It darts its flames and grows in magnitude!
 I'm blessed with form beautiful sweet and good,
 A robust health and flowing youth are mine,
 While there awaits a world to feast upon;
 There is the king, foremost of rulers now,
 With a heart controlled by purest springs of love;
 He deeply feels, I'm dearer than his life.
 And there the wide universe lies alive

To do all that can please me here and now :
How can I think or do anything else ?

Yes sir, why should I angry be at all ?
Why feel ashamed ? I will explain myself
And tell you how I came to live with the king,
Though I am not his wedded wife by right.
Listen to me and then you can pronounce
A well considered view on all I did.

II

It was the purest house that oft revealed
Wise Brahmans who their dearest lives could pledge
For great perfection of their minds and souls :
There was I born. My father had some land,
But as a scholar spent his days and nights ;
He trained a band of eager young students
In poetry, rhetoric, lofty thought.
I was his only child, brought up as a son,
And taken through all these diverse subjects ;
Quite early I began acquiring a taste
For all fine arts; the sounds I could value
Somehow in all the greatest works I read :
Grammar and Prakrits too I well began.

And quickly time in pleasant thoughts rolled by,
While we came by an awful tragic night
That took my sweetest mother dear, away !
A mighty grief soon gathered up in stealth
And took to burn my father's crumbling heart ;

His health gave way. - Then came my blessed aunt
 Who took the charge of a lonely gloomy house
 And saw my father well revived in health !

She loved the Jaina cult and its canon ;
 We came to hear her speak of this new church-
 She took my father off to the wisest Jains,
 With whom he talked of problems great and good.
 I used to hear a deal and quickly came
 To learn the Jaina Prakrit texts aright.

That time there was one only young student
 Who stayed with us, who loved to read that all ;
 Him did my father deeply love. He had
 A noble soul that pined and yearned for truth,
 While mine began to swell with purest love :
 There was a vital flame that moved my soul,
 With fondest dreams that played around the youth.
 That was the beginning of bewitching youth,
 And all my love gathered firm strength and depth.
 We were at the time both reading Jaina texts
 With minds sincere, serene, and full of love.
 Whene'er my aunt the marriage talk would bring,
 My father as his wont gave vague replies.
 At last I felt, so did my loving aunt,
 That there will come the brightest cheerful day
 When my father would give me to him.
 We were then wont to swing in sweet delight :
 Time moved fast ; I did attain the age
 When there a delicate bashful feeling rose
 And took me unawares, all all in a trice.
 Henceforth together we could never read !

But there it was my youth that moved his heart
To realms of love.

One pleasant eventide

In stealth he came to whisper in my ears
The breath of love that rest-less made his soul.
That night I gave my aunt the cheerful talk :
She gave a thought. - She came the morrow morn,
Gave me her sweet promise, and all moved well.
The news soon spread throughout the little town
And scared his parents who were all upset ;
For they held long a vain, sinister thought
That we were Jains disguised, who could corrupt
In the vilest way their dearest only child.
His moving piteous tale he pleaded well,
But all in vain ; adamant were they all,
They gave command, and he was disallowed ;
And like a snake enchained with sacred spells,
He lost all heart and never showed his face.

My father's kind and moving heart gave way,
He was laid up and scandals strange were spread
In all the town - his grieving heart was stung.
In time the slanders reached those ailing ears,
An inward, hard anguish worried him through.
One fruitless last attempt somehow he made,
And lost all hope of a happy life for me ;
I truly vowed to wed that youth alone,
And gave no thought to any one else.
My father tried to mould my shaping mind,
But I could never yield and change my thoughts.
Meanwhile, my father stood alone thrown out
Of all the Brahman fold, he lost all cheer

And lay in bed for many weary nights,
 There came a hard moment that moved his heart
 And he then crossed the bar with thoughts unsaid.
 My fate lay stretched beyond the human tongue ;
 Both friends and foes too soon deserted us :
 At last we two managed to reach the shore ;
 This time we reached the shore to hear with pain
 That the youth I loved married elsewhere.
 My being lay shattered ; the weight of tears
 And bitter pain made me wither away :
 The gentle care of my dear aunt revived
 The springs of life ; and resurrected thus,
 I turned detached to life.

The swelling tide

Of grief gave way as I arose at last
 With a tranquil mind that had its deeper roots
 In Jain canon. I soon became a nun ;
 All thought of love, of wedding feast and joy,
 For e'er and e'er willingly I resigned.
 Seven long years I never thought of love ;
 And all the while I could cherish penance
 That kept one sober, calm, serene and well.

There came a day when chance was moving near,
 This king passed riding by ; a light divine
 Then flashed from off his eyes and soon communed
 With mine : the passage of my heart lay closed
 All these seven long years : that eventide
 There was an opening made without effort.
 Next day a maid came from the noble king ;
 I felt the stream of love, and thought too well -
 Of vows I took. Emphatic No was all
 I could reply : but then my heart of love

Regained its last vigour, and made me feel
Too deeply for the king.

The maid returned,

She was bidden to have a talk with me ;
I asked her then to find from the loving king
Whether he would like to share the crown with me
As a mark of love. She came possessed too well
With the royal mind ; She gave in faltering tones
The great troubles that would follow the trail
If I insist on it. The king, she said,
Would hold me dear, treat me as his wedded wife.
Since that moment the king showers all his love
And fondles me with sweet, delicate thoughts,
As though I am his wedded wife ; I too
Have given my life and thought to the flame of love
That he kindled in me.

This is the truth.-

But then the world knows not this deeper truth,
And loosely talks of love that's pure and fair.
The common man does often turn away
From subtle thoughts and hidden noble truths !
Some great, profound, wise seer like you alone
Can well fathom, detect and then pronounce
The valued truth ; Give me your judgment, sir !
It is your favour that i yearn for e'er !
Let me be not ignored and screened away
From the noble sight of one's own master great.
I take your leave : am I allowed to retire ?
I offer here my thanks, respects too dear
To my beloved master noble, great.
Pray, convey my best respects and love
To all the monks and saints that move with you.

LOPA MUDRA

(A Monologue)

L o p a m u d r a

It's rare, unique, mysterious, strange, my dear :
A long long weary time has gone to rest :
Not once, not even for a lone moment
You care to lift and show your lovely face!
This forced silence cramps my spirit now -
And is it meet that you should pain me thus ?

No trace of love, my lord, no sweet mercy !
Three eager hours in patient waiting spent
Have now provoked the slumbrous passions sweet;
The vow of great penance that sets aside
A heart in love is rude indeed, too hard !

I served you through long hours, days, awful nights,
And at your feet my bloom did melt away ;
Is it great virtue, dear, to treat me thus,
And soon reject the heart of a loving wife ?
This is hard : I am your wife in name -
That age that comprehends the pulse of love
Has quietly gone, it'll not return, never ;
What can we speak of him that will not dream
E'en once of the thoughts and feelings of his dear ?

Will then the gentle touch of a maid you wed
Revoke the vow of continence you took ?
The cruellest celibate life you would lead,
Tears asunder a wife's fond heart of love -
Will it not help the piling foulest sins ?

Can't you give up at least, at least today
 That rigour which keeps me away from you ?
 Can't you just think of me, judge me aright ?
 I'm young, a woman too ; I plead pity .
 Somehow I have no sense of lowly shame ;
 A craze holds me : can't those sweet eyes blossom
 To feel a wife that prays on bended knees ?

Long long before this youth would slide away
 You moved renouncing all those pleasures sweet
 And chose a life that passes all my thought
 I'm kept at an arm's distance : can you ever say
 That this is virtue's way decreed by lore ?

What you fulfil, how can we comprehend ?
 Can we take up such awful seeming life ?
 Saints you are all, your minds are well controlled ;
 And even the hardest goal you realise
 Being crowned with laurels sacred, brave, hard won!

We hear them say that all your worthy peers
 Somehow do stand repelled by a human world ;
 But we aren't gifted with the sweet madness
 That pines with fondest hopes for the kingdom come!
 There's in you something strange, unique and weird,
 Something that oft amuses me alone ;
 There were the wise who longed and pined and felt
 For many a child ; alas ! you look else where !

I'm happy, proud, your eyes are blossomed now:
 A ray of light I gently do perceive ;
 Your firm and fixed heart now seems to mett .
 So strangely are those radiant eyes settled

A long time after on this kneeling one!
I'm happy, proud ! your eyes are sparkling flowers:

There is a sprout of joy on the sweet face,
On the sweet once stern face of my dear dear lord;
There is a tender smile revealing much !
This long enduring wife moves near to dance
And clasp her sage in an eternal moment !

THE WHIRL POOL

How long a time has moved away !
The vital springs were once robust,
And helped me then to wield the sway.

When will it end, life and its lust ?
The heat of the sun I could not bear,
I scorched and tanned my hard won crust.

The flowing stream sent round a rare
And biting chill down, down my spine !
Turn wheresoe'er I may, I stare

And find no boat for which I pine ;
Alas ! A whirlpool captured me !
There's the eddy that drags in line -

It rocks and swings and hears no plea ;
I long to cry, to scream about -
I stand as frenzy sports with me !

The solar disc has now gone out,
It fell in the bluish waters there
Of western sea ; here is a rout.

My hands and legs must float in air,
In weaken'd forms all passion lost !
I do not know with all my care

How best to save a life at last.
The twilight waves of darksome night
Are gathering gloom ; the light is past.

I have these eyes, and yet my sight
Has made the earth look like a stream;
The mind grows dizzy, dim and light.

Worried in mind why should I seem ?
The mind was free and absolute
When it drove me into the stream !

If I get drowned with pain acute,
Will there be e'er a serious loss ?
Should I now plead and place by suit

Before my God while here I toss ?
Must I plead like a wailing maid,
And crave relief beyond the laws ?

Indeed, I feel ashamed, unstaid,
And guilty too ; Can I demand
The grace divine ? How can I raid

On his-sweet love, without a hand
In one good deed that he may love ?
Look at this eddy now ; Withstand

The rush and look at one remove :
It fearful roars and casts a gloom
Before my lonely form by now !

It moves and acts to bring a down :
For these the open mouth it is
Of death that hovers round the gloom !

Why should I fear ? I am at ease :
Let me give up all love and hate,
And leave the word along the breeze,

Who will bemoan my death ? A fate
Pursues ; my body passive seems,
And now the stroke it does await.

May not the mind be lost in dreams !
Let it remain full tranquil now !
Frequently, Lord, your name, it seems,

Is dancing on my tongue with love.
If this be the stream you entered once
When all its stains you did remove,

If this be fact, there is some sense ;
I would be glad to yield aright
A life you gave with thought intense.

The blackest clouds that hold the night
And paint the sky, the various sides,
These bluish waters of my plight -

All these reveal the moving tides,
That now manifest well your sway
And lovely form, my Lord ! Time chides !

There's manna sweet with sacred play
At your sweet home ; that life I must
Possess ; I drown and come away !

THE BRIDGE

A tranquil heart was all I sought that eventide,
When I did move to a lonely place
 where was a bridge ;
Wearied I sat : The banian tree began to bide
Its time and fan the coolest breeze,
 while in the ridge
Echoed the rustling pleasant sounds
 of leaves beside.

I was alone, unmoved I sat while all did move ;
The gentle hues that painted well
 the face of the sky
Slowly passed by ; the earth
 was gently touched by now
With slender darkening waves ;
 well lost in thoughts of high
I steadfast sat and fixed my eager eyes above -

Without effort there rolled those intimations sweet
And painful of the past :
 the woes that held my breath,
The evil plights that I was always made to meet,
The unfulfilled desires reproaching lay in stealth ;
And the stream of sorrow swelled
 and rushed without retreat
I could not keep that stream in my selfsame control:
I wept in silence still ; the tears that frozen lay
Till that moment grew heavy, great ; then did roll
Like drops of pearl in never ending flowing sway-
The panting winds began to stake
 the banyan scroll.

The moving eyes strayed far
 and fixed the look at ease
On the rustling leaves : at once
 I could remember well
Your words, 'I am the Banyan tree among the trees';
Forthwith my sorrow ceased.
 In Suka's words I fell
To pray ; and there arose
 a tranquil soothing peace.

I prayed for long and prayed -
 with purest heart, devout ;
That was the bridge which made me
 ford the sea of grief ;
Indeed, the pangs of woe, who else
 can here root out
Save You ? Can it surprise, my Lord ?
 We find relief
And nectar sweet, divine, when we do think devout.

COAXING

Why should you always fret, my soul,
For a tender blushing heart ?
Do you not know that this forebodes
The endless evil start ?

Sweet heart, alas, why should you thus
For vilest gold contest ?
Do you not see it is a dull
And fond metallic pest ?

In various way with frenzied love
Why strive for all knowledge ?
Is not knowledge the source and spring
Of many an evil pledge ?

Fond heart, why eager should you be
For the world and its pleasure ?
Is not this joy ephemeral
Howe'er you may measure ?

Knowledge and maid, pleasure and gold :
Give up this fondness, dear ;
And seek refuge at the altar sweet,
Divine, without a fear.

THE SUPPLIANT

I find no path to guide me now,
I have no thought to work upon -
Suppress these worries I cannot :
What shall I do ? On thee I fawn.

There's darkness dense : it moved along
And enveloped this lonely heart ;
No shelter can I find save you ;
The lights have gone : Have-I no part ?

The sacred splendours crawling out
Of those profoundest heights above
Can give refuge to a saddened mind ;
But what you will I dare not trow.

Forsaking all the mental powers,
I drag along this weary life
With firm and fixed faith in you ;
Do what you like with this sad strife !

Here is the suppliant waiting now
With no free mind to think about ;
You be the Master : switch the tune
And set me right where I can sprout.

THE CROOKED MIND

Many a path I oft have took
And spared no pains in all my ways ;
But yet the mind remains a crook !

There was a crook whom you did clasp,
And she grew straight and sang the lays ;
That once you did. - I stand and grasp.

Here is the mind ; it moves sideways
And waits with love to have the grasp
That can reform its saddened rays.

THE VISION

There is a splendour sweet, profound,
in all the world

It's rare, unique and transcendental light that blows
As soon I see your face ; at once is born too close
A humility dancing at a lowly glance,
That renders bright the ends of
the tripling eyes by chance :
It is a glance that twines
with purest thoughts unfurled .

Your form lies enveloped by light, profuse and rare
There is a cloth of spotless white
you graceful wore,
While walking sweet and slow ;
those fine jewels did pour
The harmonious sounds : all I remember now ;
They move free in the streams
that scan my mind with love ;
And there's the tide of joy
that swells my soul too fair !

There is the face delightful, lovely like the light
That comes from all the splendours
of the lotus flowers
Blossoming in the lake at dawn ;
it spells the showers ;
And as it rose this morn, beloved dear, the eyes
Bequeathed a path for all the deep worries and cries
That raged like moon light here; gone is that light!

THE LADY OF THE HEART

Heroine of the mind ! The sweetest name
Has captured you and held you fast in a ring !
My eyes give you the form that pleases them !
I know you are the purest golden string.

Wherefore should you with Cupid's graces sweet
Some times some how reveal a formless form ?
Why should you, Heroine of the soul, not greet
This one with clearest shape in a tranquil form ?

You look a child at times, and other times
You seem to be a youthful maid of love ;
Why do you thus assume these forms betimes ?
These sportive rhythmic dances hide your brow !

Your true, unique, sweet form we are denied ;
Once do I feel a deity in you,
And soon I see another form that vied
With all the rest ; how best can I be true ?

As I consider you to be the muse
Of poesy, you gently fade away ;
Well, of the finest arts have you the clues ?
Are you the goal of striving pilgrims, say ?

Or else, are you the loveliest young maid
Who sits enthroned in the inmost hero's heart ?
I cannot take whate'er of you is said,
For like the flash of lightning you depart !

There lie artists amazed, for ever lost ;
The cultured wise in sweet confusion move ;

O Heroine of the mind ! Here are we tost ;
You move without revealing your form now !

Indeed you must remain the sweetest spring
Of all artistic life ; you are the blest
And noblest form of all beauty we sing ;
Here is my mind which answers well the test.

Perplexing all and hurling them in doubt,
You danced in varied forms before the mind !
O, tender crescent face, I can think out ;
Well reign you must o'er us : Here is the find !

THE TOUCH OF HAND

"Please remove, put away, that delicate hand
From my shoulders : forgive me, have patience, sire,
You well know, the lotus can endure the bee ;
How can it bear the touch of the bird of air ?"

'My dearest love, in anger too
'Tis my delicate hand : Is it ?
Well, let it be ! What do you think ?
You take me thus in a sober fit ?

'Tis true you are the richest flower !
Is this a simple hand of man ?
Or else some great elephant's trunk ?
My wits have gone about too wan.

'One only great monarch allowed
On his own shoulders bright, indeed,
The hand of one excited youth ;
Have patience, dear listen : Agreed.

'That king was Jaya Simha, dear,
Who made the Ghurjars lose their bands ;
He ruled in sweet prosperity
And loved fine art of all the lands.

'It was a pleasant moon - blanched night :
He moved towards the sacred shrine,
Where lay the best talented ones
To stage a play they did refine.

'There sat the wisest aesthetes
On both the sides of the royal guest,

Behind him too the zealous were ;
The latest play seemed noble, blest.

'Engrossed in play they silent lay :
Within the great assembly's pale
Some able hand, vigorous, fresh,
Soon on the royal shoulder fell.

'But tranquil could the king remain,
While calm control his wrath did win ;
He fixed a silent glance on the hand,
And placed the betel leaf therein.

'The play moved on and came to a close ;
While all began to wend their way,
With pregnant looks the king observed
The youth that cast his hand away.

'He called his man and gave the word
To bring the youth where'er he be,
To the royal court the morrow morn,
For he would know the young man's plea..

'The youth, a trader's son, was brought ;
With folded hands and trembling gait
He bowed his head and stood along,
While all the court did anxious wait.

'The king looked into the youthful eyes ;
And with a gentle pleasing smile
He spoke in love, "the weight of hand
You made me hold still pains awhile !"

The panic - stricken youth did hear
The graceful pleasing tones of high ;

He felt at ease and calmly said
With a rare twinkle in the eye :

"Your rare, unequalled shoulders, sire,
Do bear the weight of all the earth :
Are they now grieved to hold a blade
Of grass a child outspreads in mirth ?"

'This timely wit convulsed them all ;
The king with them revelled in joy,
And gave the cheerful witty youth
Many a gift he could enjoy.

'The taste for all his dear subjects
There they saw in the royal love.

'Pray, show me sympathy, my sweet :
This is the place to rest and love'.

AROUND LOVE

I

It is an ancient tale : a hamlet was once
On the banks of the bluest stream that one can find;
There's still a sacred lovely shrine serene
Which once a smith in teens did oft frequent.
He loved the God with purest noble thoughts,
And served devout his lonely mother well.

He vowed, fulfilled in cheer his mother's wish ;
But when she could refer to marriage plans
He used to smile and shelve them all for the nonce.
He had no thought, no feeling for a maid.

Those pleasing sculptures turned by his finest hands,
Those golden ornaments he gave rise to,
Were all the ways that set him truly free
From the chains his father then contrived to forge.
And slow and sure he won the hardest race ;
At last he won a place in the world of art.
The rude, raw forms of gold and rock he would
Transmute to all those ways that always pleased
The diverse tastes and whims of human kind.

A few days back he gave his hamlet sweet
The bull divine that in the marble lay,
And all the cattle daily stared at it.
None could surpass him in pictorial art
In all those delicate art-forms he wrought,

In golden ornaments the women loved ;
 Each maid did get her gold transmuted oft
 By his finest touch that made it live and breathe.
 That spotless face cast in mystic splendours great,
 That bluest hair competing with the flame,
 Those beads which delicately moved aloft,
 That sweetest nose, those pleasant moving eyes -
 Where'er they found, the youthful lovely maids,
 They often looked at him without a wink,
 Without a thought of shame, or fear, or doubt !
 But never he did give a ray of hope,
 Though they were rapt and lost before his form.

II

There rose the dawns, the eyelids of the morn,
 The waters of the Krishna river rose
 And honoured him as he did sanctify ;
 He sprang to the shore, put on the spotless robe,
 The ash shone on his forehead clear and calm ;
 He reached the shrine and offered prayers there
 All rapt in silent ecstasy profound.
 But as he slowly moved towards his home
 An eager sparkling youth did wish him well ;
 'Did you the earrings complete', the youth he asked;
 'Mine uncle waits for you with all his guests ;
 Three hours he gives, and you in haste must come
 And set them over the ears of his only son'.
 'Indeed, I haven't forgotten, sir', he said,
 'I shall be there in time ; a little work -
 But I will keep to time, assure him thus'.

The smith moved in, brought forth the blackest coal,
And sat to careful work with great resolve ;
He sat in art unswayed : a tranquil mind
Did guide his gentle touch ; two hours he took.
Again there came the youth, for all the guests
Are waiting still the slowest march of time.
The smith then washed his feet and hands
and prayed
Well dressed he passed along the vacant homes
And reached the place that felt his sweet presence
In overbounding love and gratitude.

III

Welcomed by the master of that noble house,
The smith allowed his fingers delicate
To move along those young and tenders ears,
While the mother of the boy intently gazed
At him as though she was then treated well
To a well of honey sweet and manna dew.

Many a soul there quickly could perceive
The beauteous face of the smith, too innocent,
Well reproduced in the young one's tender form :
Surprised some saw the baffling mystery ;
Others there were whom anger soon did rouse,

The young that were boisterous and wild
Assembled on the banks that eventime,
Sat through the weary hours ; at last resolved
To teach the smith a lasting lesson true,
They rose like waves at the sight of heaven's orb.

IV

The swan of heaven sank too low and deep,
And in the western lake then slowly rose
A silent breeze enveloping the world ;
There in that darksome night disguised and wrapped
Three youths moved fast and fast
 on the lonesome wild
To reach the smith's abode in proper time.

The garden gave the shelter they could need,
And breathless, patient, they all had to wait
For one auspicious and austere moment.
At last one had the heart to move ahead
And see inside the latticed lovely room :
There was Lord's image carved well with art
And touched with all the sweetest gems and flowers;
Before the Lord the smith did prostrate lie.
He rose and sang as though an angelic band
Was moving near ; he sang those heartfelt hymns
That brimmed with love, the soul of devotion pure.

The youth observed all, all that there took place,
His heart was moved somehow ; till all the hymns
Were sung he waited thus ; then he retraced
His steps in love and fear.

 Those three that night
Could not proceed with their immense design ;
The scourge of God revealed their scratchy scowl !

V

Another night the selfsame banks allowed
 The saucy few to talk about, and about,
 "In a calm moment find out the genuine truth
 And then employ the rod", said one at last;
 "He may have sinned; but then this awful crime
 Demands two souls that willed alike to sin ;
 Should not the moral law treat both alike?"
 "Nay", cried another then while anger swelled ;
 "The smith is a grown adult, and he alone
 Stands guilty now ; Take only him to task".
 "But all the loose women should now be whipped,"
 Put in a third depressed and lost in thought.
 "Our doubts at first", said one, "must get resolved;
 But can we know the truth if we abstain
 From taking up the law the rod decrees ?
 You threaten him : and the soul of terror will
 Engulf him at the sight of pleasant rods
 That well beautify these challenging hands,
 And he will soon the bitter truth reveal.
 Yet well he may be artful, and suppress
 In mortal fear the truth and save his skin :
 But still persuasion does remain the best :
 We should proceed in peace and then propel
 The truth.

Flatter, praise him, speak high of him .
 The lovers, you know, will then speak clear the fact,
 They talked, discussed; and all the views were there
 At last they could decide. Agreed they rose
 To speak in guile to him as bosom friends.

VI

From evensong in the sacred shrine near by
The youthful smith homewards was moving fast ;
But on the sliding way the saucy few
Came by the pilgrim pure und held him well.
A pleasant talk ensued, the oblivious feet
Moved near the murmuring stream in childish play;
They sat him down well nigh the greenest plant,
And set to praise in a fashion fair and mild
His beauteous form, fine youth, sweet character,
And last that great unfailing luck he had.

But then the smith revealed his gratitude
To the grace divine that seems to lead us all :
"That's true, indeed ; this make it all too clear
And now we seem to know — many a maid
Is known to fall in love with you alone
Gasped one as he perceived the apt moment ;
"Many a boy resembles you, young man,
In our sweet little hamlet on the banks :
Can you explain this passing strange mishap ?"

"I'm glad you could reveal the earnest doubt
That seems to pain you all ; Explain I will.
Till this moment, in sooth, I didn't allow
My mind to move about uneven ways —
Have faith in me, believe my sincere words.
In a self-forgetful mood if maids do stare
And long the sight of one that gladdens them, —
He may not know a whit their inmost thoughts —
That lovely form is firmly well impressed

And planted in their heaving hearts and minds
And like the bee that form they do beget
As the wheel of time relentless moves and moves.
Shall I give you an example or two ?
Do you not this year find the number of calves
Increasing in our midst ? Remember now,
It was an year ago I did instal
The lovely marble bull at the market place ;
Our cows oft saw the bull bewitching them,
And then begot the calves resembling it.
Is it not true ? Let's not hereafter talk
Of any maid, whatever be her fate !"

Thus there the smith wound up the fateful hour
He rose and quietly homewards paced his steps.
One great surprise that selfsame migh he sprang:
For, he did tell his lonely mother dear
That he would marry soon - he meant it now.
The kind old lady turned her hands and eyes
To the greatest God whom she adored in love.

B H A M A T I

B h a m a t i

There was a time, the famous bards
In a sweet melodious tone -
Sang glorious hymns of love and praise
For you, for you alone !

There was a time when scholars versed
Too deep in all the lore,
Sat at your feet, too sweet, divine,
And learnt a good deal more !

There was a time, the great monarchs
Carried their offerings here,
And paid their humble, true, respects,
Revealing love, too dear.

But never, never did I see
This ray of joy profound :
What makes you now, my dear, dear lord,
Illumine thus around ?

V a c a s p a t i

It was a few minutes ago
I did complete my great comment :
The Master now stands plain and clear;
Thank God, time never was mis-spent.

I offer now my humble thanks ;
To Badarayana divine,
To the lotus feet of Sankara,
To all that came in the master's line.

There is no wisdom higher than
 The sweet philosophy serene,
 That sways the finite mind of man
 And sets a noble path, too clean.

What all I thought and saw and felt
 In all the striking spheres of man,
 That have I with an open mind
 Expressed at last, as best I can.

B h a m a t i

On all those systems of thought you gave
 Those expositions all ;
 And all that hold too fast to these
 Would hold their own as all.

V a c a s p a t i

For long I pined for truth alone :
 Full thirty years ago I began,
 And wrote at length, revealed the lore ;
 But now I did fulfil my plan.

I waded through those waters deep
 And felt the inmost core of thought ;
 I yearned to write : today alone
 I could complete - I've cut the knot !

Day in, day out, I did remain
 Too true to all the duties vowed ;
 And blessed with a tranquil mind
 Let me renounce this life unmoved.

B h a m a t i

You stand foremost amongst the wise
 As ignorance loved me ;

Forgive me now if I dare place
One fond and foolish plea,

Too true you were to the duties vowed
Save one alone, too dear ;
There's one one defect that stares at you
From out this married sphere.

There at the college you did pine,
You spread the lore amassed,
Then came the life of works and works :
Your life in study passed.

It's good you could devote your time
For knowledge which you tosst.
This bitter thirst is strange for me -
You were possed and lost.

What all you ate, what clothes you wore,
What luck I had to face
These long long years you never knew :
What power could knowledge trace :

Pursuit of truth engulfed your life ;
No need of a child you saw :
Must not the wife allow her lord
To renounce ? you know the law.

V a c a s p a t i

It is a mark of weakness, dear,
To shed those tears that make a mess ;
Give up now even all desire -
Nothing's lost if you are childless.

B h a m a t i

Enough of this you had no desire !
 To have a little one ;
 Alas, woman's not so ascetic -
 There's truth : Mother, I'm none.

V a c a s p a t i

So far I had no such desires :
 Bury, bury the past ; we let
 That time of youth slip by in stealth ;
 Why pine for that which we can't get ?

You have been faithful all these years ;
 A strenuous life of silent pain
 Did move each step you took along -
 The noblest dame you could remain.

And steeped in thought you bravely lived
 With ne'er an idle craving too :
 Is it meet to go so crazy thus
 For a child ? What will it bring to you

B h a m a t i

What will it bring : A worthy child,
 Would he not rouse sweet thoughts of old
 In all the minds that come to live
 In times unborn and climes untold ?

V a c a s p a t i

Then fame you would cherish to have !
 For ever there will shine your name -
 Here lies the monumental work :
 May it be known with this sweet name !

B h a m a t i

I long no fame, leave me alone,
Let not my name be dragged in street ;
I crave oblivion sweet and dull,
I crave to serve your sacred feet.

V a c a s p a t i

I fixed your honoured name at last
To this my last ; let it be the light
That can illumine me, and may
The wise declare your love aright.

THE LOGICIAN

All through the land echoed the lustrous name
Of Ramanatha, whose well earned fame
And sweet devotion pure with lofty aim

To logic absolute revealed a love
Infinite ; churn he did with one great vow
The ocean's depths: knowledge did loom above!

A faithful wife looked after him with care,
While he was oft illumining the fair
And tender minds that breathed the wisest air.

Fallacies rise and oft prevent the mind,
Illusions move around our lives, and bind
Us all; all those disciples learned to find
And soon demolish them; they all did hear
What reason taught.

And wisdom loved him dear
And drove prosperity away in fear.

Not even once in sport did wealth come by;
He cared not much to waste his time and ply
His mind with wasting time, for it will fly.

The fame and lot of this logician wise
Somehow could reach the king; and his surmise
Induced him then to think and soon devise.

The muse of poetry did often tame
The royal court ; and all the scholars came
From all the climes and sat therein for name.

A royal glance was all they wished him give ;
 The king he knew the life the scholars live
 And like a pilgrim soon he marched to give

A lofty treasure and a loving heart
 To the logician there. Well did he start
 With eager yearnings pure that knew no art.

That sweet village he saw and walked the way
 To the scholar's house, and found him lost in gay
 Divinest thoughts - all o'er a book he lay.

He touched the wisest feet and bowed devout,
 With folded hands he stood, received the sprout
 Of purest heart in a blessing that came about.

The wise one made a seat; affections moved ;
 He learnt the health and soon in talk they roved
 With greatest zeal that loving moved and wooed.

A chance there flashed; then felt the king to set
 The Brahman's lot above the needy net,
 And spoke suggestive of all he should get.

'Can diverse facts be harmonised, I ask'.
 The Brahman smiled and saw the royal mark ;
 'Discord once, sir', he said, 'We take to task;

We ne'er allow such things to put us out:'
 The king was lost, and slowly rose a doubt:
 'Do you not inconsistency find out?'

'We know how best they can consistent be,
 For all the facts in my system agree;'
 These little meaningful queries did flee

From off the subtle mind that freely moved
In realms of thought, and oft have well improved
The path of life that dare not seem unmoved.

There saw the king that he should speak in plain,
And make the scholar feel his mind amain ;
He spoke: 'Does this poverty bring you pain?'

Then came at once a blithesome speech, indeed :
'There is the land that yields the grain I need,
I have a wife who brings some leaf to feed ;

And time rolls by as I pursue my way
To find the truth that logic gives away ;
Why should I need the wealth that leads astray?'

There was a tranquil splendour, sweet divine,
On the scholar's royal face; Surprised in fine,
At last the king could see such light supine.

THE SAIVA MONK

In the sacred halls of great kalyan
Day in, day out, there used to sing
A minstrel wise the epic tales
That often in the ears would ring.

One Day there passed that august way
A Saiva monk well dressed in white ;
The sacred ash that he put on
Revealed a weired and shining sight.

The beads were hanging round his neck,
They swung in pleasing rhymic dance ;
The sacred word made pure his speech,
And in his hand there lay a lance.

He heard the minstrel sing aloud :
With deep devotion he came near ;
For two long hours he could endure
That narative that all did hear :

His eyes grew wide and flushed in rage ;
The moving tide possessed his mind ;
He rose frenzied and cried aloud,
While all amazed sat there behind.

'Stop here the worst prejudiced tale :
Give up the false account you sung :
Your book be blown across the winds :
You infidel, control your tougue !'

And as he roared as one gone mad,
They well remained in silent fear :

'Hari may well have caused the world,
But who created him, my dear ?

'Hari may well have been the power
Controlling all the human life:
But is it not my lord alone
Who is the power beyond the strife ?

'The magic power may be his god :
Is my ideal ever less ?
My god, he says, ate out of a skull :
Does he devoted souls not bless ?

'This liar lewd, this sinner great,
Must needs deserve this awful treat !'
So roaring furious, he came
And chanted hymns that were most meet.

He pounced at once in bitter rage
On that sweet minstrel who turned mild
And as the lance came out to help,
He split the head and danced too wild.

There lay the minstrel's piteous form
In the surging blood it seemed to float ;
But then the Saiva monk in joy
Danced wild and sang with fearful throat.

THE BLESSED MOTHER

'There in the shade well seated on a rock,
Her yearning looks she casts with a slanting face
In all directions ; at her feet much rapt
In faith devout a beared one has place.

'Who can it be ? He does forget himself :
Why do the people thus surround and plead ?
I long to move near her to watch the fun,
What do you say ? Say yes, and I shall lead.'

'Stay dear, It's not the time just now ;
Meet the great Mother pure, divine,
When it is proper ; and you can-
In solitude approach her shrine.

'Then will she bless you dear with love ;
This is no time to have her grace.
Her vitruous life is rich, sublime -
Lend me your ears, you can then face.

'Her story moves many a one
Who soon admires, worships her soul,
With rapt attention pure, devout :
Such is the power she dees control :

'There is the saint that peaceful sits
At her sweet lotus feet divine ;
He wed her once. And soon became
Her first disciple and ensign.

'It was the will and breath of fate
That she was born in Dacca town ;

- They brought her up in tenderness,
She lived in faith and won renown.
- 'Not once could she excited be ;
From early days her life was best
And sweet ; and all did praise her well
By overflowing love imprest.
- 'She knew no love, no hatred either ;
She moved untouched by pleasaut balm,
No worldly goods could tempt her will ;
And yet relations ne'er were calm :
- 'She had to wed in early life.-
As time rolled by she came of youth ;
A day was fixed to consumate
The marriage vows she took in truth.
- 'The bridal chamber was alert
Retouched to rouse amative care ;
With eager longing glances sweet
Her youthful manly lord was there,
- 'She may be shy, afraid, or lost ;
Some sweet caressing tender word
..She may be yearning all the time :
Thus did he think with vision blurred.
- 'Then Nirmala did stare at him
As though he were a being strange ;
The swelling tide of passionate youth
Did cast a spell that brought a change,
- 'He placed his lusty grating hands
On her supinest shoulders, dear ;

As though the lightning hit him hard,
The hands fell lifeless down with fear.

'A strange and pallid hue did grip
His farm; there was a vacant gaze ;
Somehow regaining all he lost
He spoke of love that did amaze.

"Sweetest dear, I love you well ;
Make me immortal with a kiss,
And clasp me dear in one embrace ;
Let us sweet paradise not miss."

'And as he breathed these sounds of love,
There crept a burning flame on the face :
Something he felt transforming him,
And at her feet he lay for grace.

'In slow degrees he came to think
Of all he did, of all he said ;
In deep remorse worried he lay —
With folded hands he gently prayed-

" 'T was lust that blinded me so far ;
Pity me here, forgive my sins ;
I now believe and well perceive
That there's in you divine essence.

' "There is the truth I've come to feel :
No earthly form does seem in you ;
Tha tranquil, great, self-conscious power
I take you now to be anew.

' "Hereafter will no thought of wife
My feelings sway and blind my soul ;

I have one wish, a request – to serve
Your feet and be in your control.

‘ Let me worship the power you are
With faith devout and purest heart ;
Say no, accept this craving soul,
Transform it all, and mould may part”.

‘She closed her eyes, thought it about ;
The stream of grace did gently move,
As she did sanctify his head
Placing her hand in sacred love.

‘With purest thoughts, sublime and great,
Since then he moves and sits like a boy :
And on her face there shines supreme
Eternal light, divinest joy.

‘The blessed Mother is the name
That people gave, and thus she's known ;
We shall receive her great blessing
At early dawn when buds are blown. ‘

‘Now lift the pitcher, dear! Let's move ;
The evening lights and sweet colours
Have gone to welcome rest awhile ;
Let's move and wait for morning flowers’.

ON A YOUTH

As I see you somehow I feel
My spirit has come to its norm ;
'Tis with pleasure my heart does swell
As I observe your tender form.

Your tender face that peeps with smile
Within the shade of wavy curls,
Illumines me and casts a spell
Bewitching me ; my heart unfurls !

There are those smiling lotus eyes
Too richly laden deep with thought ;
As I dare look now into them
My eyes get startled at my lot.

The pleasing sounds that fall from you,
A maiden's moving tones reveal ;
I listen rapt ; and these my ears
Get purified and bring me weal.

A natural affection flows
From out the depths of your sweet-soul ;
This flame of simple love does rouse
A joy profound : I lose control.

Wherefore is all this tender love,
My dear, dear boy, I know not now :
May be some past forgotten birth
Laid seeds of this mysterious love!

THE DAWN

The peaks of hills appear sublime
Well bathed in heaven's stream above ;
From top to foot the rows of trees
Do seem to shine with sprouts of love.

The Krishna stream moves through the clime
As though a crimson cloth she wore ;
There is moving the human seat
With lustrous sacred forms of yore.

With eager zeal in aerial paths
The birds do float, they chant sweet hymns ;
The breezes move with scented smells,
They lead us off in pleasant whims.

Is this the earthly mortal town ?
Or else the blissful paradise ?
Turn wheresoe'er I may, I see
A new creation taking rise !

FORTY FIFTH BIRTH DAY

I longed to reach the peak of life -
No steps I found to this ascent !
The way I took was weird ; and there
Deceived I lay : there was no scent
Of that one secret at my tent.

Till I could recognise the forms
In thirteen camps I did have rest ;
I then forgot the way I walked :
But there remained a mind depresset
By some strange painful frost at best.

It is this sweet auspicious dawn
That makes my tranquil eyes perceive
A path sublime, direct and calm ;
One step and soon I could conceive
That one new bend I did receive.

I look below and fix my eyes,
And all an even plain it seems.
As I looked up, the heav'nly cup
Reveals a pleasant land of dreams
Resplendant in the crimson beams.

Whate'er I see, where'er I move,
I gladly see heartening lights
And sweet melodious tunes of mirth ;
I stand possessed with zealous sights ;
A fresh energy grips my lights !

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| 2 | 17 | minds | minds, |
| 3 | 4 | aright | aright. |
| " | 20 | wask | mask |
| 4 | 3 | saved | sacred |
| 9 | 11 | swords | swords, |
| " | 14 | case | care |
| 12 | 2 | how free | how can I |
| " | 9 | can I become | be free |
| " | 9 | dreams | dreams, |
| 13 | 8 | shy | shy ? |
| 18 | 23 | mind | mind, |
| 22 | 6 | farther, | farther |
| " | 19 | discord | discard |
| " | 22 | here | here; |
| 29 | 18 | worthey | worthy |
| " | 26 | pround | proud |
| " | 28 | mett | melt |
| 32 | 9 | by | my |
| " | 12 | beyound | beyond |
| " | 22 | a down | me down |
| " | 27 | word | world |
| 34 | 29 | stake | shake |
| 36 | 9 | way | ways |
| 46 | 22 | complete' | complete ?' |
| 47 | 8 | prayed | prayed; |
| " | 21 | bafling | baffling |
| 48 | 13 | was | was the |
| 49 | 27 | there | there ; |
| " | 28 | rese | rose |
| 50 | 2 | smit | smith |
| " | 15 | alone | alone, |
| 51 | 13 | hour | hour, |
| " | 15 | nigh | night |
| 53 | 28 | wise | wise, |
| 54 | 2 | plea | plea; |

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| | | | |
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| 54 | 14 | possed | possessed |
| " | 18 | trace | trace! |
| 55 | 16 | you | you? |
| " | 17 | bring ; | bring? |
| 58 | 6 | yeardings | yearnings |
| " | 20 | mark | mask |
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| 60 | 1 | kalyan | Kalyan |
| " | 8 | weired | weird |
| " | 10 | rhymic | rhythmic |
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| 61 | 19 | form | form, |
| 62 | 4 | beared | bearded |
| " | 20 | dees | does |
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