



Indian Electronic Literature Anthology

Volume I

**Edited by Nirmala Menon, Shanmugapriya T,
Justy Joseph & Deborah Sutton**

Cover Design by Kaviarasu.P

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Contributors

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Shanmugapriya T was a Postdoctoral Research Associate at the Lancaster University. She will be joining as a Postdoctoral scholar at the University of Toronto. She has completed her Ph.D. at the Indian Institute of Technology Indore. Shanmugapriya has published papers and book chapters in national and international journals and publishing houses such as *Digital Humanities Quarterly*, *Digital Scholarship in the Humanities*, Routledge and ARC etc. She is one of interim executive committee members of DHARTI. Her research and teaching interests include an interdisciplinary focus in the areas of digital humanities, digital environmental humanities and digital literature. She is particularly interested in building and applying digital tools and technologies for humanities research. Currently the topics (but not limited to) she focuses for her research are text mining, geographical text analysis, and digital culture.

Introduction

‘Electronic literature’ or ‘digital literature’ has unfolded itself along with the evolution of digital computers, transforming, overlapping and diverging with the ‘print’. Beginning with *Love Letters* (Strachey, 1952) and *Stochastic Texts* (Lutz, 1959) electronic literature further evolved into visual and graphic poetry (1960s), Interactive fiction (1970s) and generative poetry (1980s). These literary activities became more delineated and recognised by the founding of Electronic Literature Organisation (ELO) in 1999. ELO through its Electronic Literature Collection, Directory and conferences attempts to ‘foster and promote the reading, writing, teaching, and understanding of literature as it develops and persists in a changing digital environment’. However, for various reasons, there are certain gaps in ELO, predominantly in terms of representation, with no contributions from South Asian countries and only three from Asia in the three published volumes of Electronic Literature Anthology. This has further ensued to definitions that isn’t sufficing the electronic storytelling across regional languages.

Though Indian Electronic literature spans digital versions of print texts, born digital texts (self-existing or launched before the print version), texts that utilise the multiple capabilities of the web, literary games and social media writings, it is regarded as just “digital versions of the text”. The initial perception about digital literature in India was that of academic inadequacy and a reluctance to be accepted as a serious form of writing. Howbeit, disparate creative conversations and production of digital literature was circulating within small, interested communities without a wider reach, in other words, there was no

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digital platform where one can publish the non-traditional, non-linear, non-static literary works created for the mode of digital publishing, embedded with graphic interfaces, kinetic images and texts, videos, and collaborative narrative. This lack of seminal go to texts for scholars as well as general readers is a huge impediment for Indian Electronic Literature. In a post-colonial context, we don't subscribe to a hegemonic canon, however an anthology of works will hopefully set the tone for a Saidian 'nomadic, decentred and contrapuntal' canon. Indian Electronic Literature Anthology Volume I was initiated as an attempt to consolidate and chronicle the digital literary activities from India in English as well as in regional languages. We are trying through this maiden venture to provide an open access platform through KSHIP to publish and present to the world a collection of electronic works in four languages from India.

The works were selected after an open call and a review, based on diversity, representation, pedagogical relevance and literary significance. The process of compiling the anthology took sincere efforts of two years and multiple outreaches. The primary hurdle was the dearth of awareness about the ambit of a literary publication amongst even the everyday social media and online content creators. Being an attempt that is unfamiliar to Indian academia, financial constraints also thwarted spending money for the outreach.

The works in this volume of the anthology, combines the contemporary trends based on social media networks and widely adopted platforms and apps. The volume features 17 works and each has a unique form, style and genre including flash poetry, slam poetry, frame narratives, generative poetry, interactive narrative and other forms of multimedia writings in English, Tamil and Bengali. The works range from 'I Can't Breathe' by Stephen S George, a frame narrative of inner monologues by a character, whose identity is allusive; Subhanjali Saraswati's ambience based slam poetry touching upon existentialism, entangled in the silence of everyday; 'Gods and Mathematicians', an endless generative, interactive poem developed in Max/MSP as an experiment in surrealism and language development by Antriksh Bali and Shivayan Mukherjee's digitisation of his Grandfather's works as a tribute to the late author, for his work and dedication towards Bengali literature. These works utilise broader forms of communication ranging from written narratives, spoken and sign language, audio and video recordings and user generated content which includes materials that can be viewed online, as well as material that requires internet access.

We hope that this and the following volumes of the anthology will facilitate the wide utilisation of multiple capabilities of the computer and the web in production and publication of literature and its validation in academic and literary environments in India. We expect that our future volumes will be far more diverse and experimental, with the rise of small-scale digital publishing platforms, availability of new interactive content creation software, and establishing of organisations like DIGRA India and Elit India.

Justy Joseph and Nirmala Menon

CHAPTER I

எல்லாம் கலந்து, மீட்பன்

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Abstract

“எல்லாம் கலந்து” [Translated as: Combining All] by Mohankumar Shanmugam poignantly portrays the serenity of a writer and the power of his words. The poem invokes imageries mundanity and invokes the spirit of the writer’s ink with blood – as it is the tool to induce the change combining all the spirits of life. மீட்பன் [Translated as: The Savior] is a melancholic song of a young mother longing for the baby that she had when she was young. It is a poem of lost love and longing wretched through the pain of everlasting innocence and infinite time.

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எல்லாம் கலந்து

அடையாளமாய் நிற்க வேண்டி
அனைத்தையும் ஏற்கிறது
தனியாய் நின்றோ
தனித்து நின்றோ
எதையும் பாடும்
இதயம் இல்லை அதற்கு ...

ஒரு கூட்டத்தின் நெருக்கடியில்
நசுங்கி நழுவும் வியர்வையை
ஒரு பேருந்து வாரியெறிந்து
போகும் மழைக்கால சேறை
ஒரு தெரு சண்டையில்
உமிழப்படும் எச்சிலை

பாகுபாடின்றி அசுத்தப்படுத்தப்பட்ட
பாழடைந்த சாக்கடை நீரை
மனித உயிர்களை மென்று
தின்ற மலக்குழியின் ஈரத்தை
இளமை பருவங்களை கரைத்த
கிராமத்து கிணறுகளின் நுரையை

பாலின்றி அழும் ஒரு
குழந்தையின் கடைவாய் கண்ணீரை
உதிரம் உருமாறி சிந்தும்
ஒரு தாயின் முலைப்பாலை
நாளைய விதியை மாற்ற
சிந்தப்படும் இன்றைய குருதியை

எல்லோரின் உதடு பட்டும் தீட்டாகாத
தேநீர் குவளையின் கடைசி துளியை
மானம் பார்க்காமல் அம்மணமாய் கிடந்த
கிழவனை நனைக்கும் மழைத்துளியை
வஞ்சம் ஏதுமின்றி சிரிக்கும்
கிழவியின் வெற்றிலை சாரலை

மோகம் தீர்ந்து முத்தமிட
வந்த விந்துகளின் பிசுபிசுப்பை
கட்டிலின் ஓரத்தில் நதியாய்
கலக்கும் மௌனம் பேசும் உணர்வுகளை
தொட்டிலின் தூக்கம் கலைத்த
மழலையின் சிறுநீரை
என நிஜங்களை கலந்தே

என் பேனாவுக்கு
மை ஊற்றியிருக்கிறேன்

அது இலக்கியம் பாடாமல்
இலக்கணம் பேசாமல்
உரை எழுதாமல்
காவியம் கிறுக்காமல்
கல்லறை சென்றாலும்
கவலை ஏதுமில்லை

நிஜங்களை உரைக்கும்
சாமானியனுக்காக சத்தமிடும்
ஏழைக்காக சிறை செல்லும்
என்று நம்பியே
என் குருதியையும்
கொஞ்சம் கலக்கிறேன் ...

எவர் காலை சொறிந்தும்
செரிந்த இலக்கியம் என
அது பெயர் வாங்க சம்மதிக்காது !
ஏனெனில் அது
எல்லோருக்குமானதாய்
எல்லாம் கலந்தது!....

மீட்பன்

அவன் மீட்பன் தான் !
தந்தை யாரென அவன்
தர்க்கம் நடத்தக்கூடும்
நீயா என் தாயென
முகம் மூடக்கூடும்

எங்கே பிறந்தேன் என
அவன் கேட்டால்
அதோ அந்த ஆலயத்தின்
ஆலமர விழுதுகளின் மறைவில்
அழுதபடி பிறந்தாயென சொல்லிவிடுவேன்

எப்படி பிறந்தேன் என
அவன் கேட்கும்படி இந்த
அறிவியல் அவனை முட்டாளாக்காது
ஆனால் யாருக்கு பிறந்தேன் என
அவனை தேட வைக்கும்
அவலத்தை சமூகம் செய்யும்

அவன் மீட்பன்
அவன் என்னை மீட்க வரட்டும்
ஆனால் அவன் கேள்விகளோடு
என்னிடம் வரக்கூடாது
தத்துவங்களோடு என்னை
தீண்டக்கூடாது

ஐயோ !!!
தாய் இவளில்லை என
தள்ளி போனாலும் பரவாயில்லை
விலை மாது தானே என
விருப்பம் கொண்டு வந்துவிடும்
விதி நேர்ந்தால்

அவனுக்கு ஆசை அரும்புவிடும்
வயதில் நான் ஒன்றும்
நாற்பது வயதை தொட்டிருக்கமாட்டேன்
முப்பது வயதென என்
முன்னழகு சாட்சி சொல்லி
வியாபாரம் செய்து கொண்டிருக்கும்

என் முதல் மாத விடாயின்
குருதி துளிகள் காயும் முன்பே
அவன் விந்துவாய் என்னுள்
அலைகிறான் என தெரியாமல்
அந்த முட்புதரில் இரவில்
அழுது கொண்டிருந்தேன்

வயிற்றுக்குள் பிள்ளை வளர்கிறான் என்ற
தாய்மை இல்லாமல்
விளையாட தம்பி வருகிறான் என
விருப்பம் கொண்டவள் நான்
அவனை பெற்றெடுக்கும் முன்பே
விற்பனையும் செய்துவிட்டேன்

புணர பயந்து வெறும்
தொடுதலுக்கும் வெட்கமின்றி
முத்தமிடுவதற்கும் தனங்களை
தடவுவதற்கும் என வரும்
விடலைகளின் விருப்பத்திற்கு
ஐம்பது ரூபாயென அவனை பாதுகாத்தேன்

ஏதோ ஒரு பாலத்தின் அடியிலோ
மரங்களின் நிழலிலோ
சாலையின் சந்திப்புகளிலோ
பேருந்து நிலையங்களிலோ உறங்கினால்

அவனுக்கு ஆபத்துயென
கழிவறைகளில் கண் விழித்து கிடந்திருக்கிறேன்

பத்து மாதத்திற்கு
பத்து நாள் இருக்க பிறந்தவனை
பிரசவ வார்டிலிருந்து
எடுத்து வர பணமின்றி
பரிமாறி விட்டு வந்தேன்
பால் சுரக்காத முலைகளையும்

ஆயிரம் ரூபாயை கையில்
திணித்து அவனை தூக்கினார்கள்
எனக்கு புதிதாய் இருந்தது
இதுவரை யாரும் காசை
என் கையில் திணித்ததில்லை
வெகுநேரங்களில் பிறப்புறுப்பில் தான்

இதோ அவன் கொடுத்த காசில்
இந்த கட்டிலும்
இலவம் பஞ்சில் மெத்தையும்
அவன் மீட்பன் தான்
இருந்தாலும் அவன் தான்
முதலீடு போட்டிருக்கிறான்

அவனை தத்தும் தரவில்லை
தாரையும் வார்க்கவில்லை
ஏதோ ஒரு பெரும் முதலாளியின்
பிச்சைக்கார கூட்டத்தில்
பிரதிநிதியாகவே அவன்
பிரிந்து போயிருக்கிறான்

அவன் வரக்கூடும்
பிறப்பின் ரகசியம் கேட்டோ
பிறப்புறுப்பின் சுவை கேட்டோ
தந்தை யாரென கேட்டோ
விந்தை விரயமாக்காவோ
மீட்பன் வருவான்

எப்படி அடையாளம் காண்பது
அவனை ? இன்றிலிருந்தே
கண்ணை மூடி
காம தீயில் வேகும் பொழுதெல்லாம்
கண்ணீரோடு கடவுளை கேட்கிறேன்
கடவுளே !! மீட்பனை இனியொருமுறை
கண்டிப்பாக அனுப்பிவிடாதே..

Contributor Biography

Dr. Mohankumar Shanmugam, is an active researcher, passionate writer, and blogger. His writings focus on subjects that are not readily accepted because of various societal dogmas. He melds his passion and profession for the refinement of society and the students' community. He aspires to represent the voices and ideology of the common man in this world through his writings. Mohan earned his PhD (English) from VIT University, Chennai. Presently, he is doing research independently in the field of emotive writing and has planned to publish his second book as a collection of poetry in Tamil.

CHAPTER 2

The wait and A Muse on the Train

Alakananda Lal

Abstract

A train journey with a window seat never fails to tinkle one's imagination. The first poetry is all about the poet's rekindling emotions over undertaking one such journey and contains descriptions of how the outside world seems different all through the way. The poet wonders what would have happened if all the windows had been turned into emergency exits. So many hearts, then, would have escaped to the different world they had viewed from the windows. The second poem, describes a journey but in a dissimilar form; a journey from innocence to experience and finding joy in discovering self. Human hearts possess an eternal craving for care, love, and belonging. Waiting for someone symbolizes this connection and prioritizes love. The poet in the same way had been waited for and faced waiting. But at last, she found the waiting worthwhile as she thanked herself for realizing her true self in that waiting.

Video Repository

The Wait

<http://dspace.iiti.ac.in:8080/jspui/handle/123456789/9682>

A Muse on the Train

<http://dspace.iiti.ac.in:8080/jspui/handle/123456789/9683>

How to cite this book chapter:

Lal, A. 2023. The wait and A Muse on the Train. In: Menon, N., Shanmugapriya, T., Joseph, J. and Sutton, D. (eds.) *Indian Electronic Literature Anthology: Volume I*. Pp. 9–10. India: IITI KSHIP. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.57004/book1.c>. License: CC BY 4.0.

Contributor Biography

Alakananda Lal, hailing from Kozhikode has Completed her Masters in English and Comparative Literature from Pondicherry University. She is Currently working as Assistant Professor at MAMO College, Manassery (affiliated to Calicut University).

CHAPTER 3

পীচ ফল (Peach Fruit)

Pinaki Gayen (পিনাকী গায়নে)

Abstract

Transporting self to a distant place of belonging and delving deep into the nostalgic past constitutes the soul of this poetry. The descriptions in harking back to the past give a slice of vivid visual of daily life from the heart of Bengal - the city of Kolkata; as though the poet's heart too belongs there. Isolation and intended self-exile ring throughout the lines, where the poet is seen constantly mediating between past and future. As the thought of the future hinders him from complete escape, the recollection of his homeland reiteratively haunts him in the foreign land. While tossed in between, the poet goes for unconcerned walks, grapples with directions, and dives into deep thought. Thus, the symbolic peach fruit, the reference of which appears as the title itself, sources the poet's stream of thought for being a constant reminder of his residing far away from his mother state. At last, the concluding remarks on the poet's urge to pen down everything flag the message of the portance of writing

How to cite this book chapter:

Gayen, P. 2023. পীচ ফল (Peach Fruit). In: Menon, N., Shanmugapriya, T., Joseph, J. and Sutton, D. (eds.) *Indian Electronic Literature Anthology: Volume I*. Pp. 11–13. India: IITI KSHIP. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.57004/book1.d>. License: CC BY 4.0.

পীচ ফল

বেশ কিছু সময় মুখে হাত রেখে পীচ ফলটাকে দেখি
মনের মধ্যে সহস্র ফিল্টার কাজ করে
দেখার ধরণ গুলো যেন ধীরে ধীরে পাল্টে গেছে
টাইম জোন পাল্টানোর সাথে সাথে

রাস্তার ডান দিক ধরে চলতে চলতে থেমে যাই
হাত দুটো দেখি, কোনটা ডান আর কোনটা বাম

কোনও কিছুতেই কিছু যায় আসে না - এই ভেবে
বরফের মধ্যে খচ্ খচ্ পা ঢুকিয়ে হেঁটে যাই
গুগুল ম্যাপ যদিও বলে দিতে পারে গন্তব্য কোথায়
তবু, প্রায় দু-ঘন্টা হারিয়ে যাই চীনা পল্লীতে

লোকজন নেই কোথাও
রাস্তার দু-পাশে সারি সারি গ্রাফিতি দেওয়াল
বিকট শব্দে হঠাৎ ছুটে যায় আগুন নেভানোর গাড়ি

হালকা তুষার পাতে আমি হেঁটে চলি একা
আর কল্পনা করি কোলকাতার ফুটপাথের চা দোকান
এবং দোকানে বসে খবরের কাগজ পড়ছে
এক চুল উঠে যাওয়া বৃদ্ধ

কোনও কারণ ছাড়াই ঠাণ্ডা হচ্ছে টিম হরটনস্ কফি
মন খারাপের স্মৃতি গুলো ক্রমে ঢেকে যাচ্ছে বরফ চাদরে
পরতে পরতে ভুলিয়ে দিচ্ছে কোলকাতার পথঘাট,
জীবনযাত্রা,

অতীত আর ভবিষ্যতের মাঝে যেন কেবল একটা
পীচ ফল রাখা

আমি
বেশ কিছু সময় মুখে হাত রেখে পীচ ফলটাকে দেখি
আর ভাবি আত্মবিস্মৃতির আগে সব কিছু অকপটে
লিখে রাখাটা জরুরি

Contributor Biography

Pinaki Gayen is a visual artist, researcher, and writer. Pinaki obtained his PhD from the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at the Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur. He worked under the supervision of Professor Priyadarshi Patnaik during his PhD. He is a recipient of Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute Fellowship 2018–19. He was a visiting doctoral research fellow at the Department of Psychology, University of Toronto, Canada. He has presented his research works in many prestigious conferences like the 6th Visual Science of Art Conference (Trieste, Italy), the 25th and 26th National Academy of Psychology Conference (India), the 3rd International Conference on Arts and Humanities – (Indonesia), the cultural exhibition presentation at the 3rd WSSF Congress (Chiang Mai, Thailand), the 1st International Conference on Recent Trends and Sustainability in Crafts & Design at the Indian Institute of Crafts and Design (Jaipur-India). Previously he completed Bachelor and Master's degree in Visual Arts from the Government College of Art and Craft Calcutta, University of Calcutta. He was awarded the National Scholarship to Young Artists by the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India and was empanelled as a Designer at the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, Office of the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts) in the area of Textile, Natural Fiber & Allied Craft. He is the Associate Editor (Art) of *Muse India* w.e.f. Issue 84 (Mar–Apr 2019).

CHAPTER 4

I Can't Breathe

Steven S. George and Vinit Gupta

Abstract

I Can't Breathe is a collaborative sequence produced by Steven S George and Vinit Gupta. It was published on Instagram.com/vinitguptaphoto on 1st June 2020 from 12 pm to 10 pm in ten frame narratives. The narrative unfolds in the form of inner monologues by a character whose identity is allusive. The mysterious narrator has a habit of forgetting. It's through forgetting the narrator remembers many things in the narrative. Character's memory is playing upon itself, due to which the character is confusing reality, past, and stories. The narrative unfolds in the mixing up of different worlds and identities and finding affinities amongst them. The frame takes its cue from the phrase "I can't breathe," which were the last words of George Floyd, who was pinned beneath three police officers and died due to choking. The unreliable narrator brings some correspondence to the particular instance with the working class, migrant workers, sexual and racial identities.

How to cite this book chapter:

George, S. S. and Gupta, V. 2023. I Can't Breathe. In: Menon, N., Shanmugapriya, T., Joseph, J. and Sutton, D. (eds.) *Indian Electronic Literature Anthology: Volume I*. Pp. 15–26. India: IITI KSHIP. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.57004/book1.e>. License: CC BY 4.0.

Scene 1: The Face



They are saying I was born into crime. The last I remember, I was born ...uhh... I'm sorry I'm not taking my medications these days.

I've actually started forgetting. It's probably my age, an age of viciousness. Do I look like a criminal? Maybe my hair could tell more, or you could identify me by my clothes. I don't know why these things are coming to my mind. I was actually looking for something, justice, yeah, justice was the name. Let me know if you find it.

https://www.instagram.com/p/CA4ek5lJV10/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

Scene 2 : Rat Trap



I've been in the closet for the last one hour, but it feels like decades, leave that, look what I found. Do you know how many types of rat traps are there? When the rats break into the warehouses of the rich, it's because of hunger. While these warehouses are built to feed gluttony. Rats steal to feed, get trapped for stealing, and are fed for being trapped. Isn't it a bit dramatic? When a rat is confined in a cage, there's always a forlorn hope of getting out of it. But have you ever seen a glue trap? They walk into it, they cry, shit out of pain, and die! An easy solution, the Final solution.

https://www.instagram.com/p/CA4lniOJFnD/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

Scene 3: Graveyard



There was a dead rat in the corner of my room. I thought I'll bury it, but I could not choose where to cremate it. The significant difference between a dump yard and a graveyard is, people wish to visit the latter. The monumental cities are erected upon these graveyards and kept clean by the dump yards. I worked at both these places; if given an opportunity, I would have become the president. On my way, I heard the city mourning at somebody's funeral. I don't think I'll find justice soon.

https://www.instagram.com/p/CA4sZ5gJ2nr/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

Scene 4: When the Sun Shines



"I can't breathe." There are so many people shouting those words, but the mayor said if they're saying "I can't breathe," it means they're breathing. Anyway, I offered them my inhaler, they hugged me. I love them. I remember something, but I mix up things, I can't really...uhh...this is so frustrating. I see myself saying these words, "I can't speak! I can't move! When the sun shines, it never shines equally on me. If I proceed to the river to drink water, I run the risk of getting killed."

https://www.instagram.com/p/CA4zpwGpoLd/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

Scene 5 : Silence!



Listen to the radio, television, and the internet. Aren't they speaking enough? Be silent! Shhhhhhhh. Don't you understand? you need to understand! (Silently) The last time our ancestors spoke, they broke the chains of slavery! I think there were more chains broken but I can't recall them. Do you want that to happen again? I hope you know this time it could be more detrimental than before. I forgot to tell you I'm an artist.

https://www.instagram.com/p/CA46rU4pYwK/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

Scene 6 : Citylights



Cities are made of prisons, and prisons are made of cities. Tell me, where do we find the maximum number of criminals? Well, everyone knows, not behind bars but in the shimmering chandeliers. Sometimes you see it very clearly when you fly. Don't you find it amusing; the minorities of the states mostly occupy the prisons around the world. I don't; I love patterns.

https://www.instagram.com/p/CA5BHK0pPRH/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

Scene 7: The Smoking Fan



Did you know that the fan actually works counter-clockwise? We migrate from our homes for the pendulum of time to move and improve our living conditions. We get illuminated by the rotating fan and dream its breeze. Only to reach closer to it to realize it does not circulate air; it sucks out the air. Did I tell you something about an artist?

https://www.instagram.com/p/CA5IK8FJuF_/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

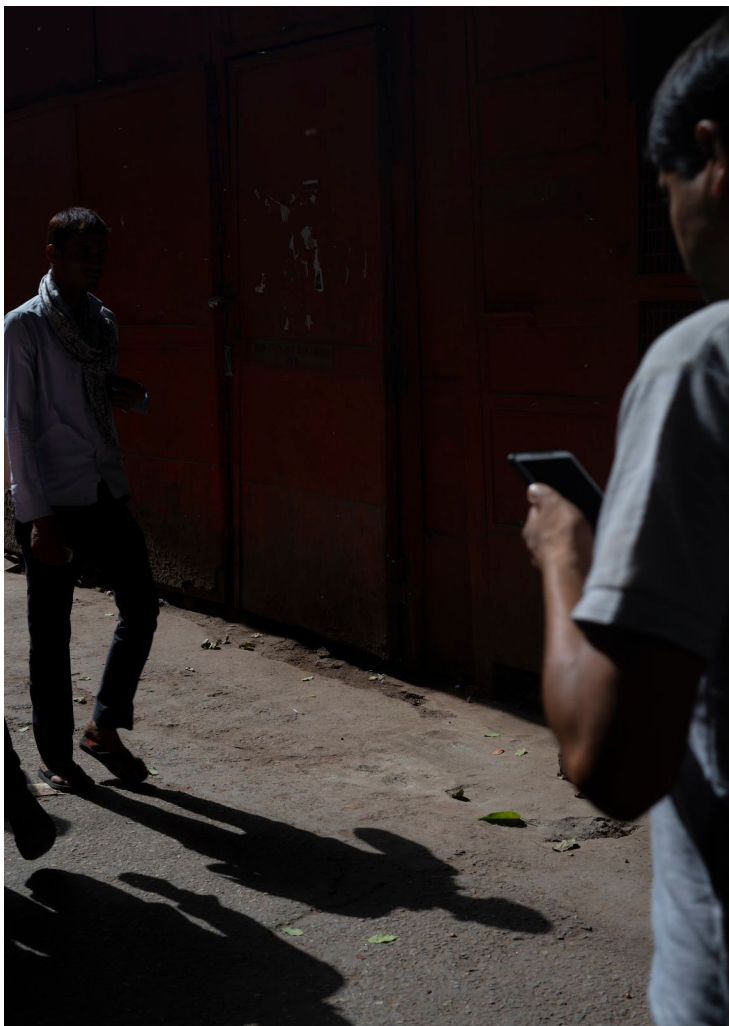
Scene 8: Stream



There's a scarlet stream flowing in the hamlet, and a grimy drain overflowing in the capital. Between the vicissitudes of ghettos and narrow lanes, the working class screams silently. Do you want to listen to it? Not a fight or a brawl or some gory crime thriller. Would you laugh at me if I confess I forgot what art I produced?

https://www.instagram.com/p/CA5PEOEpp9h/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

Scene 9: Walking



I heard you love to take long walks. Would you like to walk with me? For once? Maybe? We'll take my regular route, walking thousands of miles through history. You might not be getting a kick for it. Well, count it as an adventure-sport or trend it as a challenge. Moreover, we can search for justice together, on the way. I forget everything and remember something, but I never forget to find justice. I don't know why.

https://www.instagram.com/p/CA5V4EmpIGb/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

Scene 10: Light



The light shines only when it falls, like love. You fall, open your wings, and fly forever. Not today, we'll discuss my love life after finding what I was looking for. Every light designer knows the existence of light is based on the surface. Maybe I was a light designer. But I keep listening to various melodies, independent in rhythm and contour, overlapping and playing out harmoniously in my head. There's a word for it...what's that word, uhh, uhh, contrapuntal. That's it! I think I remember, I'm a contrapuntal art. Do you follow? How can you not? Our overlapping territories and intertwined histories follow.

https://www.instagram.com/p/CA5fV4lpvt8/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

Contributor Biographies

Steven S. George is a Ph.D. Scholar at the Department of English, Jamia Millia Islamia working on Dalit Christians narratives in Kerala. He published a fictionalised narrative of an interview with Professor Dilip Menon on the subject: Ocean as a Method. He is a theatre practitioner working with experimental forms in performance making. He has published his play Mimesis serially in the Khirkee Voice tabloid.

Vinit Gupta is a photographer and researcher who lives and works in New Delhi. Vinit has a masters degree in economics and Anthropology. His work addresses transformation, marginality and play between mythology and social in context of human rights, identity, environment, violence and visual culture. His principle medium is the portraiture, although his work also encompasses personal narratives and found photographs.

CHAPTER 5

Untitled and Others

Meghna Gangadharan

Abstract

This collection of poetry consists of five tercets written on different themes. All are interwoven with the similar serenity of tone and self-conceited ideas. The first three poems are the inner reflections of the poet's wandering thoughts on the bits of her life experiences and crystallizes her own ideas of self-understanding whereas the last two are written in second person in which the poetess seems to be conversing with her loved one about her deep feelings in a very subtle style that is evident of her fondness towards him/her. The poems are inner narratives filled with equivocation of poetess thoughts and struggle to express herself. The writing style is simple and vivid, except the first two poems, there isn't any rhyming pattern in the other poems.

How to cite this book chapter:

Gangadharan, M. 2023. Untitled and Others. In: Menon, N., Shanmugapriya, T., Joseph, J. and Sutton, D. (eds.) *Indian Electronic Literature Anthology: Volume I*. Pp. 27–28. India: IITI KSHIP. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.57004/book1.f>. License: CC BY 4.0.

1. Untitled

A solitary loon inside my head
Sings of a faraway land
In an alien tongue

2. Glass

Reflections
I see are affectations
Induced to drown me out

3. Wildflower

A wildflower.
It grows in the wilderness,
Untamed, just like you.

4. Colours

A cornucopia of wonders
You hide behind a screen and talk
As if your colours aren't brighter in person.

5. Home

He tells me it's in a land
Engulfed in man-made smoke
He doesn't see the one within my eyes

Contributor Biography

Meghna Gangadharan is a second-year PhD student at IIT Indore, working in the interdisciplinary area of Literature and Other Arts under the guidance of Dr. Ananya Ghoshal. She occasionally writes poems and short stories. She is also a practitioner of Bharatanatyam and a keen observer of Indian art forms.

CHAPTER 6

Short Story

R. Vidhya

Abstract

The short story is a painstaking narrative of a young tamil girl and her perception of the geopolitical conflict on the river Cauvery that is going on between the state of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka in Southern Part of India.

“சித்ரா பௌர்ணமி நாளதுவுமா இன்னும் இழுத்து போத்திட்டு தூங்கிட்டு இருக்கா பாரு” என்றதில் தொடங்கியது என் நாள். “எப்ப பாரு இந்த கிழவிக்கு என்ன திட்டிட்டே இருக்கணும், இன்னிக்கு திட்ட சித்ரா பௌர்ணமி கிடைச்சிடுச்சா?” என்று முணுமுணுத்த படியே எழுந்தேன் அன்று.

வீட்டில் எல்லோரும் சித்ரா பௌர்ணமி கோவிலுக்கு போறாங்க. வழக்கமாக கோவிலுக்கு போவதே பிடிக்காத எனக்கு கரூர் செல்லாண்டியம்மன் கோவிலுக்கு அத்தை, மாமா குடும்பத்தோடு போவது தெரிஞ்சு துள்ளி குதித்து எழுந்தேன். குடும்பத்தோட கோவிலுக்குப் போவதுனா என்ன சும்மாவா? ஆட்டம், பாட்டம், கொண்டாட்டம் தான். பெருசங்க ஒரு பக்கமும், சிறுசங்க ஒரு பக்கமும் உட்கார்ந்து ஒரே கும்மாளம் தான். பஸ்ஸில் போகிற வழியெல்லாம் ஜன்னலில் தலையை நீட்டி ரோட்டில் போகிறவர்களை எல்லாம் வம்பிழுத்துட்டு, சின்னதா ஏதாச்சும் கதையை, பார்த்தாலே வண்டியை நிறுத்தி பாதி கதையை விலைக்கு வாங்கி, வாங்கின தீனியெல்லாம்

How to cite this book chapter:

Vidhya, R. 2023. Short Story. In: Menon, N., Shanmugapriya, T., Joseph, J. and Sutton, D. (eds.) *Indian Electronic Literature Anthology: Volume I*. Pp. 29–32. India: IITI KSHIP. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.57004/book1.g>. License: CC BY 4.0.

பஸ்ஸ இருக்கிற ஆடியோ சிஸ்டமே கதறுகிற அளவுக்குப் பாட்டு போட்டு டான்ஸ் ஆடிக்கொண்டே சாப்பிடுவதும் மஹம்... எல்லாம் ஒரு குஷிதான்.

இதெல்லாம் ஒருபுறம் இருக்க, இன்னொரு புறம் கரூர்ஸ் இருக்கிற காவிரி ஆற்றில் குளிப்பது இன்னொரு குஷிதான். ஏனென்றால், என் பாட்டி சின்ன வயசில் சித்ரா பௌர்ணமி அன்று குடும்பத்தோட ஆற்றங்கரையில் உட்கார்ந்து நிலாச்சோறு சாப்பிட்ட கதை, பள்ளிகூடத்துக்கு போக கூடாதுன்னு வாத்தியார்கிட்ட இருந்தும், அம்மாகிட்ட இருந்தும் தப்பிச்சு ஒளிய இடமில்லாமல் அவங்க போகிற வரைக்கும் தண்ணிகுள்ள மூச்சு பிடிச்ச கதை, ஆற்றுக்கு அடியில் இருக்கும் கூழாங்கல்லை எடுத்து அஞ்சாங்கல் ஆடிய கதை, துணி துவைக்க போகிறேன் என்று வீட்டில் இருக்கும் எல்லா துணிகளையும் எடுத்து வந்து ஒரு நாள் முழுக்க ஆற்றங்கரையில் உட்கார்ந்து மீன் பிடிச்ச கதை, அந்த மீனை வீட்டுக்கு எடுத்து வந்து அம்மாவிடம் அடிவாங்கிய கதை, ஆற்றங்கரையிலிருந்து வாய்க்காலுக்கு போகும் தண்ணீரில் பந்தயம் வச்ச விளையாண்ட கதைன்னு பாட்டி சொன்ன பல கதைகள் எனக்கு ஞாபகம் வந்தது. அதையெல்லாம் நானும் பார்க்கபோறேன், அனுபவிக்கப்போறேன் என்று தெரிஞ்சு படு குஷியாக போனேன்.

கரூரும் வந்தது. எல்லோரும் இறங்கி கோவிலுக்கு போனோம். அம்மா மாறருங்க, அத்தை மாறருங்க எல்லாம் பொங்கல் வைத்து சமையல் செய்ய கிளம்பியாச்சு. அப்பா மாறருங்க, மாமா மாறருங்க எல்லாம் ஒரு ஓரமா பாய் விரிச்சு சீட்டு விளையாட ஆரமிச்சாச்சு. எங்களை மாதிரி பொண்டு பொடுசுகளையெல்லாம் கூட்டிகிட்டு, "ஆற்றுக்கு போகலாம் வாங்கடா" என்று எங்க பாட்டி கூட்டி போனாள்.

எல்லாரையும் கூட்டி வந்து ஒரு மைதானத்துல பத்து பதினஞ்சு லாரிகள் மணல் அள்ள, தூரத்துல இருக்கிற குட்டையை காட்டி, "இதுதாண்டா ஆறு, எல்லாரும் போய் குளிங்க-னு சொல்லிட்டாங்க. முட்டி அளவு கூட இல்லாத தண்ணீரை பார்த்து கோபத்தில், "ஏன் கிழவி இந்த நதியில் தான் நீ மூழ்கி முத்து எடுத்தியா?" என்று கேட்டேன். "நாங்க விளையாண்டது ஆறு, இது வெறும் ஆறு மாதிரி. நாங்க அனுபவிச்சது எல்லாம் உங்களலால அனுபவிக்க முடியாது. காலம் மாறிப்போச்சு, காலத்தோட எல்லாமும் மாறிப்போச்சு மஹம்... என்னத்த சொல்ல" னு சொல்லி எங்களை சமாதானப் படுத்தி குளிக்கவச்சு அழைத்து சென்றுவிட்டாள்.

சாமி கும்பிட்டாச்சு, ஆற்று மணலில் விளையாடியாச்சு, சமைச்ச சாப்பாட்டை சாப்பிட்டாச்சு, வந்த வேலை எல்லாம் முடிஞ்சாச்சு, எல்லாரும் கிளம்பியாச்சு. இதற்கப்புறம் நான் பார்த்த எல்லா நதிகளைப் பார்த்தும் எனக்கு ஒரு ஏக்கம் இருந்துகொண்டேயிருந்தது. கதைகளில் படித்த

பச்சைப்பச்சை என்கிற பூமி, வற்றாத நதி எல்லாம் கதைகளோடே போய்விடுமா?" என்ற பயம் எப்போதுமே இருந்தது.

நம்ம காவிரிக்கு நீர் வராததற்கு கர்நாடகா நமக்கு தண்ணீர் விடாதது தன காரணம் என்று யாரோ ஒருவர் சொல்வதை கேட்டு நானும் அவர்கள் மேல் கோபப்பட்டேன். குடகில் ஆரம்பித்து பூம்புகார் போகிற வரை இந்த நதிக்கும் அதை சார்ந்த மக்களுக்கும் எவ்வளவு பிரச்சனைகள்? எவ்வளவு ரத்தங்கள்? எத்தனை பலிகள்? அவ்வளவு தண்ணீரை வைத்து அவர்கள் என்ன செய்கிறார்கள்? கொஞ்சம் கூட அவர்களுக்கு மனிதாபிமானமே இல்லை என்று திட்டி தீர்த்தேன். கர்நாடகா என்று பெயர் கேட்டாலே காதை பொத்திக்கொள்வேன். என் கோபம் எதிரில் வரும் மனிதர்கள் மேலேயும் எதிரொலிக்க ஆரமித்தது. அந்த மாநிலத்தில் இருந்து வரும் மனிதர்களை பார்த்து முட்டாள் தனமாக திட்டினேன், வார்த்தைகளால் தாக்கினேன். ஒரு நாள் எங்க வீட்டிற்கு வந்த என் அப்பாவின் நண்பரை வீட்டிற்குள் வரக்கூடாது என்று ஆர்ப்பாட்டம் பண்ணினேன். பொறுத்தது எல்லாம் போதும் என்று விட்டார் பாருங்க ஒரு அடி. ஹப்பா! எனக்கு அப்படியே பொறிகலங்கி போச்சு. இதற்கு காரணமும் கர்நாடகா தான் என்று கோபம் வந்தது. "உங்களுக்கு நம்ம ஊர் மேலும் நம்ம மக்கள் மேலேயும் கொஞ்சம் கூட அக்கறை இல்ல, உங்களுக்கு மட்டும் குடிக்க தண்ணி இருந்த போதுமா? மத்தவங்களுக்கு வேண்டாமா?" என்று வயதிற்கு மீறியதை எல்லாம் பேசினேன். பதிலாக அப்பா ஒரே வாக்கியம் தன சொன்னார், "எதையும் முழுசா தெரியாம முடிவுக்கு வரக்கூடாது. முழுசா தெரிஞ்சிட்டு வந்து பேசு" என்று சொல்லி கிளம்பிவிட்டார்.

அதற்கப்புறம் தான் அதைப்பற்றி படிக்க ஆரமித்தேன். 1892 ல் இருந்து இன்று வரை உள்ள காவிரி வரலாறை படித்தேன். கட்டிய அணைகள், பகிர்ந்துகொண்ட தண்ணீர் அளவுகள், மாநிலங்களுக்கு இடையே உள்ள பிரச்சனைகள், அதன் காரணங்கள் இது எல்லாவற்றைப் பற்றி என் பாட்டியிடம் சொன்னேன். எதுவுமே புரியாத என் பாட்டி, "இது எதுவும் எனக்கு தெரியாது, புரியாது, எனக்கு தெரிஞ்சது எல்லாம் ஒண்ணே ஒன்னு தான் எல்லா பிரச்சனைகளுக்கும் காரணம் நம்ம போல மனுஷங்க தான்" என்னறாள். புரியாத நான் "எப்படி?" என்று கேட்டேன். "எங்க காலத்துல தண்ணி கரைபுரண்டு ஓடியதற்கு காரணம், எங்களுக்கு விவசாயம் தவிர வேற எதற்கும் அதிகமா தண்ணீர் தேவைப்பட்டது இல்ல. இப்போ இருக்கிற மாதிரி ஆற்று மணல் நாங்க அள்ளவும் மாட்டோம், அதனால் நிலத்தடி நீரும் வற்றாமல் இருந்துச்சு. நகரமயமாக்குறேனு இருக்கிற எல்லா நிலத்தையும் ஆக்ரமிச்சிச்சு எல்லமரத்தையும் வெட்டியா. அதனால்

இப்போ மழையும் இல்ல, மரங்களும் இல்ல. அப்போ நாங்க விவசாயத்துக்கு பயன்படுத்தின தண்ணிய விட மூணு மடங்கு தண்ணிய நீங்க செலவு செய்றீங்க. ஆறு குளங்கள் எல்லாம் வற்றியாச்சு. நிலத்துல இப்போ இருக்கிற தண்ணியையும் உறுஞ்சி எடுத்தாச்சு. இப்போ பயன்படுத்த தண்ணி இல்ல. அதன் பலன் தான் இப்போ அனுபவிக்குறீங்க” என்று சொல்லி கிளம்பிவிட்டாள்.

இது எனக்குள் ஒரு தாக்கத்தைக் கொண்டு வந்தது. ஒரு நாட்டோட முன்னேற்றத்திற்கு நகரமும், தொழிற்சாலையும் மட்டுமா முக்கியம்? விவசாயமும் முக்கியம் தான். **அதற்காக தொழிற்சாலைக இருக்காக் கூடாதா?** நீரும் வேண்டும், தொழிற்சாலையும் வேண்டும், விவசாயமும் வேண்டும். ஒன்று கிடைக்க இன்னொன்றை இழந்துதான் ஆகணுமா? இதற்கு என்னதான் தீர்வு? என்று ஆயிரம் கேள்விகள் எனக்கு உதித்தது. ஆம், இதற்கு வழிகள் உள்ளது. நகர்ந்த மேலை நாடுகள் விவசாயம், தொழிற்சாலை என்று இரண்டையுமே விட்டுக்கொடுக்காமல் இருக்கிறார்கள். அதனால் நாடும் செழிப்பாய் இருக்கிறது, மக்களும் செழிப்பாய் இருக்கிறார்கள். இது தெரியாமல் நாம் முட்டாள் தனமாய் சண்டை போட்டுக்கொண்டு இருக்கிறோம். **இனிமேலாவது இது போல் இல்லாமல் புராணக்கதைகளில் வரும் நம் நாடு போல்** நம் பூமியை பச்சைப்பசேல் என்று உருவாக்கவேண்டும் என்ற ஞானம் பிறந்தது. அதற்கான பாதையில் இன்று நான்... எவ்வளவு பேர் என்னோடு?

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I am **R. Vidhiya** pursuing Ph.D. in the Department of English and Foreign Languages, Bharathiar University. My area of research is Cultural Studies particularly examines the oppression faced by girl children in the name of dedication in the countries India and Africa through Conflict Theory and Intersectionality. I have published 10 research articles in ugc carelited as well as International peer reviewed journals. I wish to state that I have cleared the UGC National Eligibility Test (NET) thrice conducted by National Testing Agency and State Eligibility Test (TN-SET) once, conducted by the Government of Tamil Nadu, in March 2018. In the Department of English, Bharathiar University, I have been training the PG Students and Research Scholars with Soft Skills as well as Language and Literature for Competitive Examinations. I have experience in creating tutorial environment that accommodates the needs of individual students especially in training them to crack competitive examinations. I am also working as a Research Assistant in the project titled “Content Writing” sponsored by RUSA BEICH 2.0 of Bharathiar University, under the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India.

CHAPTER 7

Monotony

Subhanjali Saraswati

Abstract

This work is an ambience-based slam poetry, recorded on a cell-phone. The poem's pretext is existentialism, entangled in the silence of nostalgic nihilism. A sly metaphor is placed upon the environment, which enables one to realise the depths of the thoughts portrayed in the wordings. A purposely placed sunlight and yet gloomy background adds to the idea of dullness that dwells in the days of lockdowns. The short phrases, place the paradoxical fights that often are faced by most young adults today. Glimmering air of depression, even as ordinariness (reflected by the backdrop) continues to trudge along.

The deliberate lag between voice of the mind, and the monotonic mindless movements places the reality of difference between what we think and what we do (the mens rea and actus reus). The digital overlaps of voice and visual play a pivotal role in the depiction being a part of today's electronic literature. One might even call it an evolved form of multimedia poetry that had been introduced by William Blake. Tinted with dramatism, the poetry depends upon subtle actions to captivate and coarsen the audience into welling deeper into one's own minds and end one's reverie (or continue) with sleep and a deeper exploration of the subconscious memory of the past and pretended future. The end note laces an absurdist arch over the social movements of today that are often simply a reaction to events, which however are failed to be realised in everyday life as a result of disagreeable lethargy.

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Link to Video Repository

Monotony

<http://dspace.iti.ac.in:8080/jspui/handle/123456789/9684>

Contributor Biography

Subhanjali Saraswati. A second-year student of Integrated Masters in political science at the University of Hyderabad, Subhanjali Saraswati, dreams of destigmatizing the world. She propagates the idea of owning one's intersectional identity. Having been exposed to liberal education in her school years: she is also an active proponent of learning via love and freedom. A human rights activist, she is the founder and curator of Feminism for Everybody, a majorly digital platform for collection of configured creations in the form of photography, art, and various forms of writings that enable an awareness towards gender equity. Nowhere as religious as her name suggests, she is a nineteen-year-old passionate towards making things change. A bibliophile by the night she spends the earthly hours swapping between a variety of team and individual games, alongside active journaling of social speculations and biased brunches. A quirky young adult of the seasonal variety, she alternates between being a very social extrovert, and a writer in hideout. She sometimes helps edit works on budding writers on Wattpad and provides emotional support to peers especially in these paranoid times. She is also the SIG Facilitator for Marginalities at DHARTI.

CHAPTER 8

Gods and Mathematicians

Antriksh Bali

Abstract

Gods and Mathematicians' is an endless generative, interactive poem developed in Max/MSP as an experiment in surrealism and language development. Built by concatenating over a 100 text files, the poem juxtaposes often-ridiculous and over-the-top imagery with grammatical structures that are meant to evoke humorous, satirical responses and at the same time, encourage thinking outside of conventional norms of what is considered poetry.

Taking on a deeply apocalyptic tone, the poem talks about conflict and how it often stays unresolved owing to inter-personal conflicts or lack of understanding between two different sides.

Broken into two halves, the poem simulates a dialog of sorts between 'gods' and 'mathematicians'. The left side of the poem puts forth the idea that all things are already pre-destined and pre-ordained even though it might be full of conflicts and problematic occurrences. It takes on a more idealistic perception of the world as we know it.

On the other hand, the right-hand side takes on a more 'human' perspective on life, full of biases, anger and pride. It has a very self-centred approach to the world. Yet, the right side somehow feels confused about what it really wants, sometimes even going to the point of ridiculing and mocking the notion of 'benevolent forces'.

How to cite this book chapter:

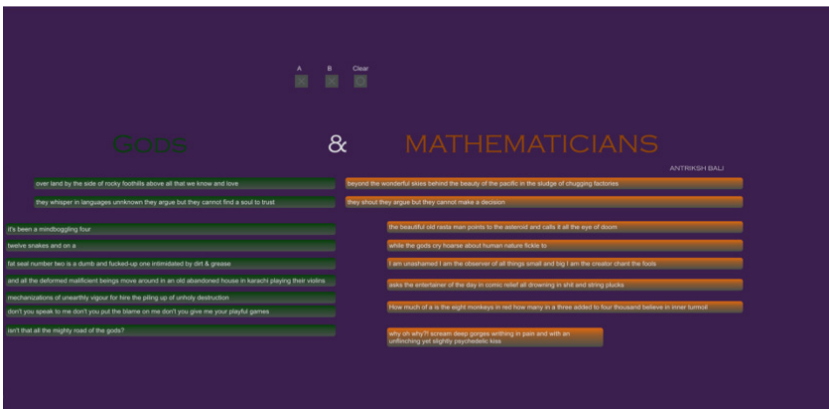
Bali, A. 2023. Gods and Mathematicians. In: Menon, N., Shanmugapriya, T., Joseph, J. and Sutton, D. (eds.) *Indian Electronic Literature Anthology: Volume I*. Pp. 35–36. India: IITI KSHIP. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.57004/book1.i>. License: CC BY 4.0.

What results is a confusing hodge-podge of phrases, words and sentences that more often than not, make a lot of sense about the world we live in, the different perspectives we have and what happens when opposing ideas clash with each other.

Link to Video Repository

<http://dspace.iiti.ac.in:8080/jspui/handle/123456789/10745>

Screenshot from Gods & mathematicians



Contributor Biography

Antriksh Bali is an interactive media artist whose work encapsulates generative poetry, text art, audio-visual art installations and video games. He combines old-world vintage sampling and audio synthesis techniques in sound with experimental and surreal generative visual projections. He's also a music producer and composer for film, television and video games with over 10 years of experience creating music and sound design. In 2015, he had the opportunity to collaborate with Native Instruments in helping build a virtual music instrument library based on folk instruments from India. In 2016, he had the opportunity to work with acclaimed Tokyo-based performance artist / visual artists on an animated short film 'Figure A' which won accolades at several festivals around the globe. Being no stranger to interactive mediums, Antriksh Bali has composed music for several video games, written software for interactive art installations and collaborated with spoken word artists on a variety of different works.

He was also awarded the 2019 Music Industry Kanter Award at University of Southern California for his work on Ascension VR which promoted education in entertainment media, and was supported by California Science Center. It made use of voice-recognition technology and the AI Watson created by IBM.

CHAPTER 9

Nanaintha Kattaru

Mohamed Rafiq and Kanimozhi

Abstract

In the collection of video poetry written by Rafiq and illustrated by Kanimozhi L, the first poem இரண்டாம் ஜாமம் [Translated as: Second instant] is about a melancholic night when the speaker is longing for love as the withers of whispered moon and a lonely butterfly crept through the window offering light and love. The second poem நனைந்தற்று [translated as: Drenched Wind] is a love poem about the meet between a man and woman on a lonely bus stop when the thunder rumbles and the sky cries with the tears of love.

Text from Word, PDF file, website/webpage/blog

Video Repository

<http://dspace.iiti.ac.in:8080/jspui/handle/123456789/9685>

How to cite this book chapter:

Rafiq, M. and Kanimozhi. 2023. Nanaintha Kattaru. In: Menon, N., Shanmugapriya, T., Joseph, J. and Sutton, D. (eds.) *Indian Electronic Literature Anthology: Volume I*. Pp. 37–38. India: IITI KSHIP. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.57004/book1.j>. License: CC BY 4.0.

Contributor Biographies

Mohamed Rafiq endeavours to find aesthetics whatever he comes across in his daily life and convert them into words.

Kanimozhi is an artist. She is interested in modern arts and can draw the words into image.

CHAPTER 10

Lovers' to the Sea

Ali Fathima Shanavaz

Abstract

The article focuses on the problems of middle class Indian Muslim family, where a girl's perspective on marriage is very revolting because she does not see herself as a bride which technically, she is, after her two months marriage. Unmarried girls are perceived as burden in most of the families and society before marriage, nevertheless after marriage she must 'fit in' or survive in a family which pretends to be her family. It is not because she is against it but because this marriage is always seen as a qualification for girls to join socio-economic society. The institution of marriage is a significant part for even society; however, it also makes people vulnerable in many aspects whether economically, physically, and psychologically. Life after marriage is a real deal, as a bride has to inhabit in two worlds which are not complete.

Link to the blog

<https://alifshan95.wordpress.com/>

How to cite this book chapter:

Shanavaz, A. F. 2023. Lovers' to the Sea. In: Menon, N., Shanmugapriya, T., Joseph, J. and Sutton, D. (eds.) *Indian Electronic Literature Anthology: Volume I*. Pp. 39–46. India: IITI KSHIP. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.57004/book1.k>. License: CC BY 4.0.

A Bride's Eye View

(Technically speaking, I am no longer a bride for I have been married to one fine man for almost two months.)

Road to marriage was not easy for me. The 'realisation' that it was way easier to get married than to stay single in a middleclass Indian Muslim household dawned on me pretty late. Although my parents never made too much fuss about me not nodding to marriage proposals, many relatives were 'concerned' about me and they expressed their 'condolences' whenever they could, whether asked or not. At one point of time, I even thought that my marriage could somehow save the world and its people! What a power I wield! Having been touted as "the next big thing" right from First Grade or so, not landing on a 'position' had already taken a toll on me. As I didn't want to carry another 'disqualification' ahead, I decided to get married; thus graduating myself from 'highly educated, unemployed, unmarried woman' to 'highly educated, unemployed woman'. The burden getting lighter was a great relief. Soon things were falling in place... for the people around me. Family and friends were happy for me. And that made me happier. Cycle of Happiness !

In the movie "Charlie", Dulquer Salman fakes his death to see how much he is loved by the people around him. Trust me, I needed no fake obituaries. I had to only get married. When things were falling apart and I had no clue about what to do, my Daddy kissed me to sleep saying, "you will do just fine because I know you, you are my daughter". There had been days when my Mummy fell asleep on prayer mat, making Duas(prayers) for me. My dearest Sister lifted my spirits whenever I was down. My lovely Niece and Nephew insisted me to sleep with them until my marriage. My Younger Sister (cousin by relation) broke into tears even a week before my marriage. She had also written me a heartrending poem which I can not read without flooding my eyes even now. And there are my awesome bunch of friends who called/texted me everyday to keep me happy. Especially the two of you who heard me out, even late at nights, patiently. It is not that I was unaware of the love I have been receiving all these while, but suddenly I was grateful for the people around me.

Marriage happened at the blink of an eye. I have to say this, I looked beautiful on my reception day and wedding day. (Well, who doesn't like self appreciation...I am my greatest fan.) If you think getting married is the toughest task, poor chappy, you are mistaken. Life after marriage is the real deal! I being an ambivert with strong leaning towards introvertism, I find meeting new people the most fatiguing thing ever. More like an encounter! You are introduced to strangers only to learn that they are your new uncles and aunties. Random kids screaming their lungs out, calling you "aunty" from the crowd seem bizarre to me. And you get to spend 'quality time' with your newfound uncles and aunties who have double doctorates in the discipline of "How to Make Someone Uncomfortable through Bodyshaming".

The best ever feeling after marriage, right now, is when you pack your bags to go home. Once in every two weeks, I flee to home only to get

engulfed in my comfort zone. I returned from my home the other day. Although I have a terrible reputation in growing plants, I brought some of the plants which adorn our garden, back at my home. Also brought some crockery sets to bring in my homely touch. Decorated my room with a DIY stuff.

Vessels bought, plants planted and room decorated. But something seems off... There is a void... That void slowly transforms into emptiness. And now I realise, it was not the plants, the crockery sets, the decorations that made my home. It was my people. Suddenly I am left with a grief I can not fathom. There is a lump in my throat.

A bride inhabits two worlds simultaneously – one where you learn to ‘fit in’ without compromising your ideals and the other where you constantly yearn to cling to your ‘single life’. Once you understand that these two worlds are like parallel lines, you start living, somewhere in between these two – at peace with your new role, with nostalgia tugging at the heartstrings.

P.S: A big shoutout to the husband who arranged a study table just the next day of marriage...to the father in law who made arrangements for The Hindu and Thozhilvartha...to the mother in law who takes immense pride in the evolution of Manju Warriar.

N.B: Lose virginity* in marriage, not identity!!

(You may lose it whenever you want. That was meant to be a cheesy punch-line)

Home

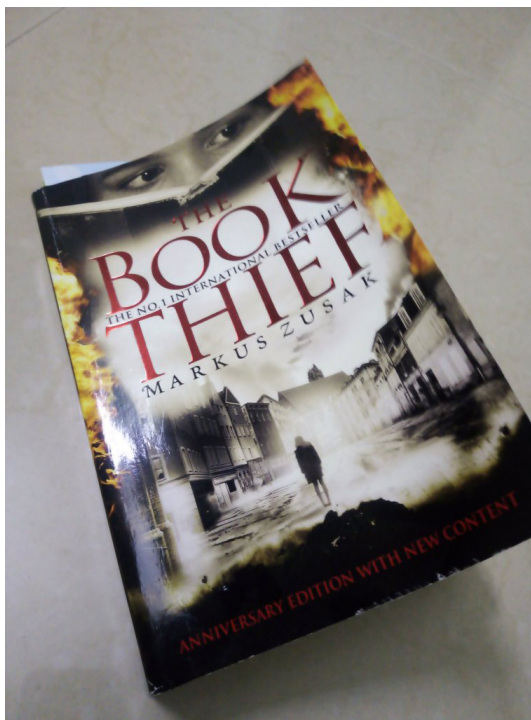
This is to you and me, who, despite being Home to each other, couldn't walk back home together!

This is to you and me, who are condemned to be homesick for the eternity!!

PS: “We were together. I forget the rest” – Walt Whitman

Love from Mumbai!!

With three days to go for my birthday, today I received a surprise gift. Although I was expecting a “surprise gift” from a friend of mine, this one was truly a “surprise” surprise gift. And it was a book – “The Book Thief” by Markus Zusak!! I searched the parcel insideout... Ransacked each and every page of the book. But the sender remained anonymous. Several of my friends know my birthday. But who knows my home address??



The initial surprise slowly gave way to suspicion. “Who would that be?” I started to overthink about what my parents would think about the anonymous sender. With no options left, I sent Whatsapp messages to some of my friends whom i have “blacklisted” Oops!!... Shortlisted. Most of them teased me and some quizzed me about the “secret fan”. Although the idea of a secret fan excited me, my curiosity was about to kill the cat. Wait.. What? A cat.. A Caaaaatt!! I got you girl – Aniboo, the Catwoman. Also Ani Radhesh, the Central Government Officer in Mumbai, in a parallel universe!

Aniboo was my roommate back in Trivandrum. She was perhaps one of the first people I have befriended from outside my school/college. Sharing a room with her was my privilege. Daughter to an Air Force officer, even her books in the cupboard were disciplined, neatly arranged as if they were on a march past! I had “inherited” a super neat room from her and I have handed over the same to my successor. OCD was our thing! She was hardly some three years elder to me but I looked up to her as if she was my Fairy Godmother. Everything she did was so cool. Sometimes she reminded me of my elder sister who is the most kickass lady I have ever seen!

Aniboo is a voracious reader – a bookdragon indeed. A diehard Agatha Christie fan. I loved her more when she spoke about the books she read for I myself have read only a couple of books. Her love for cats was known to

everyone at the hostel. She spoke of Whoopie, her cat as her kid. And it is her love for cats which helped me find the anonymous one! How did she manage to overcome the loss of Whoopie? I still remember a teary eyed Aniboo, narrating the death of Chandhu, her dear departed dog.

She was my 'go – to – everything – person' at the hostel. Somedays she packed me food for the morning class when Tamizhan Chettan messed up my breakfast with food that would not resemble a Dosa even in another hundred years. And some nights we talked endlessly about "Where is the country heading to?" like any responsible Indian citizen. Exam season was the best. We would fling questions at each other, only to fail better! However she was one among the firsts of us to land on a Central Government job and ever since became an inspiration for all of us. I still don't know how much I cried the day she vacated the hostel.

And today, some two since we last met, on receiving the gift all the way from Mumbai, I wish everyone had a roomie like her. An all-weather-friend!

She is one of a kind!

Lovers to the Sea

This time, we choose to go to the seas.

There is love in your heart..

Wind in my hair..

And, there is a Sea between us.

How Far Will You Go For A Cup Of Tea?

Thank you Queen Catherine of Braganza for marrying King Charles 2 of England. Your marriage saved my evenings.

My tryst with teashops began some two and a half years ago when I left home for Trivandrum for my Civil Services preparation. Since my hostel provided only accommodation, food was taken from outside. Although food was okay (it was not!), I was not satisfied. With each passing day, my desperation grew. One week into this 'conundrum', I figured out that it was my tea that I missed. My dearest early morning and evening tea! Back home, tea was never a matter of concern. You wake up, brush your teeth, pray and there you have your morning tea. Since I found out the cause for my desperation, I decided to find a teashop nearest to my hostel.

My quest ended at Annapoornna Teashop, a small teashop run by a *Tamizhan Chettan*, only some 50 meters away from my hostel. That was the beginning of a new normal. Tea from Annapoornna after my Fajr prayer (early morning prayer around 5am – 6am) soon became my habit. A girl in the teashop early in the morning was not a usual scene, I now assume. It took me about a week to

get into the diplomacy of a *chayakkada*. The *Tamizhan Chettan* was a one-in-a-million *chayakkaran*. He made me comfortable there. When others' tea glasses were washed only once, mine was washed twice. Whenever I seemed to be in a hurry, he gave me warm tea instead of the usual hot one even without being asked for it. He might have not realized that he was building me an ARK – an Act of Random Kindness!



My rather uneventful morning tea took a wonderful turn when a guy approached me at Annapoorinna. He introduced himself as an aspirant (generic name for people who have been preparing for Civil Services exam and are currently unemployed) and told me that he has been observing me for a while. It took me some time to gather my senses. Suddenly I was ashamed of my night dress in broad daylight, worried about my sleepy eyes and horrified about my unkempt hair tucked in a headscarf. Although we became friends over a few cups of tea, I couldn't take our friendship to 'another level' because back at the hostel, Soorya bought an electric kettle with the best of intentions – to help her friend make her own tea rather than going out all alone in the dark. Soorya's kettle thus became the death knell of my 'potential lovestory'.

Though my morning tea was in solitude, my evening tea was a grand affair with Reshma, Meenu, Soorya and Anne joining me at the teashop. (This was before the 'advent' Soorya's kettle.) But Anne was my favourite tea-mate. Rain or shine, she was ever ready for a cup of tea. We had some peculiar character traits in common. May be that was why we bonded over tea so well. We soon began to experiment various teashops. Alchemy, Zam Zam, Dewaswom Board Canteen, Tiffin Center and what not! We walked the length and breadth of Nanthancode Junction for a cup of tea.

As we pepped up our exam preparations, there was hardly any time left for an elaborate tea. The once 'notorious' Soorya's kettle soon became a blessing. I made tea for myself and Anne. No one appreciated my tea like she did. She was a fangirl of my tea, literally! With hot tea, snacks and fresh gossips, we recreated the *chayakkada* ambience within our hostel's dining hall.

From some wonderful tea moments, what I learnt is that you can never hurry a tea. You 'have' to slowdown for a perfect cup of tea. May be that's why tea time is often known as a tea break – a break from the ruckus around you and sometimes inside you. Tea wouldn't have been a hot beverage if it wasn't for all these reasons!

NB: This January, Anne married Benson Idickula who doesn't drink tea. Anne... Would you come over for another tea date with me? What about a ginger tea this time??

P. S. Queen Catherine of Braganza, a Portuguese noble woman popularised tea with the English when she married King Charles 2 in 1661. The advent of tea into the hinterlands of India was thus an aftermath of colonisation.

With a heavy heart, I owe you a cup of tea, Queen Catherine!

When the Pandemic Ends...

I am not much of a "wanderlust" person. I am always *at home* at my home in my messy bun, pyjamas (obviously with holes) and no-kajal eyes. The very thought of getting dressed for going out drains me out. But even to my dismay, I am suddenly filled with an urge to **TRAVEL**! Planning a trip when the pandemic is ripe sounds crazy (it actually is). But i see an adventure ahead. Doing inappropriate (read foolish) stuffs have always been my weakness.

I intend to go on a **solo trip**. A solo trip with Paru and Krishna! Wait.. Does that make three of us? A little too crowded for a solo trip? Nevermind. Krishna is a doctor. So she will take care of me if i get sick. And Paru is a worldly wise woman. Her 'general awareness' will help me throughout the journey. But are these reasons enough to take somebody with you, that too for your maiden *solo* trip?? No! An Emphatic No! I just want them to come with me. Period. It's **my** trip and here I call the shots.!

Team is set. But where to? I have a clear answer there too. **PONDICHERRY!** Pondy has always been on the back of my mind. To be precise, right from 2003. That is when superhit movie “*Swapnakood*” released. I was in my second grade. *Karuppinazhagu.. Ooo oo Veluppinazhagu* song was a rage back then. My Atha (grandfather) called it “*shardhil paattu*” (eeww!) because the humming of the song reminded him of people throwing up ‘musically’. The “**Pondicherry Inn**” in the film was my dream home. Every time some of my friends updated their whatsapp statuses with Pondy pics, it rekindled my love for the place.

The only thing I am sure about Pondy is that it was a former French colony. (Well, I am quite good in **GK**, you know.) Paru, the pragmatic one among us, might question me on my illogical plan. But with Krishna’s “*nammak choich chooiichh povaam*” reply, everything will be happily sorted out easily.

A trip to Pondy is suddenly up my sleeve. **A Solo Trip with Three People!!**

The probability of this dream materialising is very less. But I am not sad about that. If this happens, i would be left with wonderful memories. And if it doesn’t, I would still have a **Dream – Forever Endeared, Endlessly Renewed.**

It is good to have something to look forward to when the pandemic is over!

And sometimes I prefer **Dreams to Memories!**

P.S. “*If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.*” African Proverb.

Contributor Biography

Ali Fathima Shanavaz graduated from the University of Kerala, with Bachelors in English Language and Literature in 2017. She took a break after graduation and pursued Civil Services coaching in Thiruvananthapuram. Currently pursuing Post Graduation in English Literature at IGNOU.

CHAPTER I I

আমি

Shivayam Mukherjee

Abstract

The website is an honest effort to pay tribute to the late author, for his work and dedication towards bengali literature. We wish to reconnect to his lost readers and also gather new through this platform.

Link to Work

<http://sudhumonerekho.in/index.php/poems/15/#%E0%A6%86%E0%A6%AE%E0%A6%BF>

আমি

(এই কবিতা পড়ার একটা নিজস্ব ঢং আছে তা সবাই জানে)

বাবুমশাই

"আমি" যাকে বলি আমি, সেটা নাকি মানুষ
কিন্তু তবে অনেক ভেবে পেলাম সঠিক হুস
আমি দুই পদী জীব
আমি দুই পদী জীব, মুখেতে জিভ, বত্রিশটি দাঁত,
হাসার জন্য, পেয়ে ধন্য হেসেই করি মাত।

How to cite this book chapter:

Mukherjee, S. 2023. আমি. In: Menon, N., Shanmugapriya, T., Joseph, J. and Sutton, D. (eds.) *Indian Electronic Literature Anthology: Volume I*. Pp. 47–48. India: IITI KSHIP. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.57004/book1.1>. License: CC BY 4.0.

আমার লেজ নেই ভাই
 আমার লেজ নেই ভাই তাইতো সদাই হাতে নিয়ে পাখা,
 মশা মাছি তাড়িয়ে বেড়াই যখনই পাই দেখা।
 আমার ক্ষুর নেই পায়
 আমার ক্ষুর নেই পায়, তাইতো গো হায়, জুতায় পাটা ঢাকি,
 কাটিনে জাবর আজব খবর পান চিবিয়ে থাকি।
 আমার সিং নেই ভাই
 আমার সিং নেই ভাই, গুঁতাই না তাই, মুখে করি শব্দ,
 শব্দ শুনে, প্রমাদ গোনে তাতেই সবাই জব্দ।
 তবে শুনুন মশাই
 তবে শুনুন মশাই, বলে কসাই চামড়া আমার বাজে,
 জুতা তৈরী হয়না এতে লাগে না তাই কাজে।
 তাই ম'রে গেলে
 তাই ম'রে গেলে পুড়িয়ে ফেলে, সব হ'য়ে যায় ছাই,
 আমার আমি ছাই হয়ে যায়, সেই "আমি" আর নাই।
 তবে একটা কথা
 তবে একটা কথা, জীবন বৃথা না যদি জানাই,
 সভার শেষে বসে, একটু বলে যাই,
 আমি দুঃখীর দুঃখে কাঁদতে পারি
 সুখীর সুখে হাসতে পারি
 রোগির সেবা করতে পারি
 পরের জন্য মরতে পারি
 আমি যে ভাই তাঁরই অংশ জানেন অন্তর্যামী
 এই "আমির 'ই মাঝে আছে আর এক রকম 'আমি'"
 তাকে দেখতে শিখুন, বুঝতে শিখুন, এই দুনিয়া ভাই
 "পাক্ষা আমির" জায়গা আছে "কাঁচা আমির" নাই
 বাবুমশাই ভিক্ষা যে চাই, সবার পদধূলি
 প্রণাম জানাই ভুলতে যে চাই "আমি" "আমি" বুলি।

Contributor Biography

My name is **Shivayan Mukherjee**, a software engineer by profession. Apart from being a coder, I find great interest in traveling and Blogging. The website in discussion here is also a result of my passion for Blogging. I am the grandson of Late Mukti Prokas Mukherjee, the author of the writings of the website 'sudhumonetekho.in' and also its creator.

CHAPTER 12

Kaashi: The city that wasn't!

Samya Brata Roy

Abstract

The blog is a candid description of an unusual journey to Kaashi, the land of pilgrimage and salvation. In contrast to the common rhetoric around the land, the blogger attempts to capture different, unexplored facets of the city especially in the mundane activities of its occupants. The blog interwoven with ironical pictures, metaphors, references to literary figures and celebrities (in the most unusual places!) is a unique take on Kaasi, exploring the ironies of both the place and the humans who inhabit it. Through vivid imageries and descriptions, the blogger manages to capture the attention of the readers and takes them along the journey only to find that it ended too quick.

Link to Work

<https://thepenarchist.wordpress.com/2018/10/06/kaashi-the-city-that-wasnt/>

Kaashi, or Varanasi, is one of those places to surely feature on anyone's Freudian bucket list.

It is one of the oldest cities in the world and it makes sure you understand that while roaming about in its organic lanes and by lanes and by by by lanes and so on. My last trip to this place wasn't my first, but I can say that it was the first time I looked at it through my own eyes. I won't be docu-menting the various places of "so-called" worship because everyone does that.

How to cite this book chapter:

Brata Roy, S. 2023. The city that wasn't!. In: Menon, N., Shanmugapriya, T., Joseph, J. and Sutton, D. (eds.) *Indian Electronic Literature Anthology: Volume I*. Pp. 49–54.

India: IITI KSHIP. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.57004/book1.m>. License: CC BY 4.0.

The hotel where we stayed this time was a remarkable one (hold your hats folks!). It made me wonder about a lot of things, most of all, I wondered if Dante had decided to include the 10th circle of hell, it would have been something like our place! Sounds Warm, doesn't it?

I am not really a shutterbug, but an entire canvas of myriad experiences made me want to document this unusual journey.

I have heard a lot of talks, especially from the foreigners that they come to Varanasi to "find" them-selves! This time I realised a teeny tiny bit of how that happens. One fine evening, I found myself sulking in the audience of the evening prayer, which happens at the ghats. Therefore, I decided to take a walk by the ghats and explore the literal margin of this antique city. I jammed my ear-phones in and started to walk. What song was I listening to you ask? Oh, I was listening to American Idiot by Green Day. Is this Globalisation? Multiculturalism? Post Modernism? Frankly, I don't care.

Look at this boat, sailing the lands forever!



If you stand with your back towards the river and look up towards the skyline, believe me, for a moment I thought I was there in favelas of Brazil!



Nature, I believe, has its own rhetoric. A place called “juice bar” is promoting their brand by show-ing the way to the burning ghat of all places. I am not going to elaborate on this beautiful irony and destroy your poetry.



Let me remind you, this graffiti is in Varanasi, beside the Vishwanath temple, on the lap of the Ganga.

I'm j-u-s-t saying!



These two holy souls are here seen drawing their daily dose of inspiration from a heavenly conflict between Ray Mysterio and Randy Orton.



I have never had the guts to visit a burial ground, you can call me a coward in that respect. But, here, an inexplicable urge led me on towards that “fatal” place. Is this the force that nature has? Was this what Wordsworth meant?

I kept moving, felt more alive as I did. And when I reached I felt a wave of souls moving through my body. Scores of logs were stacked on all the sides, as the vehicles for the dead. Looking at them made me wonder, someday some log would be mine too!

I don’t really know if dusty the real term to describe the place, because the dust has- me, you, and everyone: the biggest family on earth.



Bodies piled on another, wrapped in white, all set to be launched into eternity. A “grave” situation you’d wonder, right? I am not sure if I can say that because as the enlightenment was dawning upon me, my castle of glass was immediately shattered by a nonchalant tea seller nasal screaming “lebuuuu chایی” (lemon tea). Oh yes, who wouldn’t want refresh-ment while disposing of the dead!

The power of this place was such that I wanted to go there day after day to drink life from the dead.

Also, every damn creepy house I saw above a few flights of steps, I thought that it was the abode of the great MOCHLI BABA! ALAS! I never found it. Sad.

I have finally reached a moo point



amar kotha ti furolo
note gaach ti murolo

By the way this was the most stylish guy I found there:



oh, the swagger!

All the pictures as you have already noticed are shaky. No! I am not imitating Mrinal Sen or something. It's just that I wanted to give a feel of the bustling life through these pictures. The city was moving and so was I. This definitely not all, from a personal perspective, this trip also featured one of the best co-incidences I have ever seen in my life. I couldn't believe something so poetic could ever happen to me! What the co-incidence you wonder? Maybe, I will tell you someday over coffee, but it has to be your treat!

I hope you enjoyed this trip.

Contributor Biography

Samya Brata Roy (He/Him) is currently in the final semester of his M.A in English Literature from The English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad. His interests lie in and around the modalities of Digital Narratives.

He has been writing (read: rambling) here: thepenarchist.wordpress.com for the last five years and has almost 80 entries at present. He leads the SIG on Digital Objects and Media at DHARTI (dhdharti.in), works as a transcriber with The Canterbury Tales Project and as a database contributor with Electronic Literature Knowledge Base | ELMCIP. He feels deeply about accessibility, inclusion, pedagogy and cracking exceptionally poor jokes.

CHAPTER 13

YELLOW FLOWER POWER

Ottar Oramstad

Abstract

YELLOW FLOWER POWER (2017) is the fifth film by Norwegian concrete poet Ottar Oramstad. Here again viewers encounter letter-carpets and a yellow y he identifies with. The work is based on slogans and song-titles from different countries at the end of the Sixties, presented in their original language, intentionally without translation.

The texts are combined with photographs of sculptures from the Vigeland Park in Oslo/Norway, where Oramstad lives and shot the naked people exposed in stone and iron by sculptor Gustav Vigeland (1869–1943). This park is the largest in the world based on one artist and contains more than 200 works.

The film also includes live video-footage of Charles Lloyd playing saxophone in front of a huge painting by Norwegian expressionist painter Edvard Munch (friend/enemy of Vigeland), as well as an unpublished photo of the young Mick Jagger, both shot in Oslo by Oramstad.

Like in earlier works, Oramstad uses a strong sound in the very start for creating a period of silence at the beginning of the film.

The animation is created in close collaboration between artist Margarida Paiva and Oramstad.

How to cite this book chapter:

Oramstad, O. 2023. YELLOW FLOWER POWER. In: Menon, N., Shanmugapriya, T., Joseph, J. and Sutton, D. (eds.) *Indian Electronic Literature Anthology: Volume I*. Pp. 55–56. India: IITI KSHIP. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.57004/book1.n>. License: CC BY 4.0.

YELLOW FLOWER POWER invites viewers for an individual experience dependant upon the viewer's language background and tolerance towards non-translation.

Video HD 16:9, duration: 07:17

Animation: Margarida Paiva

Sound: Hallvard W Hagen & Jens P Nilsen

Concrete poetry, cameras, piano/strings and production by director Ottar Ormstad

Text from Word, PDF file, website/webpage/blog

Video Repository Link

<http://dspace.iti.ac.in:8080/jspui/handle/123456789/9686>

Contributor Biography

Ottar Ormstad (yellowpoetry.com) was born and lives in Oslo/Norway. As a concrete poet, Ormstad has been an author of electronic literature since 2006. In his works, Ormstad extends his originally print-based practice by moving to the realm of the networked programmable space. His works usually include electronic music or own piano improvisations, visual backgrounds such as self-produced b/w (darkroom-) photography, or live video footage, on which he stages his poetry. In his playful poetry, a yellow “y” usually serves as “main character”. In print, as well as in his video-based works, Ormstad often presents his concrete poetry as what he calls “letter carpets” which create effects known from op art. His works have been internationally screened and exhibited as part of experimental film and electronic literature festivals and conferences and are downloaded in 140 countries.

CHAPTER 14

A Sonnet, Fiction Poetry, and A rap “Call me Rapper”

Akash Yadav

Abstract

My first entry is a sonnet I wrote in order to make the reader feel ever more strengthened. Adverse times make one feel weak but once we know that we have someone by our side, fear gradually fades away. This sonnet claims that one is never alone really; they always have Almighty by their side helping them through their struggles.

My second work is actually a story told in rhymes. I had written it around Halloween time. While it starts building up a gothic atmosphere, it still ends on a much merrier note with a jolly Halloween greeting. One important message implicitly communicated by the poem is that ghosts aren't real.

My last entry is a rap. The rhyme scheme I have followed in this rap is something I would particularly like to draw your attention towards. Both the verses follow AAAA rhyme scheme for quite a good period of time. The last verse exhibits such AAAA rhyme scheme for straight 15 lines.

Link to Work

Never Alone

<https://allpoetry.com/poem/11071737-Never-Alone-by-AkashYadav>

How to cite this book chapter:

Yadav, A. 2023. A Sonnet, Fiction Poetry, and A rap “Call me Rapper”. In: Menon, N., Shanmugapriya, T., Joseph, J. and Sutton, D. (eds.) *Indian Electronic Literature Anthology: Volume I*. Pp. 57–63. India: IITI KSHIP. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.57004/book1.o>. License: CC BY 4.0.

“H-e-l-e-n”

<https://allpoetry.com/poem/11047435-H-e-l-e-n-by-AkashYadav>

RAP- CALL ME RAPPER!

<https://iitianraps.wordpress.com/2017/04/15/rap-call-me-rapper/>

Never Alone

Thee laid me down
Onto this planet
Will never let me down
I claim via this sonnet

Even in the darkest times
When insecure I'd feel
Echoing would be Thy hymns
My wounds, they'd heal

Alone, whenever I'd feel
The truth, at last, will reveal

The path I've been walking alone
Would bear two pairs of footsteps
One would be my own
& the other- Thy, helping me through laps

“H-e-l-e-n”

Rohn, the best of my mates
Asked me a day out
To check out our fates
Although I'd pretty many a doubt

But still I reached out
To the village he asked me
He did make me a shout
Turned back, saw him with glee

Among the many cottages
A small worn one, I could see
Rotting there for ages

'cause it couldn't flee
No ray of light
Had ever touched it
Nor it came from the site
Not from a single slit
But I did never know
The same was our destiny
Where even the wind'd flow
With a sound, mini

In we both walked
& had a seat
With the room locked
& a table in the mid, neat

Rohn lit up the candle
& took out a board
I'd just put off one sandal
When he heard, as I roared

Damn frightened & angry, now I was
The board being Ouija was the cause

Anyhow, he convinced me
& opened it up
Only his face had a glee
I could only hiccup

Talking to "them"
As he started
Merely could I- "ehem"
Voice from me like parted

"Hello", the very word it did spell
I- I was experiencing the hell

Rohn, the brave mate
Asked them the name
But for me, it was just the date
To end over my game

"H-e-l-e-n"- the next moment, it spelled
As the planchette moved
His hand over it held

Next, the killer's name he did ask
This seemed a mighty task
As planchette didn't move
She too didn't know, it did prove
But what we didn't get
Was the reason she was still
Where- her fate she met

The same he asked next
& the answer left me even more perplexed

A voice now we could hear
That came from nowhere

"Move out & turn right
To the graveyard u'll reach
The reason for my plight
The place will teach"

Rohn- he left the chair
All of a sudden
& I- "My heart would need a repair
From the mechanic, Dr. Budden"

'Her' words, he followed
& Rohn, I followed

The very first grave
The name "Helen"
It did engrave
Breathtaken, now I was
Defied were now all the scientific laws

"The answer, you've got??"
Our answer, "No"
"Just look back & a lot
Of ur doubts shall go"

Frozen, now we were-

The only reason being fear
Of 'Helen' being near

A little pat, I did feel
Looked back & the truth did reveal

A figure, in the dark stood
But her face, I suddenly understood
Helen, yes, she was
My very own friend
After a deep pause
Followed a laugh, that did never end

The two good mates started-

"The ghost's voice, u just did meet
Now have a good seat
'cause it's time for trick or treat
After this special greet"

The Halloween treat the way they did give
In my memories, it will always live

RAP- CALL ME RAPPER!

You gotta hear whatever I chatter
Until I leave y'all to be a mere clapper
You know 'em by the thing that they do better
I do this the best so (call me rapper)×3
Better call me rapper

Haven't walked my road
You just did see it, so I just plea it
To you to not pee it,
Let it be; it don't wanna see it
You might have seen me won
But you didn't see me moarn
My road it was, I walked it alone
Wasn't even prone to my own clone
Wasn't well known, but that's my zone!
& Now as the time's gone
You want me to change my tone
But wait! You're gettin' hasted!
It isn't my own
Have raised it!
Wasn't in me sown
When on that road, noone'd ever shown
The guts to hear me groan in alone
Amongst all this was I made to grown
The mercy in me, amidst it's all gone

& You?

You still sit here to hear what I chatter
 Until I leave y'all to be a mere clapper
 You know 'em by the thing that they do better
 I do this the best so (call me rapper)×3
 Better call me rapper

& Still you wanna chase
 On how can I ace this
 You wanna test my pace
 So why not taste this-

Now that I know you'll be that bird
 To lead the flock that calls me a nerd
 Damn! Don't ya just follow that herd
 You know it or not but you're sounding absurd
 'cause when I pull the dirt off my shirt
 & sit down to rap, well you don't assert
 "See! His rhyme is creamy as dessert"
 & you think I get hurt??
 Nah! I know I'm not a freakin' expert
 But at least, can advert
 Whatever I write right from my heart
 The words may not seem to flirt
 But at least they seem to me to be pert
 The only single way to expel the heart
 Outta the gurt of this introvert

Contributor Biography

Aakash is an innovative engineer with passion to build new and impactful stuff. He graduated from the Indian Institute of Technology Indore with a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering in August 2020. He has had a passion for writing poems and raps in English as well as Hindi since his 10th standard. He writes several kinds of genres when it comes to poems in English such as sonnets, free verses and especially loves to wrap stories in rhymes. He also loves challenging himself to write in very complex rhyming schemes. He is also not hesitant in combining his passion for writing with that for technology. During the second year of his undergraduate studies at IIT Indore, he had also built an android app which precisely was a platform for publishing the best of his works. Apart from literature, he loves to work in nanotechnology, and also has experience of working as a deep learning engineer intern. His

experience abroad in Germany for his bachelor's thesis in physics at RWTH Aachen is indeed something that helped him gain a new perspective towards life and be more grateful for the smallest of the things that humans have. All in all, he is an experimental physicist who loves to work at the intersection of software and hardware, besides his love for literature.

CHAPTER 15

Taken

C. Kavya Sajeev

Abstract

The poem “Taken” is a depiction of a woman’s anger towards her deity whom she blames for the loss of her child. Through the poem we get to know that the woman has gone through a miscarriage and is finding it difficult to come to terms with it, as she reminisces the time she had with her unborn baby with deep sorrow and pain. The woman holds her deity as the wrongdoer in the poem for taking away something that it had no right over and in turn making her lose her grasp on reality as she spirals into depression. In the poem the protagonist tells us about the many steps she had taken in order to have a future with her soon to be born child, how now they are all insignificant, and the thoughts and objects which were to bring her at most joy and pleasure have now turned into sore reminders of a depressing accident. The woman makes it clear that what has taken place is unlawful for she was the only one who had any right over the child and no one else could take it away from her. She is in a conflict with her own beliefs and finds her self trying to find a proper justification for the things that have taken place.

Link to Video Repository

<http://dspace.iiti.ac.in:8080/jspui/handle/123456789/9687>

How to cite this book chapter:

Kavya Sajeev, C. 2023. Taken. In: Menon, N., Shanmugapriya, T., Joseph, J. and Sutton, D. (eds.) *Indian Electronic Literature Anthology: Volume I*. Pp. 65–66. India: IITI KSHIP. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.57004/book1.p>. License: CC BY 4.0.

Contributor Biography

C. Kavya Sajeev is a 16 years old writer currently part of multiple anthologies. Her work has also been published in her school's yearly magazine. She aspires to publish her own book someday. Currently studying in 12th standard, she wishes to study English literature to pursue her passion of writing. Through writing poems and various pieces, she gives meaning and life to her thoughts and feelings. She thinks the more relatable and authentic a poem is, the more beautiful it seems like the listener not only enjoys hearing the poem but is able to understand where the poet is coming from. Pomes gives her a medium to be heard by the society, to be able to connect with them at a personal and emotional level. Other than poems Kavya also takes keen interest in writing monologues and stories. Her inquisitiveness to acquire more knowledge about the world and the way it is fuels her passion. In her writings she mostly represents the realistic world where there is grief, temper, rejection and so on, by doing so she tries to make her writings more humane. She does not believe in a world filled with rainbows and unicorns instead believes in a one where you need to make do with what you have got, be contented with whatever you have and find beauty in the world we live in.

CHAPTER 16

Him and I and You

Jyothi Justin

Abstract

The poems *Him* and *I and You* were written in the years 2016 and 2017 respectively during my undergraduate days. The poems share the admiration and love for an imaginary romantic interest. They stem both out of a sense of insecurity and knowledge that the other does not belong to the speaker. Yet the later poem is written from a general perspective without assigning any gender to the speaker and the listener/reader. This poem also has the potential to transcend romantic interpretations to represent a more innocent or even complex human relationships. Though never a great admirer of poems, I had to read a number of poems for my coursework. This together with the teenage infatuations prompted me to undertake the task of writing these short writings that I love to label as poetry. I had just begun blogging then and had written mainly book and film reviews. This was my first creative writing attempt for the blog in which I used pen-name 'Nanditha' (after the famous Malayali poet). I chose to add these writings online as it gave me a sense of security (being anonymous then but now I have added my real name as well). By publishing online, I was also able to receive criticism and comments from my close ones with whom I had shared my writings.

Link to Work

<https://nandithaspoems.blogspot.com/>

How to cite this book chapter:

Justin, J. 2023. Him and I and You. In: Menon, N., Shanmugapriya, T., Joseph, J. and Sutton, D. (eds.) *Indian Electronic Literature Anthology: Volume I*. Pp. 67–68.
India: IITI KSHIP. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.57004/book1.q>. License: CC BY 4.0.

I and You

I know u don't belong to me yet I crave for u
I know your song is not for me yet I sing for u
I know we dont make a pair yet I long to be with u
I know we dont have a history yet I love u
I know we belong to different worlds yet I see u
I know you dont know me yet I know u
I know your smile is not for me yet I crave to be its reason

Him

I see a sparkle in his eyes
It makes me blossom amply
Not sure what the genesis is
I just want it to last infinitely

Contributor Biography

Jyothi Justin is a second year PhD Scholar with the Digital Humanities and Publishing Research Group at IIT Indore, India. She hails from an English and Comparative Literature background. She completed her Master's on the same from Pondicherry University. Born and raised in a small coastal village of Kollam (Kerala, India), she is interested in exploring the intersections between literary works and digital media. She is also interested in using digital mapping tools for literary research. She loves to read fictional works though she seldom attempts to write. She maintains a blog entitled "Nandhitha's blog", which she began writing while pursuing her undergraduate programme in English Language and Literature. Her blog contains mainly her random thoughts on life, book and film reviews along with a section that she loves to call "poems". The blog is not yet made public but it will soon be fully functional. Besides her interest in literature and films, Jyothi is also interested in gender studies and gender movements, especially feminism and queer studies. As a result, she is also interested in films and other visual narratives with similar themes. This is her first creative writing publication.

CHAPTER 17

Samaniyam Sangalpamai

Annanya SV

Abstract

சாமானியம் சங்கல்பமாய [translated as: Determined Individuality] is a ferocious call of individuality in a time when autonomy of individual thoughts and actions are questioned through societal norms. The poet calls for a near future where humanity can think through things with heart and feel things with brain.

சாமானியம் சங்கல்பமாய்

பிடித்து நிற்க வேண் டுமாம்
பண் புகளல்ல அவே பாேங்கள்!
கற்றுக் ககாள்ள வேண் டுமாம்
ேழக்கமல்ல அது ேன் மம்!
பழகிக் ககாள்ள வேண் டுமாம்
சமத்துேமல்ல அது சாதியம்!
நறுக்கி விட வேண் டுமாம்
நகங்களல்ல அவே சிறகுகள்!
கட்டுக்குள் வேக்க வேண்டுமாம்
வகாபமல்ல அது கரெளத்திரம்!

How to cite this book chapter:

Annanya, S. V. 2023. Samaniyam Sangalpamai. In: Menon, N., Shanmugapriya, T., Joseph, J. and Sutton, D. (eds.) *Indian Electronic Literature Anthology: Volume I*. Pp. 69–70. India: IITI KSHIP. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.57004/book1.r>. License: CC BY 4.0.

ஒழித்து விட வேண்டுமாம்
 கற்பவனகளல்ல அவே கனவுகள்!
 உவடத்து விட வேண்டுமாம்
 அபத்தமல்ல அது சத்தியம்!
 கவளந்து விட வேண் டுமாம்
 அணியல்ல அது மனிதம்!
 புவதத்து விட வேண் டுமாம்
 ஆணைமல்ல அது சுயம்!
 விளங்கிக் ககாள்ள வேண் டுமாம்
 விளக்கம் ஒன் றும் வேண் டுமாம்!
 ஒரு நாள் ேரும்
 அன் றிது நிச்சயம் விளங்கும்!
 இதயம்ககாண் டு சிந்திக்க முடிந்தால்!
 மதிககாண் டு உணர முடிந்தால்!