

V.K. Dadhich

Anthology

This document is a de facto collection of poems, stories, prose, painting, and anything artistic that I love or am affected by it or has impacted me or has influenced me.

Novels/Non-fiction —

- [Siddhartha by Herman Hesse](#)
- [Atlas Shrugged by Ayn Rand](#)
- [The Fountainhead by Ayn Rand](#)
- [Illusions by Richard Bach](#)
- [Jonathan Livingston Seagull by Richard Bach](#)
- [Rage by Richard Bachman](#)
- [Ignited Minds by Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam](#)
- [Life Of Pi by Yann Martel](#)
- [The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho](#)
- [The Diary Of A Young Girl by Anne Frank](#)
- [Have A Little Faith by Mitch Albom](#)
- [Tuesdays With Morrie by Mitch Albom](#)
- [The Five People You Meet In Heaven by Mitch Albom](#)
- [The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald](#)
- [The little prince by Antoine de Saint-Exupery](#)

Poems —

Look well to this day by Kalidasa

Look to this day:
For it is life, the very life of life.
In its brief course
Lie all the verities and realities of your existence.
The bliss of growth,
The glory of action,
The splendour of achievement
Are but experiences of time.

For yesterday is but a dream
And tomorrow is only a vision;
And today well-lived, makes
Yesterday a dream of happiness
And every tomorrow a vision of hope.
Look well therefore to this day;
Such is the salutation to the ever-new dawn!

Jaguar by Ted Hughes

The apes yawn and adore their fleas in the sun.
The parrots shriek as if they were on fire, or strut
Like cheap tarts to attract the stroller with the nut.
Fatigued with indolence, tiger and lion

Lie still as the sun. The boa-constrictor's coil
Is a fossil. Cage after cage seems empty, or
Stinks of sleepers from the breathing straw.
It might be painted on a nursery wall.

But who runs like the rest past these arrives
At a cage where the crowd stands, stares,
mesmerized,
As a child at a dream, at a jaguar hurrying enraged
Through prison darkness after the drills of his eyes

On a short fierce fuse. Not in boredom—
The eye satisfied to be blind in fire,
By the bang of blood in the brain deaf the ear—
He spins from the bars, but there's no cage to him

More than to the visionary his cell:
His stride is wildernesses of freedom:
The world rolls under the long thrust of his heel.
Over the cage floor the horizons come.

Hawk Roosting by Ted Hughes

I sit in the top of the wood, my eyes closed.
Inaction, no falsifying dream
Between my hooked head and hooked feet:
Or in sleep rehearse perfect kills and eat.

The convenience of the high trees!
The air's buoyancy and the sun's ray
Are of advantage to me;
And the earth's face upward for my inspection.

My feet are locked upon the rough bark.
It took the whole of Creation
To produce my foot, my each feather:
Now I hold Creation in my foot

Or fly up, and revolve it all slowly –
I kill where I please because it is all mine.
There is no sophistry in my body:
My manners are tearing off heads –

The allotment of death.
For the one path of my flight is direct
Through the bones of the living.
No arguments assert my right:

The sun is behind me.
Nothing has changed since I began.
My eye has permitted no change.
I am going to keep things like this.

The Raven by Edgar Allan Poe

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered,
weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten
lore—
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there
came a tapping,
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my
chamber door.
“’Tis some visitor,” I muttered, “tapping at my
chamber door—
Only this and nothing more.”
Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak
December;
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost
upon the floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to
borrow
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the
lost Lenore—
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels
name Lenore—
Nameless here for evermore.
And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple
curtain
Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never
felt before;
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood
repeating
“’Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my
chamber door—
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber
door;—
This it is and nothing more.”

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,
"Sir," said I, "or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,
That I scarce was sure I heard you"—here I opened wide the door;—
Darkness there and nothing more.
Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before;
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, "Lenore?"
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, "Lenore!"—
Merely this and nothing more.
Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,
Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.
"Surely," said I, "surely that is something at my window lattice;
Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore—
Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore;—
'Tis the wind and nothing more!"
Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,

In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days
of yore;
Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute
stopped or stayed he;
But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my
chamber door—
Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my
chamber door—
Perched, and sat, and nothing more.
Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into
smiling,
By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance
it wore,
“Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou,” I said,
“art sure no craven,
Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the
Nightly shore—
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night’s
Plutonian shore!”
Quoth the Raven “Nevermore.”
Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear
discourse so plainly,
Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy
bore;
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human
being
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his
chamber door—
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his
chamber door,
With such name as “Nevermore.”
But the Raven, sitting lonely on the placid bust,
spoke only
That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did
outpour.

Nothing farther then he uttered—not a feather then
he fluttered—
Till I scarcely more than muttered “Other friends
have flown before—
On the morrow he will leave me, as my Hopes have
flown before.”
Then the bird said “Nevermore.”
Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly
spoken,
“Doubtless,” said I, “what it utters is its only stock
and store
Caught from some unhappy master whom
unmerciful Disaster
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one
burden bore—
Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden
bore
Of ‘Never—nevermore’.”
But the Raven still beguiling all my fancy into smiling,
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird,
and bust and door;
Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to
linking
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of
yore—
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and
ominous bird of yore
Meant in croaking “Nevermore.”
This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable
expressing
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my
bosom’s core;
This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease
reclining
On the cushion’s velvet lining that the lamp-light
gloated o’er,

But whose velvet-violet lining with the lamp-light
gloating o'er,
She shall press, ah, nevermore!
Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed
from an unseen censer
Swung by Seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the
tufted floor.
"Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee—by these
angels he hath sent thee
Respite—respite and nepenthe from thy memories
of Lenore;
Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe and forget this
lost Lenore!"
Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."
"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird
or devil!—
Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed
thee here ashore,
Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land
enchanted—
On this home by Horror haunted—tell me truly, I
implore—
Is there—is there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me,
I implore!"
Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."
"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird
or devil!
By that Heaven that bends above us—by that God
we both adore—
Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant
Aidenn,
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels
name Lenore—
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels
name Lenore."
Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."

“Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!” I
shrieked, upstarting—
“Get thee back into the tempest and the Night’s
Plutonian shore!
Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul
hath spoken!
Leave my loneliness unbroken!—quit the bust above
my door!
Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form
from off my door!”
Quoth the Raven “Nevermore.”
And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is
sitting
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber
door;
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon’s that
is dreaming,
And the lamp-light o’er him streaming throws his
shadow on the floor;
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating
on the floor
Shall be lifted—nevermore!

Do not stand at my grave and weep by Mary Frye

Do not stand at my grave and weep
I am not there; I do not sleep.
I am a thousand winds that blow,
I am the diamond glints on snow,
I am the sun on ripened grain,
I am the gentle autumn rain.
When you awaken in the morning's hush
I am the swift uplifting rush
Of quiet birds in circled flight.
I am the soft stars that shine at night.
Do not stand at my grave and cry,
I am not there; I did not die.

The Solitary Reaper by William Wordsworth

Behold her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the Vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.
No Nightingale did ever chaunt
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.
Will no one tell me what she sings?—
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago:
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again?
Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending;—
I listened, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

There is no fear by Subramanya Bharati

The people of this world, if against they stand,
There is no fear, there is no fear, nothing like fear.

Although, we are counted cheap and rebuked,
There is no fear , there is no fear , nothing like fear.

If to beg for food, would be a life attained,
There is no fear , there is no fear , nothing like fear.

Loveable possessions if, are lost,
There is no fear , there is no fear , nothing like fear.

If clothed bosomed damsels, cast their eyes
There is no fear , there is no fear , nothing like fear.

Poison in the mouth, if fed by friends
There is no fear , there is no fear , nothing like fear.

Shielded armies, if to attack approach
There is no fear , there is no fear , nothing like fear.

On the acme of my head, if the sky did crash and
plummet down
There is no fear , there is no fear , nothing like fear.

Say not the struggle nought availeth
by Arthur Hugh Clough

Say not the struggle nought availeth,
The labour and the wounds are vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light,
In front the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright.

The road not taken by Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

Do not go gentle into that good night
by Dylan Thomas

Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Though wise men at their end know dark is right,
Because their words had forked no lightning they
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright
Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight,
And learn, too late, they grieve it on its way,
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

And you, my father, there on the sad height,
Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray.
Do not go gentle into that good night.
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Daffodils by William Wordsworth

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

The Ballad of Father Gilligan by W.B. Yeats

The old priest Peter Gilligan
Was weary night and day;
For half his flock were in their beds,
Or under green sods lay.

Once, while he nodded on a chair,
At the moth-hour of eve,
Another poor man sent for him,
And he began to grieve.

'I have no rest, nor joy, nor peace,
For people die and die';
And after cried he, 'God forgive!
My body spake, not I!'

He knelt, and leaning on the chair
He prayed and fell asleep;
And the moth-hour went from the fields,
And stars began to peep.

They slowly into millions grew,
And leaves shook in the wind;
And God covered the world with shade,
And whispered to mankind.

Upon the time of sparrow-chirp
When the moths came once more.
The old priest Peter Gilligan
Stood upright on the floor.

'Mavrone, mavrone! the man has died
While I slept on the chair';
He roused his horse out of its sleep,
And rode with little care.

He rode now as he never rode,
By rocky lane and fen;
The sick man's wife opened the door:
'Father! you come again!'

'And is the poor man dead?' he cried.
'He died an hour ago.'
The old priest Peter Gilligan
In grief swayed to and fro.

'When you were gone, he turned and died
As merry as a bird.'
The old priest Peter Gilligan
He knelt him at that word.

'He Who hath made the night of stars
For souls who tire and bleed,
Sent one of His great angels down
To help me in my need.

'He Who is wrapped in purple robes,
With planets in His care,
Had pity on the least of things
Asleep upon a chair.'

The Stone by Wilfrid Wilson Gibson

“And will you cut a stone for him,
To set above his head?
And will you cut a stone for him—
A stone for him?” she said.

Three days before, a splintered rock
Had struck her lover dead—
Had struck him in the quarry dead,
Where, careless of a warning call,
He loitered, while the shot was fired—
A lively stripling, brave and tall,
And sure of all his heart desired . . .
A flash, a shock,
A rumbling fall . . .
And, broken 'neath the broken rock,
A lifeless heap, with face of clay,
And still as any stone he lay,
With eyes that saw the end of all.

I went to break the news to her:
And I could hear my own heart beat
With dread of what my lips might say;
But some poor fool had sped before;
And, flinging wide her father's door,
Had blurted out the news to her,
Had struck her lover dead for her,
Had struck the girl's heart dead in her,
Had struck life, lifeless, at a word,
And dropped it at her feet:
Then hurried on his witless way,
Scarce knowing she had heard.

And when I came, she stood alone—
A woman, turned to stone:

And, though no word at all she said,
I knew that all was known.

Because her heart was dead,
She did not sigh nor moan.

His mother wept:
She could not weep.

Her lover slept:
She could not sleep.

Three days, three nights,
She did not stir:

Three days, three nights,
Were one to her,
Who never closed her eyes
From sunset to sunrise,
From dawn to evenfall—
Her tearless, staring eyes,
That, seeing naught, saw all.

The fourth night when I came from work,
I found her at my door.

“And will you cut a stone for him?”

She said: and spoke no more:

But followed me, as I went in,

And sank upon a chair;

And fixed her grey eyes on my face,

With still, unseeing stare.

And, as she waited patiently,

I could not bear to feel

Those still, grey eyes that followed me,

Those eyes that plucked the heart from me,

Those eyes that sucked the breath from me

And curdled the warm blood in me,

Those eyes that cut me to the bone,

And cut my marrow like cold steel.

And so I rose and sought a stone;
And cut it smooth and square:
And, as I worked, she sat and watched,
Beside me, in her chair.
Night after night, by candlelight,
I cut her lover's name:
Night after night, so still and white,
And like a ghost she came;
And sat beside me, in her chair,
And watched with eyes aflame.

She eyed each stroke,
And hardly stirred:
she never spoke
A single word:
And not a sound or murmur broke
The quiet, save the mallet stroke.
With still eyes ever on my hands,
With eyes that seemed to burn my hands,
My wincing, overwearyed hands,
She watched, with bloodless lips apart,
And silent, indrawn breath:
And every stroke my chisel cut,
Death cut still deeper in her heart:
The two of us were chiselling,
Together, I and Death.

And when at length my job was done,
And I had laid the mallet by,
As if, at last, her peace were won,
She breathed his name, and, with a sigh,
Passed slowly through the open door:
And never crossed my threshold more.

Next night I laboured late, alone,
To cut her name upon the stone.

Joy and Pleasure by W.H. Davies

Now, Joy is born of parents poor,
And pleasure of our richer kind;
Though Pleasure's free, she cannot sing
As sweet a song as joy confined.
Pleasure's a Moth, that sleeps by day
And dances by false glare at night;
But Joy's a Butterfly, that loves
To spread its wings in Nature's light.
Joy's like a Bee that gently sucks
Away on blossoms its sweet hour;
But pleasure's like a greedy wasp,
That plums and cherries would devour.
Joy's like a Lark that lives alone,
Whose ties are very strong, though few;
But pleasure like a Cuckoo roams,
Makes much acquaintance, no friends true.
Joy from her heart doth sing at home,
With little care if others hear;
But pleasure then is cold and dumb,
And sings and laughs with strangers near.

Short Stories —

- [The selfish giant](#)
- [The gift of the magi](#)
- [Lottery](#)
- [Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption](#)
- [Two friends](#)
- [A Christmas Carol](#)

Clear Sky by Abbai

THE LUNCH CARRIER WAS NEVER HEAVY when she returned from school. Up and down she swung it as she walked home ... down the avenue lined with wide-spreading trees. She lived in a place that was neither town nor village. But she had to walk to school alright, every day. Maragatham and Thangam who walked with her always ragged her about the way she swung her hands.

Susai Manickam, who lived near their school, walked back with them when he had some work in their neighbourhood. His father was a cobbler. Sometimes he got Susai to deliver one or two pairs of slippers. Susai then put the slippers into a bag and accompanied the girls. She twirled the lunch carrier; he the bag. They would all burst into laughter.

Some days, if Susai was in the mood, there was music. He had a loud, clear voice. "Thayin manikodi paareer...." He would begin. Sometimes he sang "Sinthanaisai manamae", in Sirgazhi Govindarajan's voice. Or else, he held her carrier in one hand and beat time on it with the other to the tune of "Kelungal tharappadum, thattungal thirakkapadum, thedungal kidaikkum enraar, Yesu thedungal kidaikkum enraar". The girls sang along.

But the ruckus lasted only till the end of the shady avenue. After that, Susai took another route into the village. He had told her once that he had to stand at the gate and lean over to deliver the slippers. Susai's father made good, strong slippers. The seams ran straight and neat. In fact, he had made the slippers she was wearing. They had thin strips stitched delicately together. Whoever collected the slippers from Susai always advised him: "Yellai, live up to your father's reputation, be a good boy." Susai didn't like this. "Why must I also stitch slippers like my father?" he asked. "Why! He makes such beautiful slippers. Why can't you do the same?" Govindan – the one who wore a long naamam on his forehead – asked him once. "If the work is so wonderful, you learn to do it," retorted Susai. "I, I...!" Govindan spluttered.

Once, Susai brought a pair of slippers for Sivagami's grandfather. She went into the house and told her mother that her classmate had come. She asked for some coffee for him. Her mother served the coffee in a brass tumbler. Susai was sitting in the verandah. Before Sivagami could reach him, her grandfather said, "Looks like the coffee is too hot." He poured it into an aluminium tumbler that had been kept on the window sill and started to cool it. The third time round,

the coffee was in the aluminium tumbler. He held it out to Sivagami.

Her face reddened. It seemed as though she would burst into tears.

“Mmm. Go, give it,” said her grandfather. “And not in his hand. Put the tumbler down on the ground,” he added.

Susai stood a little way away. Sivagami didn’t know if he had overheard.

But the moment her grandfather turned his back, she poured the coffee back into the brass tumbler and handed it to Susai. Susai’s face darkened. “I don’t want coffee,” he muttered. But when he saw the tears in her eyes, he said “Okay, give,” and gulped it down.

At night, when they were in bed, Sivagami complained to her mother about her grandfather.

He’s an old-fashioned man,” her mother said, consoling her. He believes in castes and all that. You musn’t mind him.”

“Who divides us like this ? Who says this is a high caste and that is a low caste?” Sivagami asked her mother.

“We do,” her mother replied. “People like us.”

One day, school gave over early, in the afternoon itself. Apparently

someone had been killed in the town nearby. The seventh class teacher who made the announcement about closing early had an anguished look on her face.

Tension enveloped the school. Carrying that tension, Sivagami walked homeward.

Her lunch carrier was heavy. That day it was tamarind rice garnished with fresh, roasted peanuts – her favourite. Remove the lid and the aroma of curry leaves, and roasted, ground fenugreek and chillies bowled you over. Sivagami's mother had fitted a small plate on top of the rice, with two flower-like vadaams on it.

But Sivagami had not yet eaten. There was nobody to walk with her and even the tree-lined avenue seemed very long. Besides, it was drizzling.

At times like this, the moment she got home she would rush to the back of the house, to her father's workshop. Her family had been sculptors for generations. Her father and grandfather would be chiselling something in wood or stone ... Krishna playing the flute, Hanuman with prayerful hands, Durga on a tiger, stone and wood sculptures for small temples, big houses, offices and gardens. Sometimes they painted the wooden chariots for deities, vahanams. Huge ones like the garuda and the peacock. During certain months they made clay Vinayakas and Gowri – Ganeshas.

Sivagami longed to touch the chisel. But her grandfather always chased her away the moment she came into the studio. "What work does a girl have here?" he asked. She would look at her father. He would not say a word. Her mother had explained to her why her grandfather behaved like this. She said they

would not teach sculpture to girls because after they were married off, girls belonged to another family. They believed that if girls learned the secrets of the art, they would pass it on to the “other” family. “I’ll live here only always Amma,” Sivagami once said to her mother.

Her father heard this and stroked her head. Her head was filled with these thoughts today. Just a couple of days ago Susai had told her that if only her father made a three or four-foot wooden statue of Jesus Christ, they could install it under a thatch roof in their locality and then everybody could worship together. Sivagami was looking for the right opportunity to talk to her father about it.

It was drizzling harder now. As she walked, she saw her father coming towards her with an umbrella. When he came close, she saw that he looked anxious.

“Appa, there’s been a murder in the next town...” she began. “I know, I know. That’s why I came running,” he said. “Come under the umbrella.”

They started walking. Sivagami rarely got a chance to walk like this with her father. When she was little, she often wanted to touch her father’s rough, hardened palms. His hands were like stone. He would laugh and stretch out his hands to her. Touch them, he would say. Now her father’s face was tense. But after walking some distance, the

familiar calm look re-appeared. Smiling, he turned to look at her.

“Appa...” she said, softly.

“What is it, darling?” he asked.

“You know Susai, my school Susai.....?” she started to say, like a question.

“What about him?”

“Nothing ,” she said and inched closer to him.

“You know, they have to walk a long way to church.

If you make them a

three or four foot-high statue of Jesus Christ, he said they could all pray in their

own neighbourhood. Will you make it?” Sivagami asked, looking at her father.

“Sure, why not?” her father replied.

“I have never seen you make a Yesu,” Sivagami said.

“I made a Virgin Mary when you were a baby. Some people in the next

village asked for it. We have no religion, you see.

Mosque, church, temple . . .

for sculptors they are all the same,” her father said.

Sivagami walked beside him, silently.

If Susai’s father and the others tell me what kind of statue they want, I

will make it for them,” he said.

She nodded. She didn’t speak. In silence, they reached home. Her father

folded the umbrella and put it away. Then he disappeared into the workshop.

As soon as she entered the house, Sivagami wiped her head, changed

her clothes, washed her hands and feet. Quietly, she ate the tamarind rice from

her lunch carrier. After she finished, she washed the vessel and went to the workshop.

There, her father was fashioning a bead necklace on a foot-high figure of a woman. Her grandfather rested his foot on a statue that lay on the ground; he was busy chiselling. About five or six others were working too.

Sivagami stood and watched.

“What business do you have here? Go home and study,” scolded her

grandfather, stopping his work.

Her father looked up at her.

“You said sculptors don’t have any religion,” she said to her father.

“Yes, darling,” he replied.

She took a step forward. “Then, the only difference there is, is between girls and boys?” she asked.

Her grandfather was stunned. “Ei Sivagami!” he shouted.

Her father’s face wore an expression she had not seen before.

“Come here,” he said.

She went to him.

“Sit,” he said.

She sat. Her father opened a tool bag and took out a small chisel. He put it into her palm and closed her fingers round it. The chisel felt cold.

“I will teach you,” said her father.

“What nonsense is this? All these new-fangled ideas...” her grandfather began to shout.

“Wait. We beat and kill each other only because we go on discriminating between people. Forget all that,” Sivagami’s father said, opposing his father for the first time.

The others stopped their work and waited to see what happened next.

“First, watch me,” her father said and, as though nothing had happened, continued with his work.

Grumbling away, her grandfather went back to work. Sivagami began to watch her father intently. In between, when she raised her head and looked up, she saw that the rain had stopped. The sky was clear.

I Worried

Mary Oliver

I worried a lot. Will the garden grow, will the rivers
flow in the right direction, will the earth turn
as it was taught, and if not how shall
I correct it?

Was I right, was I wrong, will I be forgiven,
can I do better?

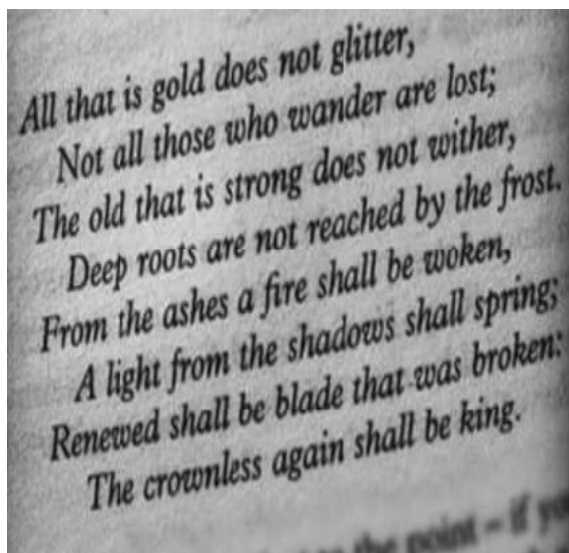
Will I ever be able to sing, even the sparrows
can do it and I am, well,
hopeless.

Is my eyesight fading or am I just imagining it,
am I going to get rheumatism,
lockjaw, dementia?

Finally I saw that worrying had come to nothing.
And gave it up. And took my old body
and went out into the morning,
and sang.

Kaun keheta hai hum jhooth nahi bolte,
ek baar khairiyat toh puch ke dekhiye.

~ Gulzar



All that is gold does not glitter,
Not all those who wander are lost;
The old that is strong does not wither,
Deep roots are not reached by the frost.
From the ashes a fire shall be woken,
A light from the shadows shall spring;
Renewed shall be blade that was broken:
The crownless again shall be king.

The Mountain

If the mountain seems too big today
Then climb a hill instead
If the morning brings you sadness
It's ok to stay in bed
If the day ahead weighs heavy
And your plans feel like a curse
There's no shame in rearranging
Don't make yourself feel worse
If a shower stings like needles
And a bath feels like you'll drown
If you haven't washed your hair for days
Don't throw away your crown
A day is not a lifetime
A rest is not defeat
Don't think of it as failure
Just a quiet kind retreat
The mountain will still be there
When you want to try again
You can climb it in your own time
Just love yourself 'til then.

Man shouldn't be able to see his own face – there's nothing more sinister. Nature gave him the gift of not being able to see it, and of not being able to stare into his own eyes.

Only in the water of rivers and ponds could he look at his face. And the very posture he had to assume was symbolic. He had to bend over, stoop down, to commit the ignominy of beholding himself.

The inventor of the mirror poisoned the human heart.

– **Fernando Pessoa**, *The Book of Disquiet*
(1982)

You start dying slowly
if you do not travel,
if you do not read,
If you do not listen to the sounds of life, If you do not
appreciate yourself.

You start dying slowly When you kill your self-esteem;
When you do not let others help you. You start dying
slowly If you become a slave of your habits, Walking
everyday on the same paths... If you do not change
your routine, If you do not wear different colours Or
you do not speak to those you don't know. You start
dying slowly If you avoid to feel passion And their
turbulent emotions; Those which make your eyes
glisten And your heart beat fast.

You start dying slowly If you do not change your life
when you are not satisfied with your job, or with your
love, If you do not risk what is safe for the uncertain,
If you do not go after a dream, If you do not allow
yourself, At least once in your lifetime, To run away
from sensible advice...

- Pablo Neruda

Nicholas Was...

older than sin, and his beard could grow
no whiter. He wanted to die.

The dwarfish natives of the Arctic caverns
did not speak his language, but conversed
in their own, twittering tongue, conducted
incomprehensible rituals, when they were
not actually working in the factories.

Once every year they forced him, sobbing
and protesting, into Endless Night. During
the journey he would stand near every
child in the world, leave one of the
dwarves' invisible gifts by its bedside.
The children slept, frozen into time.

He envied Prometheus and Loki, Sisyphus
and Judas. His punishment was harsher.

Ho.

Ho.

Ho.

by Neil Gaiman

IF THE ONLY PRAYER YOU EVER
SAY IN YOUR ENTIRE LIFE IS
THANK YOU, IT WILL BE ENOUGH.



Meister Eckhart

Come along with me to my Father's house,
To my Father's house, to my Father's house.
Come along with me to my Father's house;
Where there is joy, joy, joy!

Peace and love abide in my Father's house,
In my Father's house, in my Father's house.
Peace and love abide in my Father's house;
Where there is joy, joy, joy!

Peace and happiness in my Father's house,
In my Father's house, in my Father's house.
Peace and happiness in my Father's house;
Where there is joy, joy, joy!

YANTRODHARAKA HANUMAN STOTRA

तमामि दूतं रामस्य सुखदं च सुरद्रुमम्
पीनवृत महाबाहुं सर्दशत्रुनिवारणम् ॥१॥

तानारत्नसमायुक्तं कुंडलादियिराजितम्।
सर्वदाभीऽष्टदातारं सतां वै दृढमाह्वये ॥२॥

वासिनं चक्रतीर्थस्य दक्षिणस्थगिरौ सदा।
तुंगाबोधितरंगस्य वस्तेनपरिशोभिते ॥३॥

तानादेशगतैः सद्भिः सेव्यमानं नृपोत्तमैः।
पूपदीपादिनैवेद्यैः पंचखायैश्चशक्तितः ॥४॥

भजामि श्रीहनुमंतं इमकांतिसमप्रभम्।
व्यासतीर्थयतीद्रेण पूजितं च विधानतः ॥५॥

त्रिवारं यः पठेन्नित्यं स्तोत्रं भक्त्याद्विजोत्तमः ।
यंचितं लभतेऽभीष्टं षण्णाराभ्यंतरे खलु ॥६॥

पुत्रार्थी लभते पुत्रं यशोर्था लभते यशः।
विद्यार्थी लभते विद्यां धनार्थीलभते धनम् ॥७॥

सर्वथा माऽस्तु संदेहे हरिः साक्षी जगत्पतिः ।
यः करौयत्व संदेहं स याती नरकंण ध्रुवं ॥८॥

॥इति श्रीव्यासराजयितकृत यंत्रोधारक हनुमत स्तोत्रं सम्पूर्णम् ॥

Paintings —

- [Scream](#)
- [The starry night](#)
- [Girl with a pearl earring](#)
- [Glow of hope](#)
- [Foxes](#)
- [Krishna](#)

