

My Soul running between Lives

All night dews fell, drip , drip
On the petals of petunias,
On the long-lost twigs of begonias—
I was lost in a catechism with Soul,
Pestering it with a nagging query,
Mother's apron, as if, I was stuck to.

With dewfall, getting cuddled in quilt,
Warmth of mom's lap, falling back on,
I kept asking, " Which body did you
Love most, because though bodies
Perish, you don't!"
Straitjacketing myself in my
present identity,
Losing myself in the chiaroscuro
Of seemingly plausible answers,
I took up my preferred one,
Unlike cat's nine lives
I know of just one,
Capering from one cosy end
To the other stormy end,
Oscillating between my present
And my past lives (mostly imagined),
I was keen on scrounging
A rejoinder chiming in unison
With mine,
Ah! Soul is a patient of amnesia too,
Careening its memory-bus down the lane
Losing its way amidst torn and snapped threads,
Pointing to me, at last:
Me and my present birth?!

Danced I, pirouetted I ,
Jumped up to my seventh heaven,
Discovering to my utter dismay,
Oh my, my! My body is missing!
Do I breathe or don't I?

A Post Modern Love Poem

A huge reptile hissed and crawled
On its chest, putting the heaviness of its physique
Straight on the tessellated floor of the zoo,
Cold, stony floor, dank walls and a netted canopy above.

A lover hisses as he pants for breath
Immediately after his labored union with his love,
Lying on the bed, punctuating stillness of the room
With syncopated whimpers and moans of gratification!
Lover and beloved stay locked in embrace for hours together
Even asking for more kisses, more proximity,

But all turn hazy, askew, awry, as the picture-perfect
Immaculateness receives a jarring jolt
Near its belt, driving it to an irrevocable
Unconsciousness !
Togetherness annuls itself on satiety,
Gratification totters on the brink of
A promise, that is not to be kept
Though made and feigned as real,
But mostly unreal!

Love in the era of postmodernism
Is like a desiccated grape, that needs an overhauling!
Love in the post-modern era
Is a sea-change brought forth by
Varying takes on emotions, passions,
Amorous expressions, gestures
And many a thing that come along!

Love is now a bubble in the bucket,
Where soap-suds mingle, weave dreams,
Love is now an unknown flower in a thicket
Where new ideas thrive, impinged by sunbeams!

Cage-Free Emotions

The Vesuvius of mind erupted,
Disgorging anger, venom, tantrum, insecurity,
All in different hues, all in one blow.
Nothing was locked up within, anymore.
The liberated emotions danced around,
Found no soul to affect or to influence.

Emotions surged up, unleashing balloons:
Ochre, crimson, blue, green, aubergine, yellow,
High up in azure sky, creating patterns—
Phantasmagoric, magic-realistic;
Eyeing on a higher psychedelic
Elevation, seeking higher plane
Of ultimate realization!

Emotions once unshackled
Can play havoc with sundry things around,
Shackled, enmeshed, fettered, locked in
One's inner within, clamoring bitterly
For a release, a welcome sparing.
Once freed, the emotions can fathom
The depth of an ocean lying
Millions and millions
Of cubits, deep down,
Than the plane we stand upon.



Ketaki Datta is an Associate Professor of English, Bidhannagar College, Kolkata. She is a novelist, short story writer, critic and a translator. Her novels *A Bird Alone* and *One Year for Mourning* have won rave reviews. Her poems have been published in several anthologies. She was elected Professional Woman of the Year in 2005 by American Biographical Society, North Carolina.

