The Rhyming Rainbow

A Tanka Collection

Pravat Kumar Padhy
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A Collection of Tanka Poems

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(A Collection of Tanka Poems)
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Printed in India at Krishna Offset, Shahdara
Dedicated with reverence and gratitude to my parents
Sobhabati Padhy and Banamali Padhy
Foreword

In Pravat Kumar Padhy’s tanka collection, *The Rhyming Rainbow*, he recalls at length the influences on his writing by the wider tanka society. The collection is both moving and accomplished. Padhy can raise everyday moments to the realms of the extraordinary and sets up a compelling rhythm throughout his work. He writes poignantly about nature: gentle winds, birds flapping their wings, Antarctica, clouds, the shore and much more. There are light touches of humour to be found among the more serious poems: “a sparrow / leaves its message”, “I wish I were a bird”, “the beggar counts / the coins”; and “tomorrow waits for the kids”. Many of the tanka are located in a specific natural landscape from which the poet gleans a strong emotional response: “behind the window / she smiles halfway”; “from far off distance / resonates the departed soul” / “guiding my little daughter / crossing the zebra square” and “desire carries on / like wave after wave”.

Moods vary from tanka to tanka, as you would expect from a lengthy collection. Inevitably, there are moments of sadness and anger at society’s inequities. Yet what strikes me most when I read the tanka is how often the tone is celebratory. What prompts Padhy to write? I think he’s driven by a need to pay homage to the people who have inspired him, to his family, the places and the times he’s loved. There’s an inextinguishable joyousness at the heart of Padhy’s work that makes reading him an upbeat and uplifting experience. Many genuine sensory responses to the problems of life are packed into these pages so that the collection soon asserts itself as a literary experience that requires careful reading.

**Patricia Prime**

Reviews Editor: Haibun Today
Preface

I started imbibing the poetic feeling and metaphoric expression at an early age of around thirteen by composing aphorisms, proverbial poems (one or two lines) during my school days while writing essays in my mother tongue, Odia. Later on, I wrote both longer and shorter versions (micropoetry) of free verses, often embellished with both internal and end rhymes. Largely my poems are characterized by aspects related to social issues. Poems are manifested with the textural density of allegory symbolism and allusions. The beauty of nature, socio-economic spectrum, human emotions, and occasionally mystics with sublime metaphysical expression with idioms and imageries predominantly occupy in my writings. The sense of freedom, peace, love and humanistic expression spotlights in many of my verses. In the volume, “Interviews with Indians Writing in English” (Writers Workshop Publication, 1992), edited by Atma Ram, I opined, “Poems come to my mind as fragrance to flower. Anything I see, it creates a symbolic frame in my mind......... when I see a small grain of seed, I feel:

it is tiny
because it nests with care
the mightiest in it

Tearful Smile

I pile up the smiles
From the garden
Of creation
In my heart
Until I smile with
Tearful eyes at last.


His Last Wish

He wishes
To see everybody
Laugh and merry
Though he is
Born blind
Indeed.

ByWord, Indo-Australian Special Issue, Vol. 12, No.3, 1984

Helpless Mass

Every day
Morning wakes up
Making them to sleep
And
Night goes to sleep
Compelling them to weep.

University Today, Vol. 5, No. 9, 1985

Memory

As patches of cloud
Memory sails around
When I wish
To see
Those become tears in my eyes.

The poems, “A Better Living”, “Seed” along with others were published in “Kavita India”, Vol. III, Nos. 2&3, July-Dec 1990, edited by A. Chittaranjan Sahay and “A Better Living” is probably one of the shortest poems:

**A Better Living**

Try best  
Like a bird  
Reaching  
To its nest

I wish to do experimentation by assimilating the essence of scientific fragrance into the petals of poetry. I thought of an idea of “Astro-Poetry” (Celestial perspective) assimilating the scientific entities in literature. During the early seventies, I had composed a poem, “Saptarshi ra Satadbhi Prasna” (One Hundred Questions of the Seven Stars) portraying time, space, and the celestial mystery. Recently, the tanka sequence ‘Muse of Science’ has been featured in the anthology, “Stacking Stones”, edited by M Kei. One of my tanka is as follows:

scars  
on her face  
I console  
how the craters glorify  
the whiteness of the moon

The poem, “The Other Being”, enumerates embellishment of scientific spirit.

**The Other Being**

At times I wonder  
Perhaps we are the  
Living images  
Of distance cosmic rays  
At an imaginative focal length.

Benediction and compassion have been reflected largely in many of my shorter version of poems:

**God’s Gift**

God has gifted us  
A distinct brightness  
To differ from others  
Smiling: An expression  
On our face.

Dreamers Reality, September 2009

**Budding Value**

The bud blooms  
To divine others.  
It takes care  
It’s fragrance  
To share.

Dreamers Reality, September 2009

I read some of the classical articles on Japanese poems by Jane Reichhold and I could discover that some of my earlier poems are close to Tanka style and its subgenres. Indeed the age-old literary cadence of the Japanese short poems manifests excellence of humanism and emotional behaviour.

‘Tanka’ means ‘small song’. It originated in the 7th century AD in Japan and was known as *waka*. Originally tanka was known as *uta* (song in Chinese). The *waka* has been written on seasonal subjects (*kidai*). The schemata or *mora* patterns follow 5-7-5-7-7 (known as ‘*sanjuichi*’). The original structure was in 5-7, 5-7, 7 and subsequently it became 5-7, 5-7-7 during the Man’yo period. Later *waka* was widely known as *tanka*, a five-line short song (during post-Meiji period), named by Masaoka Shiki in the 19th century.

The tanka is divided into two strophes. The first three lines of tanka are known as *kami-no-ku* and the last two lines as *shimo-no-
ku. The art of image building in the two strophes and the interrelationship with a twist make a tanka different from the conventional five-line free verse. Sometimes there is a rare composition of three strophes. The pivot line (kakekatoba) or the swing line (zeugma) is the main characteristic that distinguishes tanka from the five-line free verse. Tanka contains two parts, the inner and the outer scenes, in terms of rhythm structures and each of about one breath length. The break or swing line formats the tanka in 2/3, 3/2, 1/4, or 4/1, with each line characterized by a concrete image as suggested by Kala Ramesh. Generally, line-3 serves as the pivot line and swings away from the three lines above by imparting expression of fervent elucidation and elegancy to the tanka with the imagery of the last two long lines. Tanka embodies wide thematic values of human expression: pathos, anguish, emotion, romanticism and other reflections with poetic elegance and musicality. Poetic essence (honi) or exhibition of personification or anthrop-omorphism, use of metaphor, similes, metrical exhibition, the imaginative blending of alliteration and assonance are highly embedded in tanka writing.

Japanese poetry is syllabic by nature and is not metrical or rhymed in style. The equivalent syllables would be more in the English language. The Japanese long poem, choka, is structured as 5-7-5-7-5-7-5-7-5-7-7 onji in line length and may even exceed 100 lines. The Onji refers to the counting of phonetic sounds.Tanka is constructed by 5 lines or units or phrases, each odd in the number of onji, and ending in the traditional 7-7 onji pattern. Of late, we have adopted tanka in five lines (s/l/s/l/l) without stressing the syllable count while writing in English.

Tanka genre has a wide scope of poetic expression on broad spectrum, described by Jane Reichhold in her scholarly essay, “The Wind Five Folded”, based on mystical expression and loneliness (yugen tei), gentle expression (koto shikarubeki), exotic beauty and elegance (urawashiki tei), human feeling, love, grief
(ushin tei), grandeur (taketakaki tei), visual description (miru tei), witty with conventional subject (omoshiroki tei). Sometimes the subject matters may be described with the unusual poetic concept (hitofushi aru tei) or narrating in precise details with complex imageries (komayaka naru tei). Some tanka, in contrast to elegance or balanced narration, exhibit strong diction in style of expression. This is classified as demon-quelling (onihishigi tei or kiratsu no tei).


I got a lot of encouragements from Marilyn Hazelton, Claire Everett, H. Gene Murtha, Kirsty Karkow, Martin Lucas, Aurora Antonovic, Sonam Chhoki, Susan Constable, Tokido Kizenzen, Robert Epstein, Alison Williams, Kathabela Wilson, Miriam Wald, Don Miller, Liam Wilkinson, Lorette C. Luzajic, Joanne Morcom, Grunge Hello, Michael H. Lester, Susan Weaver, Jacquie Pearce and many others.

In 2009, I composed three five-line poems and sent them to Anglo-Japanese Society. I was new to the traditional style and syllabification of tanka writing. Dr. Hisashi Nakamura,
President, Anglo-Japanese Tanka Society, UK was quite appreciative of the philosophical underline of the poems. I made minor edits by rearranging the lines of the poems in the form of s/1/s/1/1 at a later date. Primarily these tanka reflect mystery and depth (yugen tei).

Poetry creates a fabric of resonance to transmit the human essence into our surroundings and further into the greater space. The Japanese art of poetry writing spells the aesthetic values of nature and the inherent bondage of mankind. I witness the colours of hope and a world of joy of living in the temple of poetry. It unveils the human psychology interweaving mythology with modernity and seclusion with unification with a note of peace and harmony, here and beyond. The colours of rainbow muse the aesthetic assemblage of nature, and explore the sense of beauty and universal credence.

the melody
of seven swaras* in the sunny sky
the wish flags rhyme with the colours of rain

*It is the ancient Indian concept about the complete dimension of musical pitch.

Pravat Kumar Padhy
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I wish to convey my sincere gratitude to Patricia Prime for the poignant “Foreword” for the present collection, “The Rhyming Rainbow”. My sincere indebtedness to Hidenori Hiruta, Robert Epstein and ai li and for their words of poetic inspiration.

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Anglo-Japanese Society-Tanka Online (UK), The Four Seasons of Haiku -Tanka in Spring (UK), Sketchbook (USA), Atlas Poetica (USA), The Notes From the Gean (Australia), Simply Haiku, Red Lights (USA), Special Feature (Atlas Poetica), Magnapoets (Canada), LYNX (USA), A Hundred Gourds, Kokako (New Zealand), Ribbons (USA), Chrysanthemum (Germany), Tanka on site, Inner Art Journal, The Bamboo Hut, Undertow Tanka Review, Skylark (USA), Ekphrastic Tanka, Whispers, cattails (Canada), and Presence (UK).

I convey my warm appreciation to my wife, Namita, and daughters, Smita and Rupa for their poetic support and immense encouragement.

I convey my sincere appreciation to the publisher, Authorspress, for accomplishing a memorable collection.

Pravat Kumar Padhy
About The Poet

Pravat Kumar Padhy hails from Berhampur, Odisha, India. He holds Masters of Science and Technology and a Ph.D in Applied Geology from Indian Institute of Technology (ISM), Dhanbad. He has a certification of the Executive Education Programme on “Advanced Management” from IIM-Bangalore.

His literary work has been widely anthologized and cited in Indian Literature, Indian English Writing, Interviews with Indians Writing in English, Anger in Action: Exploration in Indian Writing in English, Quest for Identity in Indian English Writing: Poetry, Spectrum History of Indian Literature in English, Voices of the Present, Alienation in Contemporary Indian English Poetry, Cultural and Philosophical Reflections in Indian Poetry in English etc.


His tanka are featured in anthologies namely Fire Pearls 2, One Man’s Maple Moon Bright Stars Vol.1, Neon Graffiti, Special Features: Atlas Poetica, Triveni, Every Chicken, Cow, Fish and Frog: Animal Rights Haiku, Earth: Our Common Ground, They Gave Us Life, Its own place – a mindscape of tanka anthology, Stacking Stones, Train-themed Anthology and others.

Some of his poems are translated into Japanese, Chinese, Serbian, German, Romanian, Italian, Bosnian, Spanish, Arabian, Hindi, Punjabi, and Odia.
His poetry won the Editors’ Choice Award at Asian American Poetry, Poetbay, Writers Guild of India, the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival, UNESCO International Year of Water Cooperation, The Kloštar Ivanić International Haiku Commendation Award, Creatrix Haiku Commendation Award, IAFOR Vladimir Devide Haiku Award, Diogen Spring Haiku Award, 7th Setouchi Matsuyama International Photo Haiku Award, Second International Haiku Contest for the award “Radmila Bogojevic”, IRIS Commendation Award and others.

His haiku was displayed by Haiku Society of America in the exhibition “Haiku Wall”, Liberty Theatre Gallery in Bend, Oregon, USA. His tanka, ‘I mingle’ is cited in the “Kudo Resource Guide”, Cal Performances, University of California, Berkeley, 2014/2015 Season. He is also showcased in “Freezing the Moment: A Celebration of Haiku by Poets from India”, Scroll.in, April 2018.

His poem, “How Beautiful”, published in 1983 in the leading Newspaper, Indian Express, has been included as a part of the Undergraduate English curriculum, 2018 of the prestigious Shivaji University, Kolhapur, India amongst the notable literary luminaries namely Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore, Martin Luther King, Johannes V. Jensen, Sundaram (Tribhuvandas Luhar), Iftikar Rizvi, W H Davies, Nathaniel Hawthrone, Robert Frost, Prof. Satish Tripathy, Desika Vinayakam Pillai and renowned economist E F Schumacher.

He has been conferred with prestigious “Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award” for professional excellence.

His online publications can be read at http://pkpadhy.blogspot.com
in my poetic science
I search light of happiness
for the agony to heal
eclipsing the ignorance with
brightening oneness of gene

+++  

gentle wind muses
songs of spring to the far off fields
angel of beauty
visits the land of rainbow
birds clap flapping their wings

+++  

in white-land of Antarctica
a serene gathering of penguins
the veteran leads the mass
to the curvilinear point
where ice meets the sea

+++  

whirling wind
unscheduled and unkind twist
scattered leaves
with no shelter and mercy
detached from the living trees

+++  

23
in dense majority
clouds hang over the ocean
in my dream
I feel mingling with the sea
and the softness of the rain

♥♥♥

near the shore
waves with musical tone
come and go
smilingly it returns back
deep inside changing its face

♥♥♥

sublime smiles
the painting portrays
I adjust to live
rewinding the coil of time
in the shadows of my loneliness

♥♥♥

with telegram
awaits the old man at post office
the grief soaked paper
sends the message to darkness
over the coffee mixed with tears

♥♥♥
purpose of life
touching the softness of cloud
drains all agonies
all along the shoreline
before mingling with the vastness

✦✦✦

tender trees --
the wrath of fire
burns everything
transferring the forest
to shapeless smoke

✦✦✦

music of waves
echoes the beauty of living
along the shore
nature architects the feeling
art of shell and sand together

✦✦✦

at life’s shoreline
the sands of time escape
from many gaps…
I collect memories
embedded in sediment

✦✦✦

25
he searches
in the kingdom of darkness
for a ray of light
the sun remains always
in hiding for the innocent blind

• • •

memories
like waves after waves
sail to shore –
and return to a great distance
for the late evening moon to catch

• • •

I watch
the black, white and brown
short and tall
all variances and varieties
in the garden of beauty

• • •

the sparrow
leaves its message
coming home
the old man still awaits
son’s return from battle

• • •
he inks
the greatest experience of life
when he kisses
in the light of darkness
the warmth of the final breath

waves of anxiety
coil the shore of my mind –
glimpse of hope
one day would spell the meaning
and the mystery of miracle life

we catch the light
from the distance stars
in deep darkness
the New Year candle brightens
to erase our age-old blindness

a play of love
for entire mankind
I plant
in dream a world of garden
full of flowers and friendship
sky sprinkles
the rain of beauty
love discovers
sparkles of thin moon
behind innocent clouds

✦✦✦

rows of trees
along stretched seashore
remain speechless
perhaps the oceanic vastness
interacting in deep silence

✦✦✦

twilight
kisses the sky’s edge…
a bouquet
of birds, painting rainbows
on their homeward return

✦✦✦

warmth
in the winter cold
reminds me
of my mother
lulling me to sleep

✦✦✦
summer streak  
I wish I were a bird
in the open sky
full of thin clouds soothing
the burns with dripping rains

✦✦✦

black and white
paintings on the pot
the transgender
searches the streak of colors
to fill the gap of the emptiness

✦✦✦

shadows drift
under the setting sun
the life
of a beggar mingles
with the darkness

✦✦✦

withered flowers
I gather with love and care
closing my eyes
in the garden of memories
I dream the greatness of living

✦✦✦
in long desert
breeze swings from
the crest to valley
I march with lonely shadow
as footprints fill the shifting sand

+++  

in starlit sky
the beggar counts
the coins
just enough
for a Christmas cake

+++  

alone in the house
she gathers memories
scattered shells
brittle and drained
with dissolved souls

+++  

close to the lips
over a cup of coffee
winter rain
gently pours warmth
of long memories

+++  

30
evening moon
amongst the twinkling stars
the handicapped
firm on his inner aspiration
the life will continue to sparkle

reddish soil
glitters under the morning sun
festive of space journey
tomorrow waits for the kids
to walk and play on the Martian surface

the whirlwind
in winter evening
broken mirror
my mother gently gathers
in between hot arguments

azure sky
in great journey
up the hill
I listen to my loneliness
the echoes of step after step
a flow of music
in the rhythm of rain
the flute
recounts its memories
under the bamboo tree

+++ 

the tree turns
from wood
to wrinkled skin
the begging man
arms with dissolved fingers

+++ 

virtual tour
she swells with pleasure
seventh month
with the baby in the womb
inside the scanning room

+++ 

her smile
blossoms in the garden of life
the moist breeze
swings on the wings of butterflies
unveiling the early morning dream

+++
he talks
with angry voice
the words
I rearrange to compose
a kindhearted poem

●●●

sprinkles of memories
essay the rainbow of union
the tender lips
urge the swollen eyes
earnestly for your forgiving

●●●

winter twilight
recedes from the old hut
tender warmth
I reorient my single bed
close to my family album

●●●

man from Mars
woman from Venus
we measure time
across a great distance
to heal and fill the space

●●●
early dawn
with tender sunrays
 I wish
light to reach the huts
of the slum-dwellers

***

the heron waits
till the sun hides behind
the return journey
leaves me alone under
the moonless sky

***

the grown-up tree
aspiring to bear fruits
in mid-way life
she wonders in her afternoon
diminishing of the brightness

***

the spider climbs
up the corner edge
on stepping stones
the handicapped boy
aims towards the starlit sky

***
waves on waves
along the longshore
at the signpost
our close relationship dwells
under the crossed footprints

●●●

the lone seagull
scans the vastness
I fold my past
and awaken
to cross the waves

●●●

twilight extends
over the cherry blossoms
romantic painting
under the soothing shadow
rekindles warmth of sublime love

●●●

autumn of life
rests on the leaned bench
flowers in the garden
console me with colours of hope
and warmth of divine fragrance

●●●
crowded with doubts and disbelieves he masks
the beauty of light and boundary of the endless sky

✦✦✦

the street dog with a bare bone
the frail baby cries over the skinned breast
under the shadow of neon light

✦✦✦

skyscrapers eclipsing each other
I miss the calmness of the moon
with layers of chaos and crowd

✦✦✦

under sacred tree the old woman laments
the newborn to continue frequenting another chapter of begging

✦✦✦
I murmur
some lines of rhyme
the journey
urges me to revisit
memories of my village again

•••

my shadow
lengthens towards light
the cry of an owl
reminds me in dream
it is still midnight

•••

past, present and future
embedded in Krishna’s mouth
the far off
dust, dark and dance of fire
through Hubble Space Telescope

Note: In the Hindu religious books, it is narrated how Lord Krishna manifested the spectrum of the universe to his mother, Yashoda, by opening his mouth.

•••

Nataraja
in cosmic dance
God particles
sparkle the stillness
in the discovery tunnel

Note: Natraja is regarded as the cosmic dancer and is depicted of God Shiva.

•••
Boddhi tree –
in deep meditation
closing my eyes
I turn within discovering
reflection of sound and light

Note: Boddhi tree is regarded as the sacred tree located in Bodh Gaya, India. Lord Buddha attained enlightenment under the tree.

+++  

the earthen pot
broken by an untimely storm
the twilight
darkened the hope leaving
thick blood on the floor

+++  

audience listens
the melodious song
mother murmurs
with her finger language
to her deaf daughter

+++  

bird unfolds
the wings of freedom
the lone statue
scripts from the slum
the alphabet of hope

+++  

38
an old tree
veterans from nearby places
get together
sharing memories with smiles
under the shadow of twilight

☼ ☼ ☼

I reminisce
your childhood smile…
like a butterfly
I chase
in the garden

☼ ☼ ☼

touch of warmth
melts the dew drops
the teary woman
wipes out her drenched grief
of the winter morning

☼ ☼ ☼

rolling stones
of the remote valley
the sand dunes
somewhere in desert preserve
the footprints of my long journey

☼ ☼ ☼
frail tree
still in breath
the old widow
in loneliness branches
out her best wishes

+++ 

fragrance of flower
from far off distance
our relationship
I narrate and mail her
through the gentle wind

+++ 

behind the window
she smiles halfway
I hold back tears
from my swollen eyes and
return home drenched in rain

+++ 

rain drips
on the gravestone
deep silence
rebounds the screams
of the slum orphans

+++
I search
my moon all the way
horizon of hope
offers solace in the midnight
rekindling vastness of the sky

✦✦✦

I painted
throughout night
my memories
of grief and anguish
remain as patches of white

✦✦✦

autumn morning
all my wishes fall apart
some drains
into the meandering river
the rest blown before I could gather

✦✦✦

the spider
rides up and down
on the mirror
I readjust my face
picking up the shiny hair

✦✦✦
thin moon
in the hot summer
the nest swings
catching darkness
everywhere

•••

the train
whistles to start
I carry her
memories till I reach
the stretched distance

•••

the Ganges flows
with the thin moon
godly-chant
from far off distance
resonates for the departed soul

•••

harvest moon
over the golden field
the old man
murmurs to the breeze
holding his trembling lips

•••
remote village
  in the dense hillside
the native language
they speak is full of melody
rumbling with the braided stream

+++ 

I mingle
with the vastness
in my dream
cressing the tenderness of
the sea, calmness of the sky

+++ 

villagers look up
at the distant pale sky
a lone frog
in the narrow lane leaps
with footprints of hope

+++ 

gentle rustling
of the tender leaves
the grandmother
cresses the newborn humming
the melodious desert folk song

+++
sunlit morning
over youthful blossoms
Mother Teresa
with sacred gift of love
rekindles the garden of hope

speechless display
of musical instruments
I recount
peeping into the past
the resonance of antique world

tender breeze
whispers something
in deep midnight
the new moon brightens
the tone of my loneliness

morning sun
over the tribal hut…
sublime smile
of her daughter reposes
promises of enduring warmth
blinks of red light
flash back my memories
silently I recount
guiding my little daughter
crossing the zebra square

wave after wave
closely follow together
returning home
the grand family enjoys
the forgotten smiles

fragrance of love
carefully the flower preserves
in foggy morning
she gently nurses the wounds
of deep misunderstanding

like clouds
seagull floats in the air
I return
leaving the rain, the dance
of the gentle waves behind
an exhibition
of pencil-sketches
in the nest
eggs about to hatch
to discover light of the day

✦✦✦

wave after wave
on an incessant journey
another sunset
when I long to change the taste
of salt, the colour of the wind

✦✦✦

a moonlit night
the sea unloads its
anxieties
but desire carries on
like wave after wave

✦✦✦

a solitary kite
in the twilight sky
dusk deepens
unfolding the heaviness
of her long loneliness

✦✦✦
from a ball of flesh
Queen Gandhari brought forth
her Kaurava clan…
science celebrates the birth
of test-tube baby, Louise Brown

Note: In the Mahabharat, Queen Gandhari sprinkled water over a ball of flesh, which was divided into a hundred and one parts about the size of a thumb. These were then placed in pots with clarified butter and kept at a concealed spot under guard. In due course, a hundred brothers and one sister were born, known as the Kauravas.

***

the temple steps
lead to the corner end…
with Ardhanarishvara
the devotees divinely sense
the softness of the stony carvings

Note: The name Ardhanarishvara means ‘the Lord whose half is a woman’. In Hinduism and Indian mythology many deities are represented as both male and female, manifesting with characteristics of both genders, including Ardhanarishvara, created by the merging of Lord Shiva and his wife Parvati.

***

the rainbow
slowly disappears
into the sky
the stain of separation
drenches me with tears

***

47
thin twilight
along the shoreline
leaving behind
the silent reflections
of scattered seashells

✦✦✦

journey of life
lays as tiny footings
the imprints
remain as the image of joy
on the silent rock surface

✦✦✦

a long journey
through twilight shade
as a gift of nature
I embrace the darkness
the light of my inner thought

✦✦✦

she waits
since dawn for her calf
the screams
over the sharp edge melt down
suturaing the early morning sun

✦✦✦
the waves
in a harmonious tone
at Rock Memorial
the confluence echoes
the melody of deep silence

Note: Three seas, Bay of Bengal, Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean, merge near Kanyakumari, the southernmost part of the mainland India. At the Vivekananda Rock Memorial, off-coast of Kanyakumari, Sri Vivekananda exemplified the spiritual attainment

+++  
full moon
peeps through the roof
the street dweller
tightly holds the thread
of hope against wild thunder

+++  
drizzling rain
all the day long
I await
the twilight sunshine
to paint my lost rainbow

+++  
melting snow
over the stepping stones
a gentle touch
on my wounded heart
ignites the warmth of joy of living

+++  

49
who knows
my little effort spurs
a new shift
gentle breeze flips pages
of my old manuscripts

●●●

twilight sky
with floating clouds
a long journey
before I could travel
the rain-soaked distance

●●●

the poet scripts
her well-lit voyage
ripples of love
the darkness paints
gently on the silken edges

●●●

arguments and
counter arguments
I pile up like dust
it is all in the street
the wind you cannot seize

●●●
with heavy steps
she strolls down
the shore
pouring in between
drops of thick salty tears

✦✦✦

the murmuring
sound of fallen leaves
drifts all along
the monk chants skyward
the hymn lost in the piercing pop song

✦✦✦

a few words
the painter scribes on painting
at the zebra cross
the crowds rush ahead
leaving their stretched footprints

✦✦✦

tiny seedlings
in the kitchen garden
the grandma
recalls the dusty earthquake
and the memories of buried tears

✦✦✦

51
...under the shadow
our twitting lasts for long ...
tossing the stone
I return in the evening
carrying the half-moon of love

*fertile ground
for the tallest and the tiniest
Earth Day
celebrates the green message
of no caste, creed, color or faith

*morning wind
gently embraces me
her tender voice
from a distant, quite unknown,
keeps me listening time and again

*soot of smoke
meanders all along...
in crowded mass
I miss the softness
of the tender greetings

***
the Berlin Wall
once cemented with pain
the sugar mingles
with the flow of happiness
bonding with a homely feeling

✦✦✦

for million years
the mountains in stillness
her remembrance
spells the perennial presence
within vast space of my rocky silence

✦✦✦

a lone myna
high in the sky
the kite
descends on its weight
holding the silent wind

✦✦✦

the chirping sound
of birds in the early dawn
the beggar
wakes up with hope
recounting midnight sun

✦✦✦
mother’s touch
keeps the winter away
the tired dog
encircles the puppies
under its swollen breasts

•••

my gleaming mother
shares her pleasure
with twin buds
I sense ripples of sound
of the swimming clouds

•••

with snowflakes
I merrily rush ahead
with teary eyes
my mother consoles me
kissing my empty hands

•••

spring melancholy
gently colours all the way
I march ahead
along the road of success
painting the moment of joy

•••
thin pond
in the midst of
scorching heat
the cows gently lick
each other’s shadow

•••

windswept leaves
over the sloping roadside
their music reminds me
of my solitude days…
of the long, rough journey

•••

ancestor’s home
visiting after a long spell of time
in stillness
the spiders and the prey
rewind the time of past and present

•••

kids play and dance
under the twilight sky
counting the waves
and counting the stars
return with a pocketful of shells

•••
tomorrow man may
fly to Mars and beyond
I wish all to settle
and flourish as human alone –
no caste, no religion

• • •

she baskets
the wilted flowers
while the newborn
unfolds a world of joy
hidden in the wild garden

• • •

so many
on the stepping stone way
to the temple gate ...
a poor man limps
for a glimpse of his God

• • •

a pair of parrots
on a dancing branch…
in a mixed tone
the transgender bellbird
expresses its hidden desire

• • •
I scream
for the breeze of help
in deep oblivion
loudly I breathe my last
carrying the scar in my womb

✦✦✦
desert-tour
with great curiosity
I am thrilled
recounting Darwin’s thought
of the camels’ easy way of walk

✦✦✦
wave after wave
closely follow together
returning home
the migrant family
their smiles rising

✦✦✦
the orphan
at the crossroad
he stares at
the safety slogans
painted on the billboard

✦✦✦
pelicans, kingfishers
and other migratory birds…
with gentle pace
I enter my remote hut
enjoying their foreign language

●●●

how far
she stretches her hand
the tiny daughter
rushes and screams aloud
echoes against the blind wall

●●●

flowers
budding on one branch,
wilting on another –
a mixed baggage I carry
on my long train journey

●●●

argument
after argument
at the end
I burn the garbage
as snow covers the night

●●●
Pravat Kumar Padhy hails from Odisha, India. He holds Masters in Science and Technology and a Ph.D from Indian Institute of Technology (ISM), Dhanbad. He has a certification of the Executive Education Programme on “Advanced Management” from IIM-Bangalore.

His literary work cited in Interviews with Indian Writing in English, Spectrum History of Indian Literature in English, Alienation in Contemporary Indian English Poetry, Cultural and Philosophical Reflections in Indian Poetry in English etc. His Japanese short form of poetry appeared in various international journals and anthologies. His haiku won Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival Honourable Mention, UNESCO International Year Award of Water Co-operation, The Kloštar Ivanić International Haiku Award, IAFOR Vladimir Devide Haiku Award, 7th Setouchi Matsuyama International Photo Haiku Award, Second International Haiku Contest for the award “Radmila Bogojevic”, and others. As a mark of recognition, his tanka, ‘I mingle’ is featured in the “Kudo Resource Guide”, University of California, Berkeley.

- Pravat Kumar Padhy is familiar with tanka, creating a world of enlightenment. Each tanka is worth reading, giving us a desire to live a long life in Padhy's tanka world.

  - Hidenori Hiruta, Secretary-General, Akita International Haiku Network, Japan

- Pravat’s first book of tanka is a remarkable synthesis of his scientific perspective and strong poetic spirit. Pravat has a big heart which enables him to approach with emotional honesty, difficult realities that include poverty, natural disasters, aging, illness and loss (to name only a few) with great courage and hope. He situates human suffering within the broader context of Nature, including the galactic realm, and discovers much Beauty to appreciate. His tanka, like the traditional Japanese form, are songs to soothe and uplift the human soul.

  - Robert Epstein, Poet and Anthologist, San Francisco, USA

- Pravat, in his maiden book, shares many examples of his Tanka on Life. He sings to us in a voice that remembers the rain, the moon, forests, clouds, fields, and stars - painting rainbows, to guide us through his ephemeral world. Here’s a captivating song from his book:  I reminisce / your childhood smile... / like a butterfly / I chase / in the garden

  - ai li, Editor: The Cherita, London, United Kingdom