

Multitude in Solitude

In the midst of a lonely night
With not a human sign in view
Not a single voice to greet the ear,
An elderly man seated at his desk
With fingers on his lap-top
In a peaceful room he may call his own
Can hear his breath in and out,
The constant tick of the clock
The rustling of the gentle winds
As they softly caress leaves on nearby trees
The sharp shrilling sounds of crickets
And the quavering croaks of frogs.

In the loneliness of his room
The elderly can visualize far and wide
The crowded city just at noon,
With its din and hurly burly
People jostling with each other
Rushing to shops or market fairs,
To food courts or to restaurants
And can hear the blares of vehicles
Moving at a very slow pace
Halting at pedestrian crossings
To let passers-by walk apace.
Or the repeated voice of sellers
In the crowded market fairs
Vaunting the quality of their goods
Enticing people to their stalls,
But taking care not to be rude.

In the solitude of his room
The elderly does join the multitude
As he presses the keys of his laptop
To create pensive verses with words
And rhythms with or without rhymes
In freely structured versions
To convey his deep-seated emotions
Gathered in solitude and tranquility,
To part with images ingrained in his mind
In the daily course of life
To one and all who may wish to care
And share his thoughts and vision
To the multitude across the oceans
From the solitude of his room.

Solitude Amidst Multitude

On a late summer afternoon
Just on the eve of the new year
With the evening coming soon
Along the north western coast
Of a small lovely island
With its sandy beach packed with people,
Young and strong, weak and old alike,
With kids playing merrily and happily
Within their parents' easy reach
Many a youth gaily strolling on the shore
Others swimming in the bluish sea
Or just dabbling in the warm water
Playful and joyful like a jellyfish
Scanning the depth of the ocean,
Still others getting ready
To feast the new year in pomp
With a muddled mix of musical sounds
Assailing the ears from all around,
An elderly man, just carefree
Seated in the shade of a filao tree
Undisturbed by the noisy din
Is peering at the far distance,
Gazing at the crimson rays
Of the slowly setting sun
Reflecting themselves on the sea
In the north western horizon
And staring at the mild waves
Splashing against the distant reef
Forming a long milky stretch,
A beauty beyond one's belief.

Despite the deafening din ashore
The elderly man is basking in solitude
Cut off from what is around
Engrossed in deep inward thoughts
Pondering on the rugged road
He has singly travelled so far
Reflecting on the quite heavy load
That remains to be accomplished.
Wondering on the essence of life
The main purpose of existence
And the rightful path to follow
In solitude amidst the multitude.

Coincidence or Divine Grace

On the twelfth day of the last month
Of the year twenty twenty,
With a light drizzle greeting the Port-Louis city
Of the lovely island in the Indian Ocean
After a downpour for more than two hours,
Dark clouds are draping the sky all around
While below all streets are slippery and greasy
With the main arteries of the town-city
Jammed and packed to full capacity
With vehicles treading at a toddler`s pace;

From the top of its glorious spire
The bell of a neighbouring cathedral
Put up in colonial times and unique of its kind
Has just chimed for five times
Heralding the end of the day
And witnessing officers and passers-by
Armed with colourful umbrellas
Hastening away in a pensive mood
After a long and hectic stay at work
For fear of a much heavier downpour
That may flood the streets and block the way;

With the one-way street along the city cathedral
Heading to the north eastern way
More crowded than any other day
With a long stream of vehicles jammed
Just at the junction of two one-way streets
The driver of a car stuck in the traffic
With his spouse awaits with patience
Wondering how and when to move ahead;

A few yards away one can see huge branches
Overhanging the busy street and leaves
Dripping down rain drops without regard;
The driver is on the verge of moving
Along the slippery street to the east
When a huge branch from the gigantic tree
Crashes down damaging two vehicles at least;

A feeling of shock pervades the driver
As the branch misses him just by an inch,
But his confidence does not flinch
As he heaves a profound sigh of relief
And from the innermost depth of his heart
Sincerely offers thanks to the Lord
And hastens to the scene of the mishap
To lend a helping hand in case of need,
Wondering whether his narrow escape
Is a coincidence or a sign of divine grace.

The Inner Self

With the dying sun setting down
In the distant western horizon
Golden rays glittering on the tallest bark
Rippling brooks hailing with joy the coming night
The breeze hushed to greet the parting day
Ploughmen embracing the homely way
Lovely mothers lulling their little babes
And blissful birds singing their sleepy songs,
An elderly man, wearied of age-long books,
With gentle steps treads a solitary lane
Bordered on both sides with giant trees
With lovely flowers greeting his eyes
Away from his familiar routine desk
Away from his personal laptop
Away from the envious looks of friends
Away from the wicked wrath of vain officers
But with peace and solitude crowning his breast
And blissful joy attending to his inner soul.

Banks of clouds now drape the crimson sky
While a chilly breeze rustles among the trees
And soon showers of rain splash along the lane
Drenching the solitary traveller who seeks
To shelter himself under a large spanning tree;
Yet the raindrops dripping from the leaves
Still wet him to the bones and send him shuddering,
Quivering and musing on his saddening plight;

With not a single human sound in sight
With anxious thoughts assailing the traveller's mind,
And dim sadness invading the wanderer's heart
He longs for a human voice to come to his rescue
He longs for a human hand to extend a helping hand
While praying the sky to stop the rain
When a strange breath pricks his hair
And sends a frightful quill down his ribs;

He wonders whence such a startling breath
Can strangely meet his sizzling ears
And with a curious gait turns around
To glance at the neighbouring ground
When a human form dressed all in white
Withholds his glare, just by his side
Offering to him with a smiling face
The pleasant shelter of his umbrella;

The elderly with frightful looks stares at him
And more and more his wonder grows,
As dressed in white, the figure all bright
With graceful care lends a friendly hand,
With smiles greets the lonely wanderer
While anxiety gnaws his anxious mind
And eager thoughts rock his brain to and fro.

The traveller longs the stranger`s name to find,
He longs the stranger`s home to know:
"Beseeching you grace, who are you,"
Asks the lonely and solitary adventurer;
"One who ever follows your path,"
Replies the voice and even now
Keeps the sad wanderer in gloom.

"Friend, what interest has called you here,"
Such query does the traveller seek.
Yet strange answer does the voice meet:
"The self-same interest as you
Has quietly driven me here,
I am your body`s reflection
I am your soul`s projection
I am your wandering shade
I am your eternal mate.
I am your inner self."