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Batayan

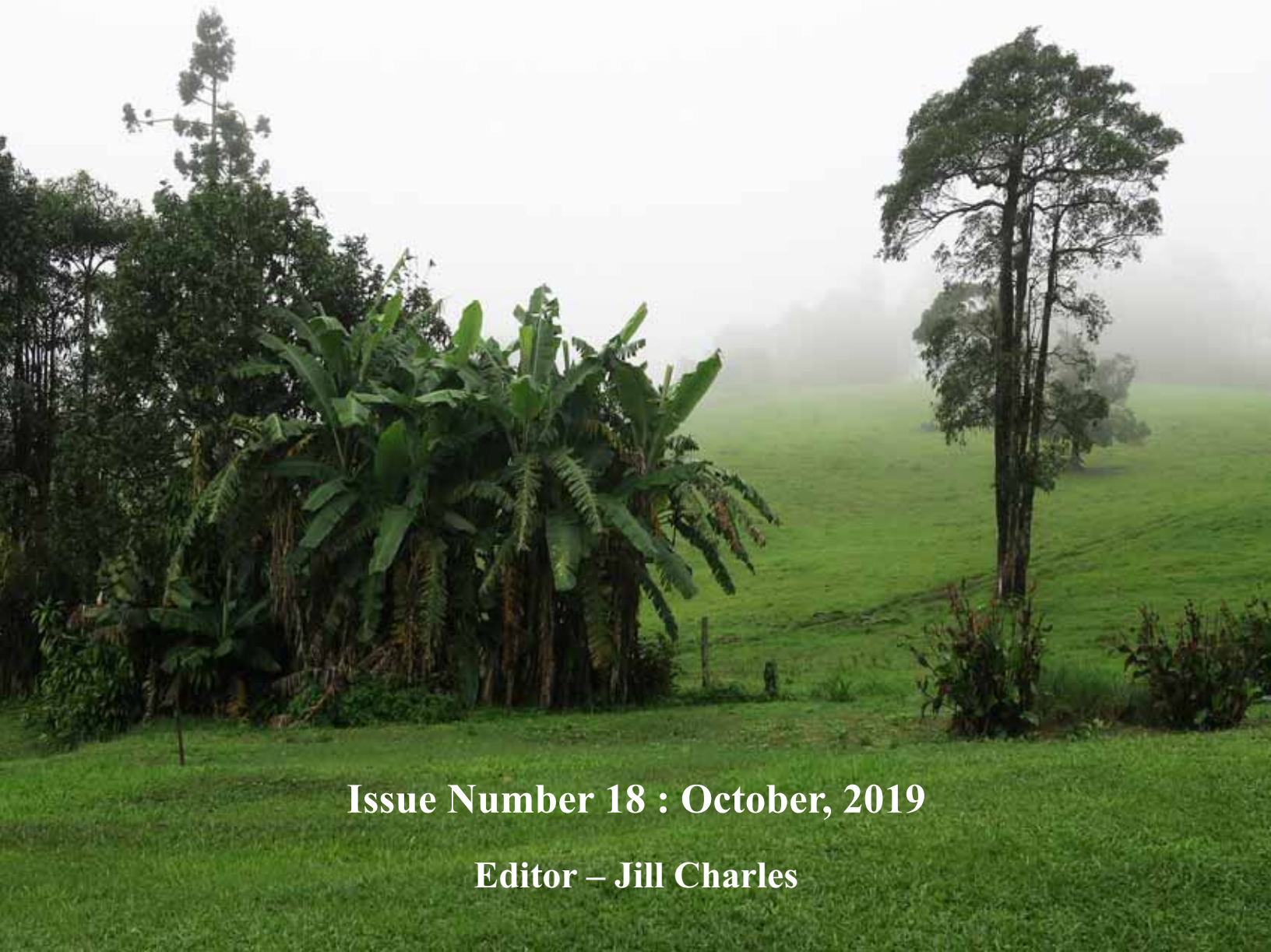
Inspiration

“Life is a beauty admire it”

— Mother Teresa



Batayan



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Editor – Jill Charles



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Front Cover : Sunset – Kari Woodall, Chicago, IL.

Kari Woodall grew up in Washington State and is currently living in the Northwest Suburbs of Chicago, IL. She fell in love with taking photos when given her first Polaroid instant camera in her teenage years. Since then she has always loved the adventure of capturing the awe of life's moments.

Front Inside Cover : Fall colors in Michigan – Tanima Basu



তনিমা বসু, পদার্থ বিদ্যায় স্নাতক । ইউনিভার্সিটি অফ মিশিগানের বায়োস্ট্যাটিস্টিক্স স্নাতকোত্তর ডিগ্রী সুযোগ করে দিয়েছে সংখ্যাতত্ত্ব ব্যবহার করে অন্তর্হিত সত্য উদ্ঘাটন করার । বিজ্ঞানের ছাত্রীর অবসর সময় কাটে কাগজে আঁকিবুঁকি করে, বিভিন্ন মিডিয়ামের সাথে পরিচিত হয়ে – কখনো কাগজে, কখনো ক্রিনে । ভালোবাসে ছবি তুলতে রঙীন প্রকৃতির এবং আপনজনদের ।

Title Page : Tirthankar Banerjee – Milla Milla, the beautiful town in Cairnes, Queensland



His interest in photography started in student days. Much later the long nights in the dark-room were replaced by hours behind the computer and focus shifted from Black & White to Colour. He likes to show the images as they are and does not approve of computer gimmickry. He loves nature – flowers, birds, trees and all things beautiful. Tirthankar is an engineer, specializing in Renewable Energy and lives and works in Perth, Western Australia.

Back Inside Cover : Batayan “SANKALAN” Press release at Kolkata Press Club

Back Cover : Suranjana Chattopadhyay, IL, US



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Editorial

Autumn approaches slowly. A few willow and ginkgo leaves are turning golden among the green. The Chicago markets feature orange and white pumpkins and dried red and yellow corn. The days are cooler with puffy white clouds in the blue sky. Students are going back to school; a new academic year begins. Autumn brings the expectation of the harvest and the school year and also holidays: Halloween, American Thanksgiving and later, winter and Christmas. I am always a little sad to say goodbye to summer: no more swimming in Lake Michigan and cooler days. However, autumn has its own beauty with red oaks, golden maples and alder trees orange and purple like living flames. The fall season is both an ending and a beginning. I hope you enjoy the English pieces in this issue of *Batayan* including Amanita Sen's review of the controversial film *Court*, M.C. Rydel's poem *Placebo Effect* and Kathy Powers' *So Many Words*.

Jill Charles
English Editor

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M. C. Rydel

Placebo Effect

My sister's been part of a clinical study
For a couple of weeks now.
Blue pills every four hours:
Six, ten, and two to start the day;
Six and ten at night before bed.

There's no way really of knowing
If the cure's made from a flower from Peru
Or just sugar pills (snap, crackle, pop)
Plain or peanut, amazingly effective
On the symptoms, but incriminatingly sweet.

Last night, she threw her glasses in the river,
Tight-rope, balance beamed a bridge,
Recognized each boat by the sound of its motor
Differentiated the cargo by its scent
As the wind shifted from gale to zephyr.

The 6 am dose helps her walk the dogs.
The 10 am has a cocaine rush.
The 2 pm is 2:30 tomorrow morning in Mumbai
The 6 pm dose suppresses all appetites.
And the 10 pm shows as glucose in a blood panel.

She hopes this is all just the placebo effect,
Fooling herself and her body into immortality
Wondering if she's swallowing a lie
Or taking a dose at 2 am of the real thing, the real thing,
The only subject in the study to live, and to live to sing.



David Nekimken

The Silence of the Guns

When the pop pop of a revolver ricochets
off the walls, the ceiling and the floor
ping ponging off table tops, chair seats and window panes
shattering wine glasses, good china and family heirlooms
like a pinball game gone berserk
stopping only when entering human flesh,
are the guns finally silent?

When the rapid fire of a machine gun spraying
molten lead at indiscriminate targets
(shrieking, sobbing, praying for help)
splattering blood and bones everywhere
mangled body parts scattered amidst
stacked human corpses stopping
only when the clips run out,
are the guns finally silent?

When the gunman invades a classroom,
a sanctuary, a movie theater, a public square
with intent to avenge a personal injustice
an abusive family, a failed a love affair, a lost job
(without the benefit of compassionate help)
killing innocent victims stopped only
by a pistol to the head,
are the guns finally silent?

When mothers and fathers decry neighborhood shootings
needing safe passage for children at play,
seniors walking to the corner store, workers
waiting at a bus stop, families going for a walk,
assign more patrols to roam the streets
disperse crowds of youth, target minorities
claiming success in stopping crime,
are the guns finally silent?



When social services are fully funded,
neighborhood schools are equally resourced,
work for all at living wages,
affordable housing with a “Welcome” sign,
compassion and empathy are a daily practice,
thriving communities embrace all people,
then the guns will be finally silent.

David Nekimken — David is a senior citizen who has been a poet most of his life, with poems published in a few publications. He has a self-published book of poems *Anything and Everything Goes*. He is a grandfather with three wonderful grandchildren. He currently lives in a housing co-op in Hyde Park.



Balarka Banerjee

Home

Are you going home for Christmas – She asks
Sideway on a busy bus
Terrifying. And Unanswerable.
Home is where the heart is.
where the music's playing.
And all country roads take you.
Going home?

Which Home?

For I have made so many.
It is a green room in a smoky city.
Where I think I wake up some days.
Under a mosquito net. And a ceiling fan.
It is a beige house.
Where the crisp and foreign air, whistled
Through the windows and disturbed.
It is the hospital locker room
Where I dozed and shivered
On wooden benches at 7:15 am.
It is a room, wingspan wide and two long,
where I sat for 4 years and 3 months.
With a Kim. And a Fluoro light.

Those sterile white rooms with humming machines.
Where I shared my victories only with myself.
In those over dark or over bright, stinking rooms.
Where my defeats were made so public.
But so was my resurrection.
Yet they were homes to me.

It is in those gigantic unending rooms. Where a boy and dog could run all day on those crazy, crazy tiles.
It is in that windowless hotel room in New York, pressed against the wall.
Where I was haunted by the phantom, in the damp.
And all those other rooms, in all those hotels.
With the red carpets. And angry air-conditioners.
And suspicious stains. And noisy neighbours.
Homes to so many. But so very mine.
It is in chairs. In so many airports, bus stops and stations.
Plastic. Metal. Leather. Some harsh and some kind.
But all offered me a home.



And those chairs. 36A, 32H, 45B, 44G. Aisle and Window.
And all the numbers in between. And seatbelts.
Where I would push my head back as we flew off.
And thought about what I was leaving behind.
Every time. Thought about home.

I have made my home in corners.
On the wooden floors of a Queenslander.
A couch out West. A mattress under a Christmas tree.
In that unit made of twinkling lights and twinkling people.
That room on top of that pizzeria in Melbourne.
Or the one across the gardens.
Or the one in that house, where “1234” let me in.
Your rooms. Where I lost so many mornings.
But gained so much in return.
That balcony where we sang songs and watched the dawn.
And I heard stories of people's struggles.
And I learnt that despite our differences.
We are all tightly bound by our heartaches.

My home is in any room that has a stage.
Plays a song by Cohen or movie by Ray.
Has a microscope. Has a pen and paper.
A Klimt on the wall.
I believe I have...lived there.

I had made my home in the red earth, and the black silt.
Between the snow like flowers of catkin.
Between frightened blurry trees I sped past.
Between gigantic furry pines that plucked at clouds
Just to tempt me.
In the sand. Ochre, gold, white and sublime.
Which pull my feet in every time,
To remind me where I came from.
Home.

I build homes in places improbable.
On a sweltering Brazilian beach where the water is always fine.
In a hamlet, in impossibly and incredibly beautiful Ireland.
Sparkling green in summers and glowing white on a winter night.
On one of those huts in Fiji, right over the ocean.
A blue so rare that they never named it.
I have lived there all.

Home is that bickering aging couple.
Those photographs of my greatest teachers.
My home is a hand-cooked meal.



My home is in eyes. And breath.
In long encircling arms.
In fingernails and cheeks.
And sometimes. Even lips.

So to answer if I am going home...
I suppose I can't.
For there are just too many to go to.
Which is why...
I never really left in the first place.

Balarka Banerjee — Balarka is a Molecular Biologist by profession and an executive in a Biotech company. Besides science his other passions are Drama — writing, acting, directing — Poetry and Art. He likes good cinema and music. He is a foodie and a good cook. No wonder he enjoys writing about his experiences and interests.



Bakul Banerjee

Dulcimer – Klein Creek Farm

A late spring snow-shower drew
white borders around the stones
on the culvert. Flecked with pieces
of flint, those round stones were
from far away rivers, aliens like me,
but unlike my little girl. She stamped
muddy shoe prints on them running
to the barn cat across the stream.
The cat yawned and disappeared.

I distracted the disappointed child
with the promise of newborn lambs
farther down the path. We stood in line
to hold the milk-bottle to a tiny one.
My breasts ached for grown-up newborns.
On the way back, we met old horses
lost in their own thoughts; the cat
returned to join our wondrous walk.

The sky was scribed by contrails.
On their way home, birds sang
the joyous vesper with the music
of a single dulcimer from nowhere.

Dancing Raks Sharki – Illinois State Fair

Painted and sequined, girls tumbled out
of my van with their bags and props,
and trudged through the giant parking lot.
We had been returning to the Lincoln stage
for years, yet took wrong turns and got lost.
I followed, carrying the sword and cameras.

Fantastic heifers with handle-bar horns
and skins of many textures must wait.
A feisty boy refused to leave the poultry shed
and pushed his little sister in protest.
The familiar giraffe said hello to me
craning its neck out from his fake forest.
I eyed funnel cakes and the liquid-nitrogen
ice cream. I was late. Temptations I must resist.

I watched from the red-painted front seat
seared by the summer sun. My grown daughters
danced to tunes of Raks Sharki. Keeping the beat
they swayed hips to ring out coin belts.
Then, they raised tambourines to pay respect
to sisters from ancient times and distant lands.

Bakul Banerjee lives in Chicago. She is a Electrical Engineer by profession. She is the Section Advisor and Past Chair, Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Chicago and Section Chair, Chicago Chapter of Technology and Engineering Management Society.



Kathy Powers

So Many Words

They come to most forums
Say many words
Coiffed with intimations of hope
Empty, ruling class promises.

Mass media blasts
Ghost messages in color
Insincere content
Meaningless, vacant, robotized.

The ruling class steals human dreams
Ignores real pleas from common angst,
Talks over essential needs
Shuts down the cries from silent voices.

So many words
Fake understanding of obligation
Homeless, hungry, sick people
Have no words, not even letters.

Kathy Powers — I am a civil rights activist and developed my passions from coping with bipolar disorder symptoms. I have a tagline: "Advocacy is my therapy." Through advocacy I have discovered truth and beauty in helping people and sharing art.

Tapan Jyoti Mitra

The Journey

How do I know where are you?
How do I know where do you belong?
How do I?

The murmur of the wind,
The rainbow in the sky,
The horizon of the sea,
The crowded city streets

Where are you? Where are you?
How do I go?
To your forest?
To your river?
To your meadows?

Life calls life
Life touches life
Life echoes life

May I go?
May I leap?
May I run to your end?

And then you smile,
And you wave,
And you sing
The immortal song
from one mountain to another

And our journey becomes eternal.

তপনজ্যোতি মিত্র – সিডনির বাসিন্দা, পেশায় আই. টি. । কাজের শেষে প্রতিদিন বইয়ের জগতে ফিরে যান । রবীন্দ্রনাথ/জীবনানন্দ সহ বিভিন্ন লেখকের লেখা পড়ার মাঝে কখনো সখনো নিজেরও দু-এক লাইন লেখার বিনীত প্রয়াস । একটি গল্প ‘বসন্তের জলাশয়ে প্রতিচ্ছবি’ দখিনা পত্রিকায় প্রকাশিত । কবিতা আবৃত্তি ও গল্প পাঠের বাচনিক শিল্প করতে ভালবাসেন । এবং কখনো নাটকে অভিনয়, কখনো বা দেশ ভ্রমণ ।



Maureen Peifer

Downtown with Dad

We all step up onto the stairs of the 151 bus at Sheridan and Broadway. Mom first, followed by me, Ginny, Marty, and Dad last so he can pay the fares – a nickel for us kids and a quarter each for he and Mom.

Mom finds seats at the back so she and Dad can sit together with the three of us on the bench seat facing the aisle and the good views out the window. She's smart enough to know that way there'll be no arguing about who gets the window seat. They talk quietly while the three of us are busy looking at the lake popping up between the big mansions on Sheridan Road, the Edgewater Beach, and, finally, as the bus turns on to the Outer Drive, the whole lake.

It's a gray and overcast November Friday, the wind is whipping up white cap waves that slam on to the pilings at Montrose and Belmont Harbor, tree trunks bending and dipping, giving up the last of their dilapidated leaves. Marty is wondering if any boats would dare go out in this and Dad explains it would be only big cargo ships and they would come in way down on the Southside by Indiana, someplace called Burns Harbor.

I'm daydreaming about living in one of those apartments along Lake Shore Drive, thinking how great it would be to see the lake out your window all the time from the 25th floor. We get to Diversey and the bus turns along Cannon Drive by the Zoo.

"You know," Ginny says, "that's where Charlie Peifer was born."

Right, I think, no – he was born in a factory somewhere in China. Charlie's her stuffed monkey/partner in crime.

"How'd that happen?" Dad says winking at me. "I wonder how did he change from a real chimp to Charlie?"

"Oh well, he was kidnapped by robots from Japan and injected with stuff that made him a stuffed chimp so they could make copies," Ginny says quite confidently.

"Pretty tricky," Dad says.

Marty nods, "Yeah, those guys can do cool tricks."

By this time we're about downtown, crossing the bridge near the Wrigley Building.

"We should get off at Jackson," Mom says, "it's closer to Sears."

"You know, I think we'll start at Carson's, T-Bone. I saw some coats in their ad that would look great on the girls."

I know we're in for a treat cuz Dad is calling Mom T-Bone - that's a good sign – it's his pet name for her. "Are you sure, Jimmy? Sears usually has better prices," Mom says a bit anxiously.

"No worries T, no worries."

We all pile off at Washington and Michigan and walk west to Carson's.

"Can we go to Marshall Field's, first," we all beg "and see the windows?"

"Of course," Dad says "you didn't think we'd skip them did you?"

There are trains and toys, dancing dolls, sparkling trees, and several Victorian looking scenes right out of Dickens. All this is presided over by Uncle Mistletoe and Aunt Holly, the Marshall Fields signature Christmas couple, and their crew of benevolent elves, long-nosed, big eyed, clad in green belted suits with Robin Hood hats



and red striped stockings. Each of us is eagerly pointing to the toys we like best, secretly praying that Mom and Dad are taking note of our favorites. “Be sure to remember those for your letters to Santa,” Mom says softly, knowing that most of them are out of their reach.

Working our way up State Street, we finally reach the beautiful black wrought-iron Louis Sullivan entrance to Carson's and head into the bedecked aisles, full of exotic fragrances, shining purses, smooth gloves, silky scarves, and candies in special Christmas boxes. In the center of the store is a huge Christmas tree, towering several stories up into the center alcove. We take the escalator up to the 5th floor where children's outerwear awaits. Mom unties her flowered challis babushka and smooths her hair, flipping her long thick black braid over her shoulder. We all unzip our almost too small snow suit jackets from last year, stuffing hats and mittens in our pockets.

“Let's start with the girls, T, what do you think?” Dad strides over to the girls section while we all look around. I spot a navy blue wool princess style coat with a blue velvet collar and cuffs just as Mom does. We both look longingly at it, knowing it's out of our price range. Mom looks at the tag to be sure and silently shakes her head no at me. Ginny is with Dad and Marty and has her eye on a bright red peacoat. Dad finally finds what he wants – a double-breasted sage green twill raccoon collared coat.

“How about that!” he croons.

“Wow,” Mom says, thrilled. “It's so collegiate! And a zip out lining, practical too.”

I'm not sure and Ginny looks really bored and pretty miserable. I can see that she really wants the red peacoat.

“Look, T-Bone, there's two of them!”

Oh no, I think, matching coats!

“Here, try them on girls.”

Grudgingly, we slip out of our jackets and into the matching coats. Wouldn't you know it, they fit beautifully with “just enough room to grow into”. Mom and Dad are practically swooning in joy at how cool we're going to look in them. Ginny and I, not so much. But the longer it's on, the more I begin to think it's not too bad and Ginny's already beginning to think up a story about shooting the raccoon while she and Charlie Peifer were playing along the North Branch of the Chicago River one afternoon last fall.

“Can we at least get different hats?”

“Sure,” Dad says, so proud of his girls. “You guys and Mom look. Marty and I'll go over to the Boys Department. Let's meet by the cashier's desk in what, say 15 minutes T-Bone?”

Ginny chooses a navy wool beret and I find an ivory pom pom tasseled knitted hat with an attached scarf that comes almost to my knees, perfect for my more dramatic moments and very like the one my friend Mildred has.

Dad and Marty show up with a great-looking three quarter length navy blue peacoat and a Scandinavian style blue and white knit cap. Mom has the shopping bag open so we can put in our old jackets as the saleslady removes the tags so we can wear our new coats. Dad removes a large wad of bills from his pocket and proudly counts out the cash.

“What a smart-looking family you have”, the saleslady says smiling. Mom and Dad beam.

“Next,” says Dad winking at mom, “lunch at the Top of the Rock.”

“Wow,” we all gasp, “really, Dad!” We never ate out.

“Sure nothing is too good for my kids,” says Dad standing a little taller, grinning broadly.

“Are we really going to eat on a Rock?” asks Ginny. “It's awful cold out.”

“Nah, you goof. You'll see.”



We all troop east to Michigan Avenue and head north to the Prudential Building, the highest skyscraper in Chicago, and glide into the lobby.

“Wow, cool,” we whisper looking around the huge windowed marble space.

“This way.” Dad pulls us along to the elevators.

“Where to, sir?” the elevator man asks politely.

“We’re going to the Top of the Rock today,” Dad says proudly.

“Certainly sir.” The doors whisk shut and we go up so fast our ears pop. “To your left, sir. Enjoy your meal.”

Dad sashays over to the hostess.

“How many in your party, sir?” she intones graciously.

“Table for five – window please if one's available.”

“Certainly, sir, right this way.”

We follow the suavely coiffed young woman in her gray flannel Peter Pan collared frock to a table looking south across Grant Park. Mom helps us unbutton and the hostess actually takes all our coats and checks them for us! We are just dumbfounded, looking out at the lake and the park.

“The people look like ants!” Marty says.

“Look, there’s the Art Institute lions and the library!” I point.

“Too bad I didn’t bring Charlie,” Ginny says, “he’d love to swing around in here.”

Mom smiles and rolls her eyes at Dad.

Soon the waitress arrives and Dad orders for all of us. “We’ll all have the special Rock Burger, french fries, three root beers for the kids, a Pepsi for the lady and I’ll have a Schlitz on draft. Be sure hers,” he says pointing to Ginny, “has no cheese, no mustard or ketchup. Pickles only. She’s a real Plain Jane.”

“Got it, sir,” says the waitress. “You can add your own condiments at the table, as you prefer.”

It was the tastiest burger I’d ever had. Lovely shiny hard rolls, thick melted cheese and hand-cut fries – plus free refills on the root beer – creamy delicious A&W!

“How about some dessert you guys,” Dad says.

“Really Jimmy, are you sure?”

“I’m sure T. it’s not everyday you have lunch at the Top of the Rock. Knock yourselves out, guys. How about that Top of the Rock Sundae – sounds mighty good. T-Bone, how about you and I share one?”

Ginny of course gets plain vanilla. Marty and I each get the special. It’s got chocolate cake rocks, vanilla and chocolate ice cream, hot fudge, nuts and whipped cream on the top with a cherry.

“Thanks, dad,” we all crow as the waitress sets the check in front of him.

“My pleasure,” he says, kissing Mom and stuffing another pile of bills in the black folder.

As we head out to the elevator, Dad’s eyes radiate pride and love for his family.

Maureen Peifer is a Chicagoan with a lifelong love of literature, writing, travel, and teaching. She is currently the school librarian at a Montessori school where she previously taught. Her summers are spent in Amsterdam, which inspired this poem.



Bani Bhattacharyya

Fish

"Loving ourselves through the process of owning our story is the bravest thing we'll ever do." Brene Brown.

The dilemma of eating cooked fish started at my friend, Amita's house!

She had invited my husband and me to a small gathering. That evening she treated us to a curried fish dinner and many other delectable dishes. We were five couples, all from different States in India. All the ladies gathered for eating and chatting at a table in her dining room, while the men sat together in another room. Deepa asked the hostess, "From where did you buy the fish? It's delicious."

Amita answered proudly, "I bought the fish at the Fish Market in Chicago."

"I love that Fish Market. They've whole fresh fish swimming in several cement tubs of water. Fresh fish tastes enticing when it's cooked properly," Rupa said enthusiastically after taking a bite of the fish.

While this conversation was going on, I kept my mouth shut and stayed busy eating vegetable dishes only. Amita looked at me with astonishment and asked, "Why aren't you saying anything Neela? As far as I know, you've always something to say. You come from West Bengal, in India. There, people eat fish every day, sometimes twice a day. How come you're busy gobbling vegetables now, instead of eating my cooked fish, the one I cooked especially for you?"

"I eat fish, but I like the only fillet of fish. I buy it from Dominic's or Jewel." I replied in a defensive tone.

They were surprised and I understood why they were bewildered. Bengal is one of the States in India where the river Ganges flows. The river is full of many different kinds of fish. Every Bengali person is raised on fish during their childhood and fish is the source of protein in their diet, instead of red meat. Bengali people are used to catching or buying fresh fish from the market and they cook whole fish with the head on.

All my friends looked at me and I could see puzzled looks on their faces. Obviously, I had to explain my reason for not eating any fish. Everybody's eyes were on me.

I said, many years ago, my husband, Ben, suggested that I buy a nice fall suit for my workplace. I was young then and had a perfect figure, but very little money since I was in medical residency training. I went several times for a few months to Marshall Field store to window-shop when I roamed around, tried on several suits and then finally liked one light grey-colored woolen suit for fall. The suit was too expensive. Then I thought, *I'm buying with my own little money that I have and it's better to have an expensive and a stand-out type of outfit to show off.* I tried on that suit from the petite section and really liked it since it fitted me perfectly. So finally, I bought it.

It was the year 1971. I came to know, there was a fish market in the downtown area of Chicago, where they sold live fresh fish. Ever since my husband came to America, he didn't like the fish because in all the frozen fish, and no matter how I cooked them, he didn't find any taste and he called them, "smelly fish." Maybe because he was used to eating fresh fish cooked well only.

I requested my Indian friend, Ruby to give me a ride the next time she went to buy fish in Chicago. I knew she was an expert driver in the Chicago downtown area and visited that fish market quite often.

The next day, I wore my new suit to work. I happened to be on call that day. I had to work twenty-four hours straight, staying in the hospital. Many people complimented me on my new suit. Some even said, "Looking gorgeous" others, "becoming", and a few said, "Beautiful, sophisticated." One or two even asked, "From where did you buy the suit?" Although I felt embarrassed by their comments, I appreciated and was proud of my choice.



That same day, I received a phone call from Ruby. "I'm going to the fish market tomorrow morning at 10:00 a.m. If you want to go with me, meet me at my house by 9:30 a.m. and we'll go in my car."

I agreed since I would be off at 8:00 a.m. I thought *I'll be able to reach her house by 10:00 a.m. I'll get the chance to change at home from my suit into comfortable jeans and a shirt. That way I'll get rid of my high heels into comfortable tennis shoes.*

The next morning, I had an extra patient to attend in the hospital. I couldn't get off till 9:45 a.m. I wasn't able to change my attire but reached my friends home exactly at 10:00 a.m. Ruby waited for me in her car. She commented, "We should hurry, the place closes at 12 noon."

We parked the car, went inside the market, where the strong aroma of fish welcomed us. There, hundreds of different kinds of fish were swimming in water within several half-filled cement tanks.

The smell of the fish didn't bother me that much since I was enthusiastically looking for my choice of fish to buy. The place was filthy, dirty water was on the floor and a severe fishy smell hung in the air. I managed to walk slowly in my high heel shoes. People stared at me, maybe, because I was over-dressed for that type of place. I paid extra to have the fish skin taken off and having them cut in pieces. My friend, Ruby, criticized me. She didn't approve the way I was behaving and walking there as she was feeling embarrassed because of my behavior. I loved to eat fish, but I never had to cut or cook them, as my family had a cook to do that for us in India.

I was excited because, after such a long time, I was finally able to prepare a delicious meal at home with fresh fish to satisfy my husband's appetite. Ruby kept all the fish inside the trunk of her car when we left the market, but I smelled the fish inside the car while she was driving. When I mentioned to her, she snottily replied, "You want to go to the fish market and buy fish, then you complain about the aroma of the fish? I'll never bring you here in the future."

I ignored her and stopped talking. After reaching her home, I shifted the fish from the trunk of hers to mine and made sure, the trunk was closed. While driving back home, I smelled the strong fish odor inside the car. Surprised, since I closed the trunk, I tried hard to find the origin of the smell and then suddenly I realized, it was my woolen suit that absorbed the smell of the fish. The strong odor of fish had now invaded my nice expensive new suit. Feeling sad and depressed, I drove home. Outside the car, as I closed the garage door, I still had the stinky smell on my clothes. Taking off the suit inside the garage when nobody was home, I left the smelly suit in the garage. Placing all my underclothes in the laundry, I put on freshly washed clothes. In the garage, I packed my suit inside a garbage bag making a tight knot on it.

Holding my breath, I removed the fish wrapped in a thick white paper from the trunk. Leaving the fish on the grass under the sun near the garage, with the hope the strong sunrays took the smell away, I drove my car to the dry cleaners. Handing over the bagged suit to the cleaner, I requested her to clean my suit nicely. When she opened the bag, the strong smell saturated the air.

The lady said, "It smells, but there are no stains on the suit. It looks new."

I immediately answered in an irritated voice, "I know it smells, that's why it needs cleaning."

Returning home, I kept my car outside with all doors and trunk wide open. Putting the sun-dried fish into a plastic bag because it was still smelling, I threw the bag in the tin garbage container and closed the lid tightly. Hurriedly, I left the garbage on the curb for the next day's scheduled pick up. All this effort was to avoid the smell in the house after cooking because of the fear that my husband will complain about the 'fishy smell' when he arrives.

Again, I changed clothes and started the washer immediately. After spraying air freshener to take the fish odor out of the house and garage, I brought the car inside and closed the garage door.

All these scenarios happened only because I wanted to make my husband happy by serving him fresh fish prepared instead of cooking frozen fish.



Feeling extremely tired from being on call the night before, I fell asleep on the sofa.

I woke up at 4:00 p.m. I took some frozen Tilapia filet out of the freezer, cooked in the oven and served it to my husband for dinner accompanied by bread and salad.

While eating he asked, "What did you do today other than sleeping."

Annoyed I replied, "I had a hectic day, and all that because of you."

He looked at me and uttered, "What did I do wrong this time?"

"Forget it, and eat the fish," I exclaimed, with my mouth half full.

I'll never forget the loss of the twenty-five dollars, the money I had to spend to have my new suit cleaned. It was the early seventies then, and I just started to earn money after long years of study with loans.

My long narration of events was just to explain to my friends a simple question, like "Why aren't you eating fish with dinner?" All of my friends had a bewildered look on their faces with no sign of sympathy for me.

Amita said with a sarcastic smile, "Why don't you write this adventure as a memoir?"

Bani Bhattacharyya — Since my childhood my passion was to write my day to day events. Born in Kolkata, I came to the USA in 1960's. Being married in America, I was busy to fulfill my professional duty and taking care of my family. Now, I live in Barrington, IL and enjoy writing novels, short stories and poems. Many of my articles are now published in Amazon and in various magazines.



Dhoti Sutra

Representing Bengal Business Heritage in Dhoti

Very few people will disagree that India in the 21st century has become a shining beacon of economic splendor. What most would be surprised to find out however, is that India's newfound sense of the entrepreneurial spirit, lust for discovery and passion for success isn't so much newfound as it is reinvigorated.

India's legacy of global business people does not go back a mere few decades. It goes back centuries!

There are several highlights of Bengal Connection to international trade in Mangal Kabya (started in 13th century, most popular in 18th century after Turkey's invasion of Bengal). The connection of Bengal with foreign countries continues from 800 BC through international trade.

A lost kingdom named Chandraketurgh, along with its power and trade of muslins was widely known to Greek such as geographer/philosopher like Ptolemy recognized it too. Chandraketurgh is located in Habra, North 24 Parganas, Bengal is part of a network of international trade. And the other Bengal town known for commerce in ancient world is Tamluk or Tamralipta.

India 300 years ago was a very different place. While it was still the hot sweaty densely populated country we love, India was less of a cohesive nation and more of a collection of separate Indic identities which had been under Islamic rule for a long time. An Islamic rule that had since fractured and was slowly being encroached upon by the British East India. It was from here, in Britannia's Second city that Mutty Lal Seal forged the first business venture of an Indian to Australia.

Mutty Lal Seal was a Bengali. Like Prince Dwarkanath Tagore, who borrowed Rs 60,000 from the Bank of Bengal in 1817 and financed his business empire in India and abroad, Seal continued to grow his business. This fact itself should shock most Indians today. Bengali's were never known for their entrepreneurial spirit. They are known for their patronage to the arts and active distance for commerce. However even a 100 years ago, no one would have even batted an eyelid - a Bengali was a natural born businessman.

The Bengali merchant prince started off selling corks and bottles to a Mr. Hudson, who was then a large importer of Beer in the country. In the height of his career, he had over INR 300 thousand in three partnerships - Furgusen Brothers and Co., Oswald Seal and Co. and Tulloh and Co, trading in indigo, sugar, rice, iron and salt peter amongst other things. Today this capital would be valued at almost INR 16.4 million.

It was in the 19th century that he made history. Australia was slowly being colonized throughout during this time. During this period, the vast land was just being discovered by its new inhabitants. And what they found was gold. Gold required many miners, and many miners needed lots of food. Mutty Lal by this time had managed to get hold of 4 old flour mills that he restarted. He used these mills to manufacture biscuits, which he exported to Australia, to feed its hungry miners. Thus, was thrown open the doors, for the first time, to Indo - Australian partnerships.

While Mutty Lal made history, he was by no means the only entrepreneurial Bengali. Kolkata was the second city of the British empire and as such one of the premier hubs of trade and commerce in South Asia. However, the land was nothing but an uninhabitable swampy marshland to begin with. A young Bengali man called Lakshmikanta cleared an entire forest by himself to make way for the development of the great city. In fact, Lakshmikanta was given the deed to 9 Parganas, including the villages that would eventually become Kolkata, by the Mughal Emperor in 1608, over 20 years before the British touched down. So, in essence, Job Charnock had docked in Lakshmikanta's Kolkata.

These deeds to the 9 Pargana's and Kolkata are still preserved by Lakshmikanta's descendants - the Sabarna Ray Choudhury family.

Men like Mutty Lal and Lakshmikanta were global trailblazers, not only for Bengal but for India.

Perhaps the Indian's of today do not regard Bengali's as such anymore because the Great Bengal Tiger has been slumbering for the last two generation, but make no mistake, it is awakening, ready to pounce back into action and leave its paw-prints in all corners of the globe.

The resurgence has already started. For instance, on the 22nd of August, 2018, a fashion runway event was held in Sydney's Dalhousie House, organized by none other than Charlotte M. Smith, fashion anthropologist and the owner of the top 10 fashion archives all over the world for "Dressed for Success". In this multicultural event, with over 34 celebrity models showcasing a century's worth of fashion trends, traditional Bengali wear in the Lakshmikanta style was showcased to the world.

Indranil Halder, wearing a tradition inspired Panjabi with western flourishes paired with the very uniquely Indian dhoti worn in the Zamindari style took to the stage with Australia's Deb Knight, showing the world the traditional Bengali is smart, modern, proud as well as wholly unique. Differentiated from the rest of the world, yet fully engaged in it and a proud citizen of India and a leader global.

But this is just the start. As the Bengal Tiger awakens, so shall the rest of India awaken to its potential and once again take its place at the business hub for the rest of the world.

Amartya, MBA Student
SP Jain School of Global Management, Sydney

Introduction: Indranil Halder, Ambassador for Fashion if Multicultural Australia (FOMA) started a to revive and reinvent the art of wearing dhoti. The art of wearing dhoti is centuries old tradition but at the moment it seems like dhoti culture is a dying art. have named my movement as Dhoti Sutra. My objective is to bring awareness about the history, heritage and human connection to dhoti across the globe. Poets, artists and photographers have joined this dhoti movement. Here is a collection of writeup, poem and photo from the Dhoti Sutra Movement.





Dhoti Sutra

An Ode to The Dhoti

The Cloth that binds so many cultures,
The length and breadth of Asia's faiths;
The threads that stretch from ancient scriptures:
Worn by heroes and demons of every race.
In Thailand the phasin
In Cambodia the sampot
In Myanmar the Lungyi -
The Dhoti has morphed
Into many stylish spots.

Its home in India,
With a myriad names:
Dhuti to Bengalis
Dhoti to Northern Indian men;
Or Lungi in Southern India
A kind of long kilt
Which can be hiked
To give women a fright!
Infamous in British Clubs
Where no pukka member
Was allowed to enter
In a "loin cloth".

Gandhi was the icon
Of the Indian face
The Independent fashionista
Who brought global attention
To the dhoti's grace

Bengalis in dhotis
Were ambitious men
They set new records
And posted novel trends:
Colonel Biswas of Brazil, the adventurer
And Radha Kanta Sikdar, the Mount Everest "measurer",
Sarat Chandra Das, the first visitor to Tibet
And the first man to make a movie : Hiralal Sen

The flappy pyjama
Or the clingy Churidar
Never can compete
With the Dhoti's status as a star;
Globally a favourite,
Airy and light,
Fashionable and forthright,
The Dhoti makes a statement
And always wins the fight.

By Julie Mehta



Sreya Sarkar

Wrinkles

Whenever Meena passed the Yoga studio on her way to the town library or her son's favorite burger joint, the nostalgia filled part of her nudged her to drop by and find out what the studio offered. Yet, the right opportunity had not appeared till a good six months had rolled away, distracting her with a myriad of necessary but unstimulating activities. When she finally got to the studio she noticed how different it was from other exercise facilities. She had seen swankier places with clean, modern aesthetics, all steel and concrete, with efficient exercise plans, catering to the young perfectionists who took themselves way too seriously. But they seemed more like military barracks with robot faced soldiers on serious missions, rather than a place to stretch and relax. This place appeared more frowzy and informal. There were a couple of people chatting next to the water cooler with smiles on their faces and they did not seem to be in a rush to go anywhere or get something done immediately. The yoga mats were stacked asymmetrically near the entrance and the foam blocks stood in a precarious pile next to the reception bar. There were signs of casual chaos everywhere yet, it felt warm and friendly.

Meena drew her attention to the classes proposed by the studio. On Monday, there was a one and a half hour of Hatha Yoga. Tuesday was Vinyasa Yoga. Wednesday morning was reserved for power yoga, three separate half-hour classes. Thursday, Ashtanga Yoga, one hour. Friday, Kundalini Yoga. Then there was a generous sprinkling of other specialized classes. Prenatal Yoga for pregnant women; Restorative Yoga for healing and relaxation; Bikram Yoga for the tough ones who really wanted to sweat it out at a hundred and five degrees. There were too many to choose from. Meena sighed, folded the class timetable in half and dropped it in her oversized tote. She grimaced as her hand brushed against the strangest concoction of items imaginable. A half-used packet of tissues, a worn out Chinese take-out menu, her son's Rubik's cube which he had been looking for the last few days, a chipped sunglass, and the grocery list that had mysteriously disappeared. She had promised herself to clean out her bag once a month but that opportunity had come, waited and left like the route buses on Massachusetts Avenue from Harvard to Arlington Heights, and Meena had not been able to board any of them. Her eyes traveled to a neat looking black and white photograph of Downtown Boston's Quincy Market hanging over the reception bar to fetch her a moment of calm.

As she stood twitching her cleft nose in an attempt to decide which class to join, a hand tapped on her shoulders lightly. Meena turned around to find a smiling woman. Her aged face had a smattering of crow's feet etched around the corner of her eyes. It looked like a face that had enjoyed many a laugh in her life.

"Hi! You look as confused as I did when I first joined the studio."

She had kind, blue eyes.

"There is no best way of choosing, you know. Try all of them and see which one fits you the best."

"Which class do you take?" asked Meena.

"I practice Hatha yoga and I take a Kundalini class some evenings."

Meena smiled, a swell of glimmer flowing through her dark brown eyes. "That is helpful, thank you."

As she waited for the person at the reception to put in her information in the computer system, she caught a flock of women dispersing after a class. Their skins were flushed, their hair messy, sticking up like half-finished waves frozen in a camera shot. They were not overweight but they didn't look super toned either. They seemed above a certain age, definitely above fifty. Who else could make time to come to a ten a clock class in the morning? Most women her age, were working full time and were unavailable to attend a morning class. These



women unlike her generation, were used to free time and did not look guilty about not working conventionally and continuously. There was a softness in their appearance like their bodies had seen better days but were now spent and had settled down to just being, instead of blossoming.

The receptionist suggested that she should start with the mellower classes and then go on to the more intensive ones to give her body time to adjust gradually but Meena did not think that applied to her.

A vain memory elbowed into her mosaic of thoughts, and she let it hover a while before snuffing it out. Many years ago, in her secondary school days, she was a star Yoga student. Whenever her PE teacher wanted to demonstrate a difficult *Asana* to the class, she would call upon Meena and direct her to bend her limbs and rearrange her torso in complex poses. She was lean and malleable back then, but now her body had changed. Her once shapely hands that had seemed like supple lotus stems had grown fleshy over the years, and her lean middle section had developed a stubborn mom pooch. She had not practiced Yoga in years. But she was still fairly young, she told herself, so she would be able to pick up where she had left. Perhaps an advanced class would be the right one for her, she reflected as she drummed her fingers at the reception bar.

“Is this sequence recommended for all ages?”

“Yes.”

“What's the class these ladies are coming from?” she asked pointing to the partially dispersed group of women.

“That's the advanced Hatha Yoga class.”

“I want to join that class.”

The receptionist raised her brows. “Are you sure? Generally, newcomers start with Vinyasa Yoga.”

Meena shot her a convincing smile. “Believe me, I am not new to this.”

The Yoga instructor was around the same age as most of the other people in the class. She was thin and delicate and looked more like a next-door granny who enjoyed baking cookies for her grandchildren, than a Yoga expert. When she asked if there was anyone new in the class, Meena raised her hand, and received an open, toothy smile from her.

“Welcome! Have you taken Yoga classes before?”

“Oh, yes. I know Yoga, but I am a bit out of practice. So, I wanted to join your class.”

The instructor's eyebrows arched up. “That is wonderful. But be careful. It looks deceptively simple, yet it is not.”

“I have practiced Yoga for many years in India.” Meena need not have shared that but there was an all-knowing smugness in the instructor's tone which she could not ignore.

A smile stretched the instructor's lips. “In that case, we can learn so much from the *yogini* amidst us today,” she told the class.

Meena saw the instructor exchange a knowing look with a few other women, whose lips had also relaxed into indulgent smiles. She bristled silently at the mildly patronizing tone directed towards her. She had thought that the West had finally stopped perceiving people like her coming from an “exotic land” but every now and then, she would come across such remarks that separated her from the rest of the modern World.

Yogini, that's right!

From across the class, she saw someone wave at her. It was the same lady she had met the day she had signed up. Meena waved back and started the stretch routine with the rest of the class. The temperature was increased and the lights dimmed. The instructor started talking about the importance of breathing right.



“Don't hurry your body, don't rush yourself. Take your time and breath...in and out...in and out...like this...”

The class reverberated with well-pronounced sighs.

“Exhale the negative thoughts you have been holding in your minds, and inhale the opportunity to forgive and embrace all.”

The instructor's orotund voice and unhurried words were surprisingly hypnotic and lured the participating women to follow a slow and steady pace. But, Meena found the speed too languid for her liking. Everyone took too much time getting to the apex of the *Asanas* and when they did, they held themselves there forever. The several variations of a pose made the class further sluggish. She set herself on a mental cruise control as she performed the poses one by one---the warrior, bridge, child. She heard the rustle of sweatshirts being taken off to be kept by the side of the yoga mats as a few struggled to hold the posture while doing the eagle and the tree poses, but she was perfectly balanced.

“Bring your mind and body together. Don't let your mind wander off without feeling it within your reach,” the instructor reminded them.

Meena tried to follow her but her thoughts kept escaping from her intention of tying it to her body. Involuntarily, she started pondering upon how her life's direction and pace had made her increasingly restless over the last few years. Managing her young son and her household with minimal involvement of her spouse and no help from anybody else since her family was in a far-away land, had taught her to juggle and multitask but had also depleted her ability to bestow undivided attention to one single task for long. *Is it possible to develop ADHD in adulthood?* She wondered. *Did she need help?*

A layer of sweat settled over her upper lip like a freshly sprouted mustache. In a few minutes, she felt her armpits getting sweaty. She paused and glanced at others, most of whom had closed their eyes and seemed to be succeeding in wrapping their minds with their bodies seamlessly. There was a calmness in their bearing in spite of the awkward stretching of their bodies, which Meena found missing in herself right then.

The *Asanas* were becoming increasingly challenging, and Meena found herself struggling a bit. If only the heat was not dialed up so high, she would feel more comfortable. The sweating intensified and she found herself reaching out for her water bottle.

The class had progressed to doing various forms of pigeon pose and Meena thought she felt a slight snap in her back but ruled out anything serious, for Yoga always made her body pop and crack, in an attempt to expand and adjust to the postures. They came back to the lotus pose in a while and she unwound her body, but a dull pain remained. She was perspiring so profusely through her T-shirt by now, that it was sticking to her curves like it was painted on her. As the instructor mentioned the bow pose, she relaxed. It could be exactly what her back might need. Yet, as she got into position and stretched herself up in the pose, a sharp pain circulated through her body. She continued in the pose for as long as the instructor asked them to, but as she started disengaging, she realized that she could not untangle her hands from her legs.

Sweat poured out of her like a leaking water balloon and she felt close to fainting in a moment.

She croaked softly, almost inaudibly. “I...I think I am stuck!”

The nice lady who had waved at her before saw her in distress and called others. They formed a circle around her and waited for the instructor to approach. Their pink faces were lined with concern along with sweat. Meena's vision was growing blurry, the faces over her swam around in crooked circles and after a moment they started changing into the shapes of her dear ones. One of them looked like her beloved older sister. Another looked like an old, school teacher she admired. They were advising her to move her limbs but, she could not. She was really stuck.

Then her mother's face came into focus.



“Continue breathing, and relax!” she said and turned her body gradually.

She massaged her hands and feet and very gently started straightening her. Finally, Meena could lie on her side and her breathing returned to normal. The haze brought about by the shock and pain cleared, and she found herself surrounded by a group of strangers again.

A twinge of embarrassment shot through her as she recovered her senses. A moment ago, the face that had looked like her mother's, had changed into the instructor's face and she had read Meena's thoughts right away.

“It is okay, now. You pushed yourself a bit too far, too fast and that caused the disorientation. Also, your back is a bit weak. It will need some strengthening before you perform the advanced *Asanas*. You can practice core exercises for a while, before challenging your body again like this, okay?”

Her voice was soft and soothing, that of a mother's and not of a teacher's. Meena nodded and tried to sit up but the instructor held her down.

“You should keep lying down. I will come and get you up in some time.” She smiled and requested the women to keep an eye on her while she finished the class.

The blue-eyed lady gazed at Meena carefully, looking for signs of discomfort. Her ponytail had moved to a side and looked limp with sweat but her eyes were still sharp and alert.

“I am so sorry for disrupting the class like this,” said Meena in a weak voice.

“Don't worry about that. We were near the end of the class, anyway.”

Another woman chimed in sympathetically, “And there is no reason to be apologetic, really! We have all been where you are right now. It is not an easy class to endure, for sure.”

As Meena lay there on the floor recuperating, a realization came upon her and filled her with a hushed humility. She had assumed last week as she turned forty, that she had lost most of her arrogance and was well on her path to grown-up humbleness but there had lingered on the last crumbly shell of conceit.

She saw the mature faces and a new kind of appreciation grew in her. The faces exhumed wisdom beyond youth. They reminded her that perhaps after a point of time, the skin does become loose and stretchy but only to accommodate a life lived, to allow the inclusion of happiness and disappointments alike.

Like the age of a tree is determined by the annual rings of its wood growth, for humans, the age rings are the wrinkles and folds of skins collected over time. Each fold represents a devastation the person has undergone. Every wrinkle has a twinkling, funny story behind the hearty laugh that caused it. And here was her skin, still taut and wrinkle-free, but her body and mind felt rigid and frozen. Perhaps she needed a few folds and wrinkles to define what she really was, in person and in soul.

Sreya Sarkar having spent her childhood in a civil service family surrounded by voracious readers and fervent political discussions, Sreya nurtured a wish to write from an early age. After a short stint as a journalist in India, she set off for her second Masters in Political Science at University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, following which she worked as a public policy analyst in U.S. think tanks and published numerous articles and op-eds for newspapers. She currently lives in Boston and is working with Delhi-based Red Ink Literary Agency to get her first full-length novel published.

Urmi Chakraborty

Durga Puja in Pondicherry

Being raised in Jamshedpur and then relocating to Pondicherry in 1996 just few days before Durga puja in a different state was an unforgettable experience. Bengalis living outside Bengal celebrate Durga Puja with the same pomp and vigour. While most Bengalis head back to their hometown during Durga puja and a small percentage of people enjoy puja outside Bengal.

Goddess Durga represents a united front of all Divine forces against the negative forces of evil and wickedness. Durga Puja is not just a festival for Bengalis, it is also a moment of nostalgia and emotion. Right from getting the flavour of puja, the serene view of kash-phul to the Ashtami-r-Anjali and Bijoya Dashami, it is the most awaited time of the year. But adversity is the mother of invention, and those expat Bengalis including myself have found their own unique way of celebrating Durga Puja away from home.

The Bengali committee of Pondicherry who organise Durga Puja perform the customs and rituals with immense faith in them. The Puja starts right from early morning and I started my day by offering prayer and taking blessings of Maa Durga and then enjoyed the rest of the day with my friends and family. I like the fact that Durga Puja is a community festival and it is celebrated with equal enthusiasm by following the same rituals.

Apart from Pondicherry's puja, I arranged a trip to Chennai with my friends seeing the idol of Goddess Durga at various places hopping from one pandal to another and enjoyed eating delicious food. I always prefer spending Durga puja at Pondicherry as my parents, relatives and friends are over there. Since most of my friends are non-Bengali, they were much more excited about what goes on during the festivities so I became their guide and took charge of explaining to them the importance of Durga puja.

From Shashti to Nobomi, a competition is held every year called Ananda Mela, Bengali women participate in cooking food, various cultural programmes are organized that includes traditional dancing and singing takes place late in the evening and continues late into the night. Bengalis all over the world during these days of Durga Puja rejoice to their heart's content reconnecting with friends and relatives. Durga Puja is an occasion when the familiar sound of Dhak, Dhunuchi nach, the mild fragrance of Shiuli gives a familiar tug to every Bengali heart.





After the four days of Puja, in Dashami, in the last day, a tearful farewell is offered to the Goddess Durga. The idols of Goddess Durga are carried in processions around the locality and are finally immersed in a nearby river. Vijaya Dashami is an event celebrated all over the country.

Those joyful four days spent at Pondicherry still flash in front of my eyes. People from all over Pondicherry and nearby places enjoy Durga puja every year.

The festival of Durga puja was drawing to a close,
The red carpets were being rolled up,
The poles were being pulled out,
The tents were being removed,
And broken pieces of thermocol lay strewn around.
Ma Durga stood in a corner,
With her family and the wily Mahishasur,
In a posture of steely resolve and quiet determination,
Serene and calm,
Determined to continue her journey
From this earthly mess into the divine, the infinite.

Urmi presently lives in Sydney. She has a great passion for travelling and love to explore new places, avid reader of english novels. She wrote numerous hindi poems and english articles in facebook and different blogs. She is extremely happy to share her creation with Batayan's readers.



Amanita Sen

Film Review – Court

Film Review – Court

When the death of two Dalit children (feeling ashamed to classify children by the name of their caste) hits the headlines, I feel compelled to write about a Marathi film, *Court*, a National Award winner in 2015, directed by Chaitanya Tamhane, which I have watched lately.

In a complete non-preachy tone this film holds the mirror to our abysmally corrupt judiciary system which is blind to the neediest section of the society.

A tutor who writes songs to inspire the common people is held responsible for the suicide of a man employed to clean the gutters. His songs speak of suicide, is the excuse given to get him arrested and thus used as an eyewash to not address the reality which is, these men are sent to clean the sewers without proper gears and masks.

I Googled to be enlightened on this issue, and found that in the first quarter of this year itself 50 people and in 2018 September 11 people had died. I didn't scroll down further. What are they now, these deaths, other than mere numbers?

In a scene from this film, it is shown that the court, in the middle of this hoax of a trial gets adjourned for the summer vacation. The director holds the shot for quite some time on the dark courtroom. This scene for its painfully eloquent silence gnaws inside. I almost hope it knocks at the door of conscience of people who can make a difference somewhere but so far have relented to do so.

The last scene is also worth waiting for, summarising the story for us.

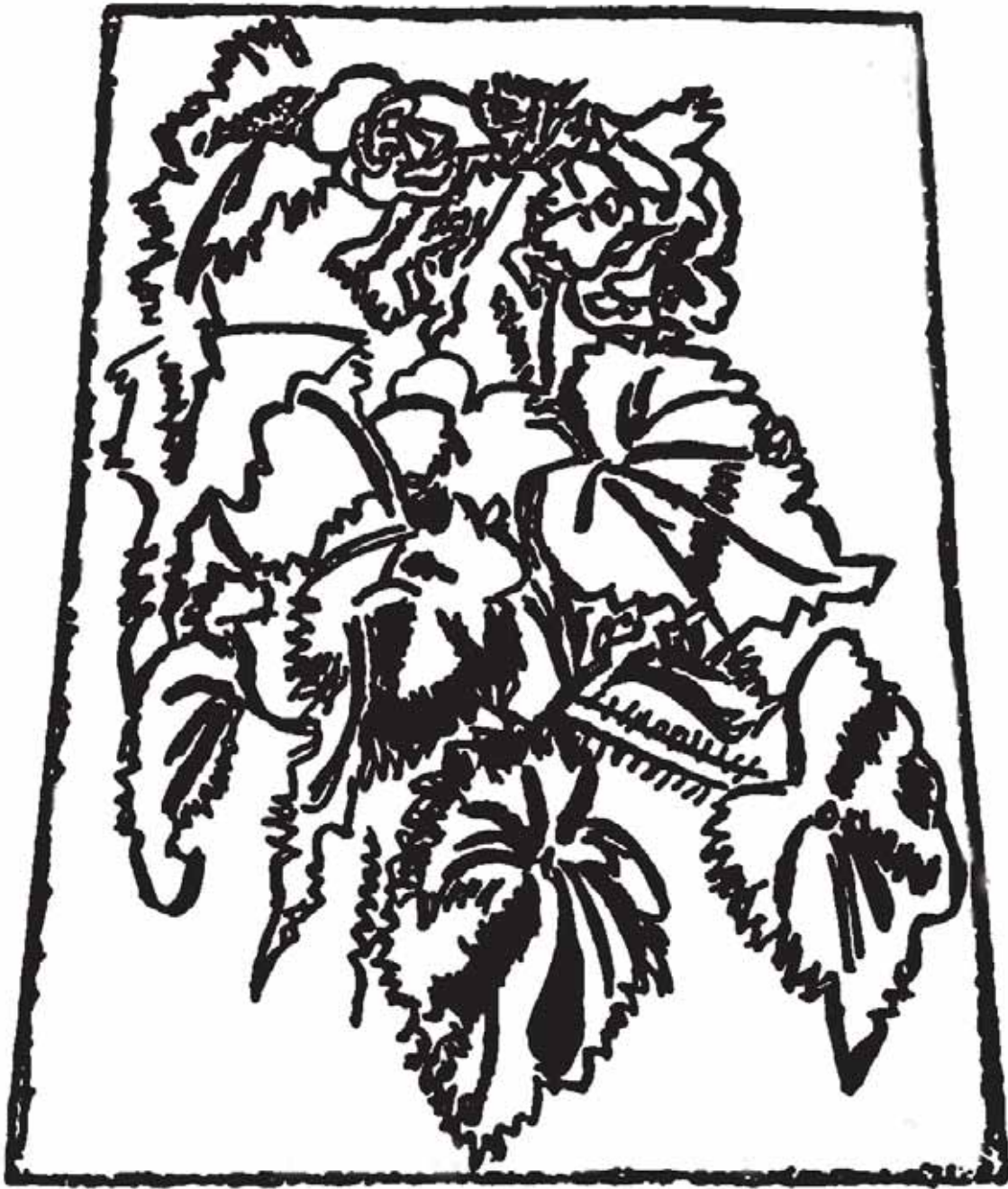
I was reminded of none other than Ray-his sensitive master-touches in all his films addressing relevant social issues right from *Debi* to *Gonoshotru*.

If you want to watch some good acting, brilliant economy of word-usage which cinema has the scope to provide to you, taking resort to symbolic depiction of the message, you might watch this film on Netflix or on Youtube.

2 volumes of **Amanita Sen's** poetry collections that have been published so far are "Candle in my dream" and "What I don't tell you". Amanita's poems have been published in various print and online journals in India and abroad. She works as a mental-health professional and lives in Kolkata.

Latest Etching

Jerry Kaiser



Jerry Kaiser — Jerry is a lifelong floral artist as well as a passionate human rights volunteer. He works settling newly arrived refugees in Chicago.



