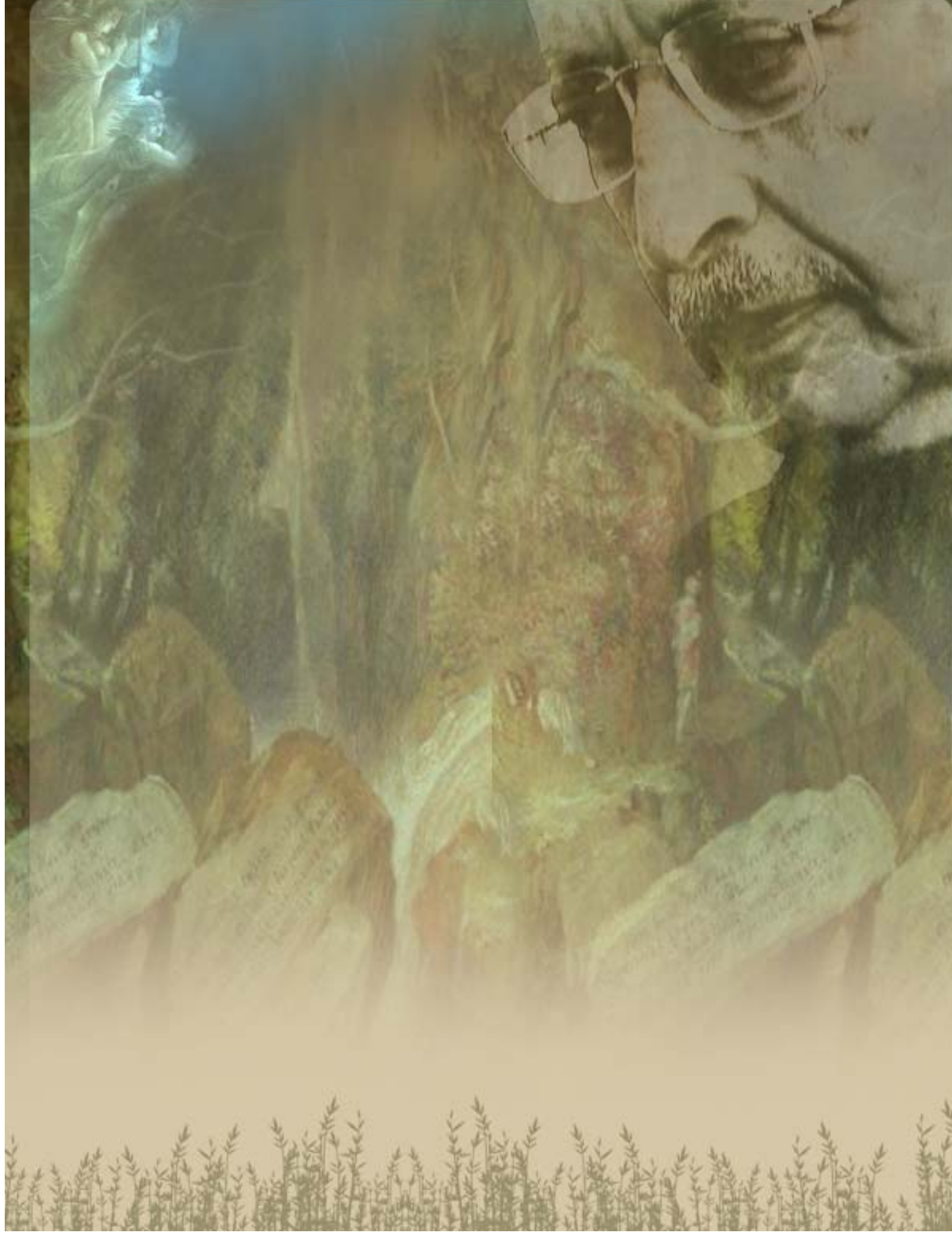


List of poems for eighth book

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1.

The 'S' Word

Silence the snake within you
Stop the hissing sound,
The 'S' word is for sukoon,
If solace you haven't found.

The rattle of the reptile
And its blood curdling strike,
Are like a two – forked human tongue,
The snake and devil alike.

The 'S' is there for shady
It's also there in sin,
And there too for sincerity
When hearts you wish to win.

The ' S' word's all – encompassing,
Sugar and salt to taste,
Evil resides in the heart,
But the soul's meant to be chaste.

- Sukoon in Urdu means contentment



2.

Untitled

It's candid admission
But he's honest that's something,
Omar's a good fellow,
But a political nothing.

For politics is about getting votes,
Splitting constituencies and people alike,
Never mind how you raise the notes,
And whether you ride an elephant or a bike.

But then if you join the game,
You must play by the rules
Or you ruin a good name
And are stung by fools.

For they know the game better than you,
By hook or crook its all the same.
It's an all or nothing extravaganza,
To grab your share of life's fleeting fame.



3.

Untitled

Scampering, darting, climbing squirrels,
Restless souls, midget-sized ,
Seeing them play with the birds,
Why am I surprised?

The chirping sparrow,
The cooing dove,
The sprinting squirrel don't match up,
Would be funny if in this melee,
They were joined by a pup.

Let's leave that to the realm of wishes,
No one likes the uninvited guest,
Unless he volunteers to do the ' dishes',
Then of course, he can also rest.

Back to the game of squirrel and bird,
They seemed happy and in clover,
But not a sound from any of them,
Was the party over?
I wondered.

And then I saw some life again,
When a squirrel jumped over a hen,
She was just strolling by,
Out for fun on the sly.

Caught between some angry stares,
She picked up speed and fled,
And flying as hens sometimes do,
Barely managed to save her head.

Species and size don't matter much,
I learned from the friendship I saw,
Of squirrel and bird at play today,
And it matters not if it's wings or paw.



4.

Untitled

The candle of life now barely flickers,
For the candle on the grave I see,
Readying to be lit by the Unseen Hand,
The mortal remains of poor little me.

One will burn and take me with it,
The other will set me free,
The body caged or destroyed,
The soul at last with me.

Where did I lose it while I lived?
Who possessed my soul?
The Devil within or burning ambition,
Who left me less than whole?

Will the soul be truly freed,
By the candle on the tomb?
Will there be salvation ?
In the silence of the earthly womb?



5.

The Monsoon- Part - I

Tears from heaven, a wailing sky,
Raindrops that gladden my heart,
The monsoon's here and I am on a high,
Is this the end or the start?

The 'Met' is never to be trusted,
For what's fact got do with the weather?
We all know how easy it is to get busted,
When brother loses faith in the other.

But that was only an aside,
So forget the bit about the brother,
What about those who take you for a ride?
Those lovely friends of fair weather.

Come on , Ashok, you are becoming a bore,
Now how much can I laugh?
If you go on like this, any longer, anymore,
By golly, no strokes for you this half.

Strokes be damned, its a brolly I need,
To keep my pants from getting weight,
Mark my words, take heed,
The monsoon's here, I'll take a bet.



6.

The Monsoon - Part II

Its now turned hot and humid,
But the 'Met' can't be wrong ,
Ofcourse, its got to be raining somewhere,
And how can you bet on one horse!

If it ain't rainin' in the east,
Try the south or the south-west,
For who knows the monsoon better,
Than the one who knows it best.

And who spoke of duration,
The length of the monsoon matters not,
Short and sharp can be pleasure,
While laboured effort could be rot.

Uncertainty is the keyword,
When in anticipation you doff,
Your cap to a pretty lady,
So my bet on the monsoon is off.



7.

Untitled

A fairy once told me she lived far from here
I asked her where and she said really quite near,
I asked her again what she meant by that ,
She said I'll tell you but first put on your hat.

So I did as she said and with hat on my head,
Patiently waited for the dancer,
She thought for a while, then pirouetted a mile.
And never came back with the answer.

She was a magical fairy you see,
As all fairies are wont to be ,
When I asked her what I should call her,
She said just call me, ' Me'.

So Me and I became good friends,
We played and laughed together,
And had so much fun over the years,
Like we were just made for each other.

I went with ' Me' to fairyland,
Saw elves and gnomes and the stars
I could even fly holding her hand,
From the moon to the faraway Mars.

I miss her now for she's part of me,
And I hope she's safe and well,
I also hope she'll come back one day,
And I'll have more stories to tell.



8.

Untitled

I love the debate about Shakespeare,
Was he man, woman or just a spear,
Centuries after the poor fellow died,
We're engaged in the battle of ' Who lied'.

Wouldn't you rather be reading
What the old chap wrote,
Like the Merchant of Venice,
In a sailing boat.

Sherlock Holmes was a man,
Of that I'm sure,
Unless someone finds
Out something more.

Another whose proven what a man he is,
'Cos no one's asking him out any more,
You surely know whom I'm speaking about,
The very important, Al Gore.

Why can't we simply leave gender aside,
Let man take woman or vice versa for a ride,
Man or Woman the Bard was great,
To sell his book, why use gender as bait?



9.

Untitled

Did I walk the straight and narrow?
Was the dart a poisoned arrow?
Did my heart ever bleed?
Did it even feel the need?

Was I ruthless to the core?
Wanting all and even more,
Was I really from that mould?
Was my soul to the devil sold?

Did I open a Pandora's box,
But keep hope alive as does a fox?
Was I simple or simply cunning?
Or from naivete simply running?

Did the devil reside within me?
Was there the 'other' I would'nt see?
Did I wear a chosen mask?
Was that easy or a difficult ask?

Asked the confessor of the priest,
Tell me if you're man or beast,
Judge me only if you have sinned not?
If you lie in hell you'll rot.

Am I both victim and perpetrator?
Will you tell me or shall I ask the Maker?
An honest answer he could not give,
Will someone answer amongst those who live?

Is anguish part of destiny?
Is fame the sunnier side of infamy?
Does Satan live by the side of God?
As the king does by the ordinary bod.



10.

Untitled

I saw a mynah on a branch today,
It sat there briefly then flew away,
It left the branch a little shaken,
But with a lesson clearly taken.

The bird was there for just a while,
The branch saw through its ruse and guile,
Testing time for the branch you see,
Would it hold, could it a home be?

Fortune too is a similar tester,
That comes our way, for a while 'the jester',
Then goes it's own new chosen way,
To flatter someone and someone waylay.

And leave some others with memories,
Of happier times and balmy breeze,
Midst all the fun some silent tears,
Some hopes, some smiles, unspoken fears.

Walk with it while its by your side,
Beware the rise and fall of the tide,
Part - time lover that fortune is,
Part-time favours is its only biz.



11.

Untitled

If you sing this ditty,
You'll be able to croon,
And with a little bit of luck,
Jump over the moon.

Its the song of the skies,
And the galaxy of stars,
There's Neptune and Venus
And Jupiter and Mars.

They twinkle at night,
When you are asleep,
And through your little curtain,
They'll softly peep.

They won't wake you up,
Cos next day is school,
But when you are naughty,
Mama knows you broke the rule.



12.

Untitled

I have never returned empty - handed,
From the portals of a House of God,
For I carried nothing but hope within me,
And hope never let me down.

The lines on my hands mean nothing to me,
Weightless, directionless, meaningless,
And when I put my hands together,
I ask for nothing, just nothing, brother.

Its enough to hope, that's all you can do,
In a world where you haven't a clue,
For a tranquil journey while your here,
With heaps of hope and no fear.

Hope is the path that God has given us,
The road on which to travel,
When we look to find the way to him,
When we pray for the future to unravel.



13.

Some thing's will never change

Morning dew and the sunrise too,
Walking barefoot in the park,
Something's will never change,
Like the beauty of a singing lark.

The moon will shine, so will the stars,
So long as the sun is around,
Some things will never change,
Though riches you may have found.

The clouds will burst and rain will fall,
There'll be rainbows for us to see,
Some things will never change.
Not for you and not for me,

Flowers will blossom and gardens bloom,
And trees will always have leaves,
Some things will never change,
Like verdant grass and fresh breeze.

Why must change be the constant?
Isn't status quo some peace?
Old footwear offers comfort,
Why hanker for new fleece?



14.

Untitled

Eagles know when its going to rain,
They also now of summer's pain,
Does summer long for rain too ?
Does it envy the morning dew?

Soaring eagles in the sky,
Six-foot wing spans up on high,
Please tell me what the clouds will do,
Generously burst or drop a few.

Hot, arid and dusty lands,
Swirling winds and whirling sands,
The eagles knows it all, my friend,
The swaying eagles rain portend.

What if the eagle wasn't there?
Who then would with me secrets share?
Of the Silent Bowl that resides above,
And showers its bounty with all its love.

Let the eagles roam the skies and more,
Let them be, let them soar.



15.

Untitled

When I fold my hands in silent prayer,
And bow my head to the Invisible there,
I do so with a wish of hope,
For the victims of strife beyond repair.

I see the world being torn apart,
I see this with an aching heart,
I see the spectre looming large,
The horse of hatred before the cart.

Let tension rage and turmoil reign,
Let blood flow, let there be pain,
Is this the voice I often hear?
When peace wears the cloak of feign.

Its might that's always right now,
Exercised with impunity and how,
Innocence slaughtered in ruthless fashion,
WMD's the holy cow.

Can't blame one or the other,
Nor those waiting in the wings, brother,
Never has it so selfish been,
Forgotten is the meaning of living together .

Will I see a different world?
Where words of love not stones are hurled,
Where co-existence exists in real form,
And flags of harmony are genuinely unfurled?



16.

Untitled

**I love the stars up in the skies,
That in the darkness shine,
So when I need I know they're there,
Those lovely friends of mine.**

**Through searing summer a distant drummer,
Beats the clouds to rain,
No greater comfort than to know,
Someone understands your pain.**

**The aching heart does quietly yearn,
For moments of relief,
From the bottomless pit and the ocean bed,
The co-ordinates of grief.**

**No truer friend than the one who's there,
To lend a helping hand,
Silently there for you to call,
When you walk on shifting sand.**

**But friendship isn't a one – way street,
Beware the dying ember,
There's give and take and all the way ,
And, that you must remember.**



17.

Untitled

I love those lazy party nights,
I am crazy about those fairy lights,
Give me food, fun and frolic,
And I am all set for roaring rollick.

I am all fine 'cos I can blink,
Plenty inside but I can think,
What time did I get to bed?
I ask a rather sozzled head.

How was the food and then the wine?
Did I have the time to dine?
Or throwing caution to the winds,
Climb the wall or commit some sins?

No greater sin than to not enjoy,
What's on offer, why feel coy?
Remember friend's life is short,
And nothing wrong with a little port.



18.

Untitled

Philosophies or otherwise,
Pain will always hurt,
Do what you want or what you will.
Dirt will always be dirt.

There is an inevitability to things,
Like life, demise and years,
Peace, contentment and happiness,
And an underlying sense of fears.

Que, sera sera,
Whatever will be will be,
I don't know today,
And you can tomorrow see?

This moment is what you live for,
And when it finally comes,
You've forgotten to live that moment,
Cos' you're listening to other's drums.

Strange that you should be living,
As others wish you to do,
Each moment is yours and only that,
To live it fully or later rue.



19.

Untitled

**Show me a cry ,
I'll show you a laugh,
Show me the whole
I'll show you the half.**

**Head or tails
You win or you lose,
It's either a blow-out
Or just a plain fuse.**

**There's an if and a but
If you like it that way,
Hens are just hens,
Golden eggs they don't lay.**

**Colours are many but,
Only one black and white,
You can look for the greys
But there's only one right.**

**Options are many ,
And then many more,
But there's only way to heaven
And that's through god's door.**



20.

Untitled

If only I could think a thought at a time,
I'd easily see the difference,
Between the dollar and the dime.

If only i could de-clutter,
The maze that is my mind,
The haze would then lift,
And clarity I would find .

An endless stream of thought
Bombards the helpless brain,
And will-nilly causes,
Did you say avoidable pain?

Yes, it is avoidable,
If the answer you can find,
You can then walk with eyes open,
And not be led by the blind.

The answer lies in unity
With the one and only Being,
For despite all distractions,
Only Him will you be seeing.



21.

Untitled

No brighter gems nor sheen
Than minds at rest and serene,
No oceans ever so deep
Than hearts that secrets keep.

No temple, church or mosque,
No sect, creed or religion,
Will give you a glimpse of heaven,
As will the light within.

No greater darkness than sorrow,
When tears won't let you see,
Till you come to terms and grief
And learn to live happily.

No truer words ever spoken,
As those that speak of You,
No greater bond than faith, O Lord,
That binds man to you.



22.

Untitled

**As the mirror that's stained with just
Does brilliantly shine when cleansed,
So the heart is set aglow
When the minds thus simply purified.**

**As the oceans churn the waters
Till serenity is then restored,
Do thoughts invade the willing mind
Till purity is spiritually found.]**

**As intricate as the cobweb
Is the maze of the human brain,
And hiding somewhere in a corner,
Lies an onrushing train.**

**As the last gasp of breath
That the mortal frame doth take.
So it given to you,
Man , to both give and gratefully take.**



23.

Had intended to speak today
But eye surgery yesterday precludes possibility.
So here go and few lines just penned
With all my love for the Club I joined 1959:

How low can the members go,
How steep is the fall I see,
Where are we headed my dear friends?
Where goes the DGC?

When one calls the other a liar,
Over seemingly petty things,
No matter whether your sinner or a friar,
Dishonour to all it brings.

All the Open Houses in the world,
Will bring no fresh air nor breeze,
Until a 'gentlemans' club remains just that,
And does not into fiefdoms freeze.

Gentle here has no gender connotations!



24.

Little Heavens

Its the little ones that a big heaven make,
The ones we miss everyday,
Like when we get relief from pain
And it rains on a hot summer's day.

Like sunrise from below the seas,
That heavenly does a day make,
Why would you buy an ersatz for your wall?
And hang a glorious fake.

Like holding hands on golden sands
As you go strolling by,
And the watchful eyes of a starry night,
And a bashful moon in the sky.

Like the cries of a newborn babe,
Midst the anguished delight of the mother,
And the beating of two hearts as one,
When a brother meets a brother.

Like the freshness of the morning dew,
When your feet touch the ground,
That little heaven you'll never know,
If you're not joyfully around.

Like the rainbow in a clearing sky,
And the silver-silhouetted cloud,
Heavens somewhere up there I know
But why put the little ones in a shroud?

Is there a greater heaven you've seen
Than the gleam in a mother's eye,
When happiness she sees on her child's face,
Pure ecstasy, just heavenly.



25.

The Shore

Lapping waters gently wash,
The face of a worn-out shore,
And erase oe'r both time and tide,
Footprints forever more.

The look now a daisy fresh,
No marks, no hollowed cheeks,
Does it succumb to age, I wonder?
For it neither raves nor speaks.

Just quickly accepts the ravages of time
And its nursing by the seas
Taking in its stride a summer's plain,
And the balm of the gentle breeze.

There is much to learn from the humble shore,
As there is from the mighty ocean,
From that which is just always there,
And that in constant motion.



26.

Untitled

As I into the sunset walk,
And over my shoulders glance,
I see the outlines of a fading past,
And walk as though in a trance.

Lingering memories come flooding by,
As the ocean does the sun engulf?
I re-live moments of happiness,
And those that were seemingly rough.

Thoughts that hovered in the mind,
Now come easily to the tongue,
I have no fears, I've shed my tears,
And the final bell has rung.

Uncanny the proximity of sorrow and joy,
For both make us easily cry,
Hold back the tears if you will,
But the efforts a futile try.

Footprints that we leave behind,
Soon get washed away,
Time is both healer and eraser,
Clean slates will always hold sway.

No one learns from another's follies,
Which is why we are so different,
Whoever learnt from the sands of time?
Whoever to be sublime?

Doing is all that finally matters,
And do you must plus dream,
Be aware of what lies in your hands,
For destiny will reign supreme.



27.

Untitled

In our heart of hearts
We all know well right from the seemingly wrong,
Then why do we let our minds fool us
And play with us ping - pong?

A battle royal between the two
Then royally ensues,
If right is right then wrong can't be so
So why the struggle to choose?

Is it because our brains are wired
To look for sensual treasure?
And while right is good and should be the choice
Wrong is the repository of pleasure?

Is it a case of Adam and Eve
And the Evil eye of the serpent?
The slick marketer the devil wearing fur
Or the duplicity of the dream- merchant?

Why is it friends why the need for 'amend'
Why can't we just get it right?
Is it the heart or the mind
The culprit we need find
Why can't we see day from night?

Just quietly accepts the ravages of time
And its nursing by the seas,
Taking in its stride a summer's pain,
And the balm of the gentle breeze.

There is much to learn from the humble shore,
As there is from the mighty ocean,
From the one which is just simply there,
And the one in constant motion.



28.

Untitled

Visit the doorsteps of the wise,
Let your feet wear out their mats,
And while departing hope and pray,
You might someday wear their hats.

Learn from others if you can,
Not easy to do that we know,
'Cos intervening in the process
Is the unwilling false ego.

Learning from some other, remember,
Is humbling for both taught and teacher,
While one learns from another's experience,
The other shares as simple preacher.

Jack of all trades you can be
But master then of none,
For you've forgotten to get a master,
To find your place in the sun.

To learn from another can be a joy,
See how a child plays with a toy,
When a doll is pulled apart,
The child is left with a broken heart.

And a lesson then that is quickly learnt,
Is if you play with fire you will get burnt.



29.

Everest

Imagine standing atop the Everest,
And how lonely you feel,
When you tower above everyone else,
And all you hear is the click of the heel.

But before you feel sorry for that elite lot,
Remember they feel sorry enough,
When they see below them the camaraderie,
And all the jolly good stuff.

Maybe its just in the nature of things,
For contentment to elude us a bit,
And were it to be any different, friends,
Wouldn't achievement then take a hit?

I'll leave you to solve the conundrum,
'Cos I'm happy where I am,
And all this talk of pyramids,
Is it real or just plain glam?

So, would you like to be atop the heap?
Or be the boy with his wandering sheep?
Write and tell me before you sleep,
And promises we must learn to keep.



30

Untitled

Clean you must the mind's eye,
As you do a window pane,
So that everytime you look outside,
Its free from prejudice and stain.

Don't cloud the mind with unwanted thought,
And your own mist create,
You'll miss rainbows in the sky,
And then eternally wait.

We dream our dreams through the mind's eye,
Then give them hope and shape,
If this is done with blurred vision,
How will we tell man from ape.

Don't walk then with blinkers on,
Though a racehorse you maybe,
For they run a different race,
And no one's betting on you or me.

The moral of this poem then lies in clairty
Of purpose vision, and mind's eye and what you want to see and be.

31.

Untitled

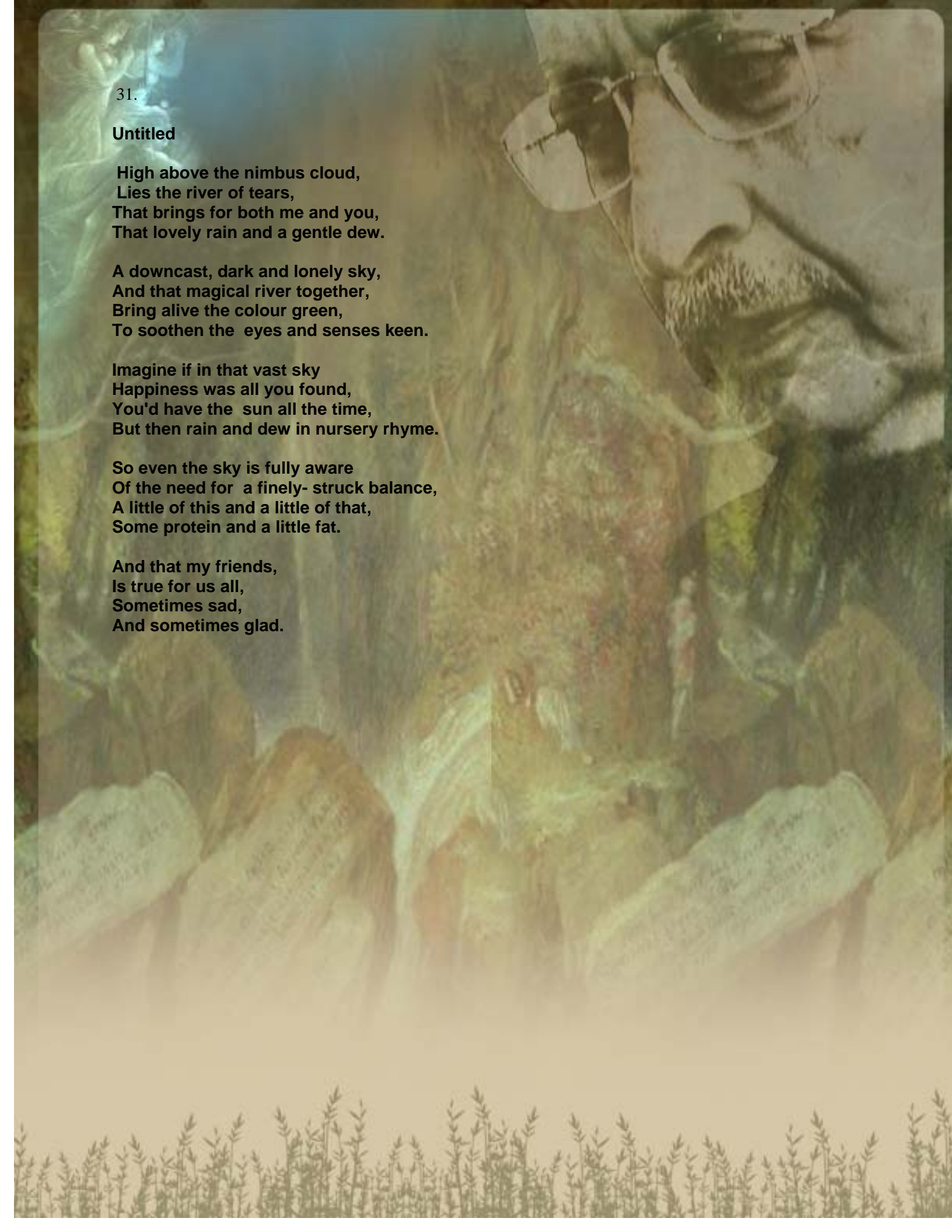
High above the nimbus cloud,
Lies the river of tears,
That brings for both me and you,
That lovely rain and a gentle dew.

A downcast, dark and lonely sky,
And that magical river together,
Bring alive the colour green,
To soothen the eyes and senses keen.

Imagine if in that vast sky
Happiness was all you found,
You'd have the sun all the time,
But then rain and dew in nursery rhyme.

So even the sky is fully aware
Of the need for a finely- struck balance,
A little of this and a little of that,
Some protein and a little fat.

And that my friends,
Is true for us all,
Sometimes sad,
And sometimes glad.





32.

Untitled

**When the grass is green
And the sky is blue,
Why are you morose ?
What's wrong with you?**

**When God is in heaven
And of that we are sure,
Why wouldn't you want
To stay here a bit more?**

**If death doesn't kill you
Stress surely will,
At least think of those
Footing your bill.**

**So come on mate
lets go on a date,
Lets have some fun,
Lets roll and run.**

**Cut out the frown
It only adds weight,
And who knows
You might just drown.**

**If I'm not your type,
Go find yourself another,
But for crying out loud,
Don't put yourself in a shroud.**



33.

Untitled

I wait for Him to say something,
To whisper as I stand still,
How goodly has my journey been,
And did I do His will?

Both black and white do I know well,
As I do the chequerboard,
I know the world has no saints,
And no ones above board.

How then does He judge me?
Where am I placed on His scale?
When He knows there's good and bad,
And isn't this the common human wail?

Or does it even matter at all,
What's done in the class of life?
When righteousness I often see
struggle with turmoil and strife.



34.

Untitled

The streaks of silver I now see
When in a mirror I look,
But mute reminders of life's stages,
And the final pages of a book.

The eyes a little weary now
Having seen and done it all,
A wry smile across my face,
Wryly tells it all.

Wrinkles , wrinkles, everywhere
And a shrivelling mind too,
The redeeming feature that I see, O reader,
Is that 'twill also happen to you.

So mock the tyranny of truth , Ashok,
As you are wont to do,
And laugh at the grim appearance you see,
'Cos that reflection is just not you.



35.

The Perils of Proximity

When the mountain is your abode
You don't feel the dangers there,
But when you see it from the valley
All your fright then laid bare.

Ask a fisherman if you wish
Does he ever a storm fear,
Then ask the stroller on the shore
And he will tell you the storms near.

When your head is in the clouds
You don't hear the thunder there,
But when you see them from the ground
You know the black that clouds wear.

When you get too close to something
Is when you don't quite clearly see
The other side of the picture, friends,
'Cos your mind's then no longer free.



36.

Untitled

**When walking backwards isn't easy
How can looking back be?
This moment and the next are
yours, Ashok,
For the past is just memory.**

**Did you really climb the Everest
And did you dance on ice?
Will someone bear you out on this?
Or will your word suffice?**

**Will you then a witness need
A speaking man or mice?
Will anyone take the box for you
Or do so for a price?**

**What value then is memory
And the heroics of your past?
Were you always truly honest
Or pull some really fast.**

**What's gone my friends is truly dead
And that you cannot flaunt,
What's left now is just the future
As memories only come back to haunt**



37.

The Icing on the cake

I love the cake you bake for me,
The candles are very nice,
But if you put some icing on it.
I'll pay you a special price.

I'll give you a hug and maybe a kiss,
O on those lovely cheeks of yours,
'Cos you are my mama and I love you,
And you help me with my chores.

I need no 'Choco' and no cream,
For you're the icing I need,
You're the one I see in my dream
When I'm hungry and need a feed.

The best , icing in the world, Mama,
Truly you and this ain't no drama.



38.

Untitled

The sun so fierce, so soft the moon,
As day melds into night,
The orange glow, the setting sun
O, what a heavenly sight.

And in your eyes a glint I see,
As stars come out to shine,
Time stands still midst silent sound,
And a moment that is divine.

And as I gaze up at the sky
I see that heavenly bowl,
All lit up an inverted cup
And I see my yearning soul.

And then my gaze returns to earth
And I see your beautiful face,
I wish I could but simply describe
Your unsurpassable grace.



39.

Untitled

**Come hold my hand lets walk on sand
Lets spend some time together,
Just you and I lets laugh and cry
Lets make the best of the weather.**

**As you had said, winters fled
Lets make the most of Spring,
Lets hop and skip , Lets jump the ship,
Lets find that happiness thing.**

**That elusive bird that single word,
Love, is in now the air,
With your looks and my flair
We'd make a comely pair.**

**The night is young the stars far -flung
And the moon it shines so bright,
Lets gently dance lets waltz and romance
And dine by candle-light.**

**Lets do all this for this is bliss
And heaven I do not know,
For me this is all that matters
And the only way to go.**



40.

Untitled

A lonely tree atop the mountain,
Pensively does look,
At its friendss below on level ground,
Whom it heartlessly forsook.

Standing alone in solitary splendour,
Wistful to the core,
Like a sailing ship whose mates are at sea,
While she's anchored at the shore.

An arduous climb to high terrain,
Is tiring to say the least,
And then to find at the end of it,
A lonely guest at the feast !

Go reach for the stars if you will,
Feet firmly on the ground,
'Cos one false step and its tumble town,
Another victim the heights will have found.



41.

'Let's reach out o Leh'

Bursting clouds as if in pain midst,
The agonising sound of thunder,
I saw the rain come down in torrents,
And the birds look up in wonder.

Their wings they flapped and thrashed about,
And Moles burrowed deep,
Terror terror everywhere,
What happened to sleep ?

Friends and strangers lost alike,
Buried under rubble,
Debris-laden open mouths
Life gone like a bubble.

Nightmare or a waking dream?
Was there even time to scream?
I Wonder?
Horrid what I read and saw,
Nature and its inexorable law,
Defy it Man and you will see,
What it does to both and me.



42.

Fear is the root of all sorrow:

Questions, questions, everywhere
What will happen tomorrow?
If peace you want as your guiding star, remember,
Fear is the root of all sorrow.

When you see a beautiful river,
And the gorgeous waterfall,
Then you think of the rapid current,
And you hear the final call.

What will I do without life
For life was meant to be,
And what of those I love,
What will they do without me?

Why are we not happy men?
The constant hankering after fame,
Keeping happiness at distant bay
For fear we may not make a name.

Want not, have not, lose not ,
Because nothing is ever yours ,
The fear of loss is like the devil
And makes us crawl on fours.

And what if I lose the lot,
All this that I richly deserve,
Would be unfair to the midnight oil, I concede,
But whose ego was I trying to serve?

Fear then is at the heart of sorrow,
That which takes our smiles away,
Leaves us feeling cold as stone,
With a brain that has nothing to say.

And if the ultimate king of sorrow
Is the fear of losing your life,
Try laughing yourself to death,
My friends and happily end this strife.



43.

Untitled

Brazil banking on Russian drought,
One man's poison another's sweetmeat.
And yet we hail the world as one,
Divide and rule is no mean feat.

The left hand knows not what the right does,
Is this not the grand design?
Of those who seek to dominate,
And is it then not a sinister sign?

Do we not derive vicarious pleasure,
From the misfortunes of another's plight?
And secretly delight in schadenfreude,
Have we forgotten Nelson's eye?

Do we with outstretched hand,
Reach to thank those who helped us along?
Or, hiding behind a devious veil,
Chant mantras and happily do wrong?

Is this human nature? Think.
Does it even make you, blink?
To what depths, Ashok, will man sink?
And yet we blame that blessed drink.



44.

The Summer Burns

**Heavens weep in silent agony,
And the sun is put to shame,
For its harshness, its tyranny,
Blots on its fair name.**

**The searing heat, the windwept storms
And dust is raised to hell,
Parched lips sweat on the brow,
Steam where rain fell.**

**Thank God for breeze, the shade of the trees
And the night that is the balm,
Thank God for stars, the silvery moon,
And my love for the peace of psalm.**

**But the Sun, you're nice when you melt the ice,
And streams flow down the vale,
For then I have another poem,
Another song, another happier tale.**



45.

Derision

**Don't mock me, friends, for I may weep,
My tears won't turn to drops of dew,
Let me be, let me sleep,
Let me dream of a sky that's blue.**

**Not every cloud has a lining,
Pretty silver or otherwise,
You will not always be dining on fare,
Pleasing to your eyes.**

**Handsome horses will be there
That you may not get to ride,
Better always to laughter share
Than to singer and deride.**

**When you sneer and mock another,
You simply run yourself down,
Let me tell you something brother,
Derision never made a name in town.**

The Hills of Jingdezhen

Took us a while to get here,
Even though, Jingdezhen, you were so near,
In Shanghai itself came the news,
You'd told the pilot, you refuse,
To let us land,
And so we were made to stand,
And wait for another day,
Before we could come to stay,
With you.

You look unspoilt and virginal,
A bit unkempt but original ,
For you are the world of living art,
If ceramics and clay is in the heart.

The people unspoilt just like you,
Down to earth for that's what they do,
They play with it and shap it well,
And a wonderful story do they tell.

You the hills I still have to explore,
And for that I need some time more,
Until then,O Jingdezhen,
There is no more from me nor my pen.

Ashok Sawhny, 29th Aug, 2010

