

Alankar Das Dalal

The Little Boy

He stood alone in the silent vale
Like a star in a lonesome night,
And drank the morn's whisp'ring gale
That filled him with delight.

Though a little child was he,
He often visits the glen.
It made him glad as happy could be,
Amidst the robin and wren.

That day he stood alone, he knew,
Was brighter than the rest.
For Spring hath ta'en birth anew
And the dale was joyous and blest.

The lark doth soar higher still,
In the azured sky,
As he trudged along the hill
And gently passeth by.

There was no melancholy strain
Amongst the flowers and trees,
Nor he felt any stinging pain,
Standing in the breeze.

Beside the lake a florid red
Speck hath caught his eye
That seemed like a soft sanguine bed
Of flowers fluttering by.

He walked down the noiseless vale
To reach the ruddy spots,
The path was shrouded with a veil
Of fragrant forget-me-nots.

When he reached the scarlet ground
Forgot all friends and foes,
For there the earth was full profound
With rich and ornate rose.

His eye fell on the velvet leaf
Such wonder-struck was he,
His naked feet could take no leave
He's o'er-brimmed with glee.

The valley made no sound no motion,

The crimson rose stood bare.
It raised its head towards the ocean,
The boy could only stare.

He hath trodd'n many a mead
Yet never this beauty seen,
The petals borne the pearly beads
And outwards they doth lean.

He sits upon the grassy glade
And looks upon the rose,
The leaves doth shine like a jade,
Oblivious of all throes.

The sunbeams dance upon the rose
And lighten up the beads,
That show the flying cuckoo goes
Like swiftly moving steeds.

He breathes the sweet scented air
In all tranquility.
And hears the flower's song, though rare,
In silent mellifluity.

O'erwhelmed thus, a drowse he feels,
Images in mind were born,
In wings of poesy he reels,
Though child, no poet in form.

His morning trance splits asudden
By a busily buzzing bee,
That echoes the voice in Keats' garden
And its chanting minstrelsy.

It sat on the airy-beaded edge,
And stopped its whizzing wings
Awhile, then it flew to a sedge,
And there a song she sings.

The zephyr swayed the rose's head
On its caressed seat,
The flower's golden grainy bed'
His gleaming eye doth meet.

He plants a palmy skimming touch
Upon its suave-red floor,
A silken touch that fills with such
Joy and cheer galore.

That pleasure could beget such pain
This innocent child knew not,
For earnest the rosy thorn hath smitten;
And O, the pain he got!

A drop of blood did stain the rose
Like an old heart guilt-laden,
That with time doth bigger grows

As if predicted by a raven.

The flower drank the child's blood
Like a thirsty monstrous pard,
And in his eyes there rose a flood
Of tears unanswered.

The needle was a serpent guiled
With lusty covered part
"Who'd think," quoth'd the child,
"Such treach'ry in her heart?"

He couldn't conceive nor concile,
The beauty he so cherished,
Could bear such hatred to belie.
His 'gnorant heart lay perished.

Like a heinous-hooded hawk
That strikes an unflawed kill,
The thorn too holds Creation's mock
In stir not, but in still.

The thorny spine from underneath,
Bore an acursed look.
A sorry sight the petals breathed,
No pity they ever took.

The tear that hath swell'd so long,
Now dropped in silent ease.
He hears no music nor a song
As the scarlet ground he leaves.

As he goes, his heart sublime,
The nightly creatures call.
The heaven's orb now kissed the line,
The day now veiled in pall.

Now he knows what seemeth rich
May not be throughout so,
The façade may never at all teach
That inward lieth woe.

No more a naïve child was he,
As from the vale he ran.
No more a little boy was he,
But a wise and suffering man.

The Evil Hour

I

The fiercest cloud of the sunless sky
 Split a venomous tongue of fire,
 That raged through every skeleton'd tree,
 And every shadowy briar.
 The savage wind like a bloodhound fang'd
 Did leap upon the earth,
 And drove the earth to smithereens small
 With voids of joyless mirth.
 The monstrous night hid the dreamful stars,
 The sun slept the other side,
 Here dole-frenzied Daemon ruled,
 And painful woe betide.
 The flowers did gloom with a palsied-eye,
 Their beds looked like a tomb,
 Not a downy dove did take a birth
 From the death-infested womb.
 The birds here tuned no ancient charm,
 But in their nest did moan,
 They turned so pale in their sullied plight,
 That they could only groan.
 A swarthy sullen Stygian sprite
 Strode singing a curs'd strain
 That spread through the plaintive wailing wind,
 Heralding grief and pain.
 A lonesome nymph on the dreary soil
 Did pine for a drop of water,
 For aeons it hath crawl'd and broil'd,
 In agony did it flutter.
 Frozen was the misty air,
 It execrations howled,
 Menacing breath sailed everywhere
 With blessed whispers ghould.
 The pall did cover the grey-ston'd moon,
 It lost its silver sheen,
 Such pallor strange of the nightly orb
 Not a bard hath ever seen.
 The mirror o' the sickly pallid lake,
 Hath turned the blackest haze,
 Stained by the dome's darken'd shroud
 Of terror-stricken days.

II

Amidst such roaring tumult lay,
 Beneath a lifeless bower,
 A wanly wearied woman old,
 From no ivory tower.
 Like a forlorn maid she looked,
 With ghastly-ailing eyes,
 With bloody feet and ruddy tears, she could
 Neither move nor rise.
 A heavy-crest'd heart she bore,

That swell'd sorrow-laden,
In silence alone, endured it all,
This ill-maladied maiden.
She couldn't breathe a painless sigh,
Thus drowned in despair wild,
For this loveless, cruel, treach'rous world
Hath killed her tender child.
Thence she knew what joy and mirth,
What was cheer and glee.
But a swiftly passing shadow
That in dark doth flee.
Happiness is but a vision'd dream
Of a sweet-scent'd eye,
That dreams of a journey to an elfin grot
In waking nowhere nigh.
'Tis like a drop of vap'rous air,
Canst not be grasped nor caught,
That eludes every human heart,
Every unhappy lot.
Thus, in Erebus, she stood,
An alabaster white and cold,
Unvisited by all merry thoughts,
Her miseries sung and told.

III

Sev'ral springs have passed since then,
Like embers burn'd the maid,
And comfort crept in her wretched heart,
When she lay in cold death-bed.
No more the bitter chill doth rage,
The stormy night becalm'd.
Soft and slow she trod the path,
Her frosty breath benumb'd.
As the still night closed down on her,
In silence she made her way,
The dormant sun from his slumber rise,
Alas, now comes the day!

Good Morning!

The Sun begins
His heavenly march
Charioted on his
Rainbowic arch.
The birdies sing,
& th' flow'rs bloom
As Delight defeats
The sad heart's gloom
The day doth dazzle
In its sprightly dance
As the Sun showers
His benign glance!

The Whispers of Nature

The east glimmers with the streaks of morn,
 Another day is happily born,
 The night's darkness, the sky doth hide,
 As the golden sphere begins its ride.
 The sky in blue is rapt withal,
 The fruits of evil are ripened to fall.
 The grass is caressed by the warmth of dew,
 And the flowers do blossom in their multi-hue.
 Green leaves dance in the light wind's sigh,
 With the sepulchral clouds gently floating by.
 The birds soar high with their airy wings,
 A melodious song that Mother Nature sings.
 The flowing brook speaks of glory divine,
 Of eternal love that surpasses time.
 It whispers the ditties of surreal heaven,
 Of angels and fairies, of no grief-woven.
 The waters of the lake are but crystal clear,
 Yet the hearts of the people are filled with fear.
 Time goes by and the works rush on,
 Before I know the whole day is gone.
 The sky is now covered in a crimson shade,
 As the silence deepens in the grassy glade.
 I sit and stare at the stony grave,
 And darkness descends like a surging wave.
 The breeze doth whistle a sublime song,
 And I keep on dreaming all the day long.
 Wing'd on the clouds, the moon begins its flight,
 She vows to be there for the rest of the night.
 The opaline stars in their silvery blue,
 Weave a different yarn I hardly knew.
 Of Elysium, they speak, where the souls reside,
 Having floated to heaven post earthly bestride.
 They chant the music of eternal bliss,
 Of joy-sans-sorrow, of celestial peace.
 As I close my eyes at the end of the day,
 The stars and the moon gently drifted away.
 No more shall I see my old friend's face,
 For life is a sweet-yet-terrible race.
 Their memories of the yester-years,
 Will bring me hope in my silence and tears!

About the Poet

Alankar Das Dalal is an Assistant Professor, Department of English and Literary Studies, Brainware University. He was a U.G. and P.G. class topper from Maulana Azad College and Calcutta University respectively. He received his M. Phil in 2019 from the Department of English, Calcutta University on "The Voice of the Unconscious: A Psychosexual Reading of the Plays of Harold Pinter." He is the recipient of the A. K. Saha Book Prize from Calcutta University and has also been honored by English Language Lovers' Association, West Bengal, for academic excellence. He has presented papers in several national and international seminars and conferences, and published research articles in journals of repute.