



Anshika Upadhyay

**THE
QUINTESSENCE**

A collection of Poems

Alok Prakashan



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(A collection of Poems)

Anshika Upadhyay

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Dear Readers

I am putting forth my collection of poems “The Quintessence”. These are my feelings which I have come across at different times in my small journey from childhood to an adult growing through several phases of life. In the past I have written a story book in Hindi titled “Abhivyakti” which was applauded and received well by the readers.

I am sure this collection of my feelings as my poetries “The Quintessence” will definitely churn your feelings and emotions by making you sometimes sad and sometimes laugh.

Anshika Upadhyay



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1

The Old School

*Moving slowly through the old corridors
Past the old embrittled walls of my school
I heard a constant hubbub of children
Playing and running around
Perhaps they were the hope
Of this decaying edifice*

*As I moved on, I saw every classroom
Each was empty, But no...
A young one of about six
Was sitting alone*

*His gaze fixed at the garden outside
His mind probably set in a different world
I was overcome by a deep desire
To ask him why he wishes to be alone
Why has his mates deserted him*

*Why doesn't he play among the twigs and
flowers?*

That he is secretly admiring

*I thought it better to watch him from far
As he picked up a pencil and started to write
On a piece of paper*

*He was writing or may be scribbling
His expressions turning from furious to calm
To quiet still, or rather, sorrow
Then he rose, and with an effort, started to
walk*

*He limped as he made his way through the
door*

*I hid myself and then, when he was out of
sight,*

*I went inside and read the manuscript
There, amid the incorrectly written words
And a horrible penmanship
Lay his grief*

*The grief of being deserted
The grief of being rejected*

*All this was reflected in one question
I know that life is meant for the fittest
But can't I have a chance to live my
own?*

*It was ill-framed, but how powerful!
I was touched by his innocent petition and
wondered...*

*Why was he been left unanswered?
Why, in the midst of care, has his silent grief
been unnoted?*

*And then I wondered
Was it the age of it, or such loopholes
That had embrittled the edifice...*

2

The Park

*In the midst of the colossal giants
That surround this borough
There is a small blotch of greens
A small paradigm of nature`s face
The only one in the core of this city
It is called a park*

*I sat there, watching
The sky, or a patch of it
Not covered by the giants
Not freckled by the artificial flies
The trees, old and dying
Left uncared for*

*Then, I flexed my gaze on the boulevard
The sun had just risen, the dawn had just
metamorphosed
Into a bright new morning
And just as it did the rabble grew
A legion of old and young
Left their shelters and were out
To take over from where they had left
To start afresh, their interminable spree*

*I watched them run, I watched them walk
Watched them laughing and talk
They were loyal to their masters
To the holders of this civilization
For they had not the slightest hint
Of discontent on their faces
Even in the face of consternation
They carried on
With a sort of uncanny obliviousness*

*Not that I was any different
I belonged to their creed
I took wake in the wake of dawn
Slept in the denouement of the dusk
I too laughed and talked*

*But had always had a dubiety within
A suspicion, an indecision
As to who is my companion
Among all these compatriots,
Who is my confederate?
Or do I really have one.
And so I come here.
To be left alone for a while
To unravel the mysteries hidden
Deep within me*

*In an enclosure, just like this park
With these unchaperoned trees
Like my unheeded thoughts*


3

The Conclusion

*Mankind has always a doubt,
What is this world all about?
In this big circus of jugglers and clowns,
Are we here only to frown?*

*Competition is the only word to be heard,
Not a little time to see even a bird!
Money and money just to earn,
Are we all here only to flounce?*

*Who is incredible or what is a dunce?
We all look like the Looney tunes,
Don't believe in anything looking straight
Upside down is this world`s trait*



*After so much of thinking and investigation,
We finally come to a conclusion,
With uncountable ups and downs,
World is just a roundabout.*

4

Moods of the year

*Oh dear! It's June, the peak of this
summer.*

*Can't go out to watch the mummer,
Can't step out on the burning bowels of the
earth,
And can't stand under the fire some Sun
without a cover.*

*Let's stay inside the cool environment of our
house.*

*It's much better than to stay out.
Next thing to do is switch on the Air
conditioner,
And sit near the window to watch out the soft
Sea.*

*Oh dear! It's August, It's raining so
heavily.*

*All I started doing is writing poems
empirically.*

*Wearing raincoats or holding umbrellas
can't*

Wholly save you from getting wet.

*The best way to be protected is to sit at home
quietly.*

*Oh dear! It's December, the season for
snowfall.*

*Can't go out and have ice-creams for all.
Can't step out to touch the extreme cold thick
ice layer.*

Just sit near the window and out stare.

*Finally! It's March, the season of spring
No hot, No rain, nor having frozen pot of
ink.*

*Now the Sun will give required heat
And pleasant breezes will blow through the
streets.*

*I would like to wish for this beautiful season
Of spring, flowers, scent and nectar ...*

*May be with us
Throughout the year.*

5

Oh Mirror

Oh mirror!

Tell me what I am!!

You say I am a human?

An embodiment of all the intelligence

And thinking possible?

But you lie...

Because I feel...

Like a weightless grain of sand

Blowing away with the wind

Not knowing anything

But just flying

In a more confident way...

Believing nothing

But my destiny.


6

The Mother Nature!!

*With golden hair and silvery face,
With eyes colored blue,
And pure like a drop of dew.
Who could be so beautiful?*

*With so much of charm,
Who could be so gentle?
Causing no harm.
I hold down my pen and take a deep sigh,*

*Look down to the ground
And then raise my head high.
The one with all such features,
It could only be Nature.*



*Then I look out of my window,
with little bit in doze,
And I wonder looking at the,
Twinkling stars,
That enlighten my heart.*

7

The Reverberation

Where are the smiles??

Where are the smiles??

*They have all faded
And went away miles...*

*This little shattered body
Is withered and dead
The soul has fled
To unknown land...*

*The hopes and affection
The ties and bonding
The earthly relations
Nothing survive...*

*Still the sun rises
And moon glitters light
The stars still twinkle
But the sky looks chide...*

*In anguish and despair
The life has lost its flair
Oh, bring it back its moments
Before it loose its poise...*

*Will someone hold the finger?
Or someone reach the soul
Will all the lovely gestures
Allow to reach the goal...*

*If this is so called eternity
If this is so divine
Then why the souls unhappy
And why they cry and whine???*

8

The Reminiscence

*I stood and looked,
At the far-far lands.
Couldn't see anything!
But, the barren plains.*

*Hills were nude,
No greenery at all,
Where gone the bushes?
Which grew so tall.*

*The berries in the jungle,
And sparrows have gone!!
Only vultures, and pigeons
And bats live long*

*Where rivers are flowing?
And springs are falling?
No peacocks crying,
Or giving a calling...*

*I want to go...
Back in time.
To enjoy the sunset,
And sunshine.*

*Oh! Bring me back...
Those dusty roads.
I will be happy,
Wearing my clumsy clothes.*

*Where one can imbibe,
The tranquil breeze.
Away from the bustling,
Crowded streets.*

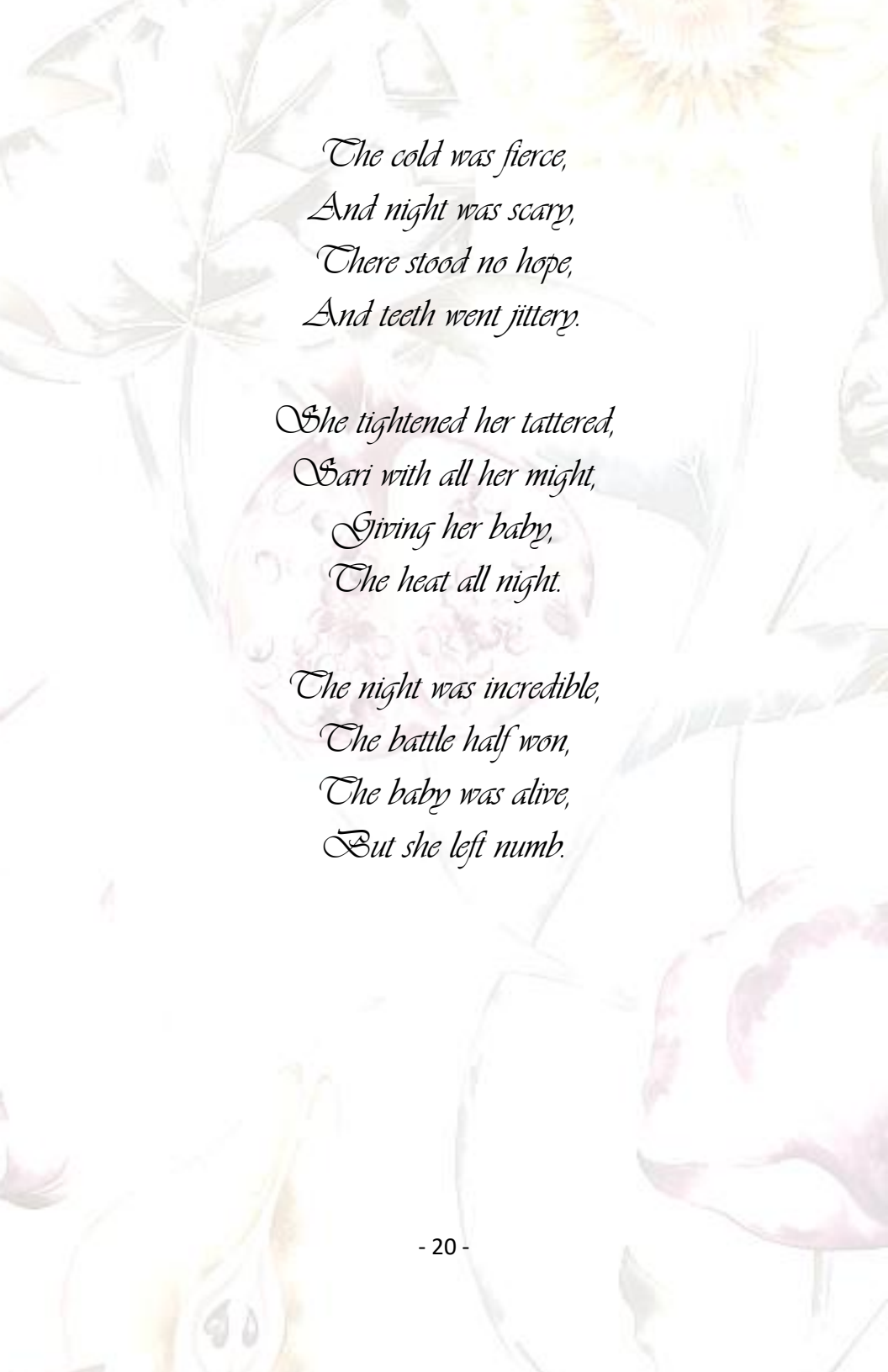
9

The Combat

*One chilling night,
She sat so quiet,
No rugs on her back,
Only sari to drape.*

*It was just this fire,
Which gave her desire,
To beat the cold,
And save her one year old,*

*She gathered some twigs,
Which gave her dream wings,
She hold her baby so tight,
And was now determined to fight.*

The background of the page is a soft, watercolor-style illustration of various flowers and leaves in muted colors like pink, yellow, and green, creating a gentle, ethereal atmosphere.

*The cold was fierce,
And night was scary,
There stood no hope,
And teeth went jittery.*

*She tightened her tattered,
Sari with all her might,
Giving her baby,
The heat all night.*

*The night was incredible,
The battle half won,
The baby was alive,
But she left numb.*



10

The Marionettes

*Neither as a king
Nor as a beggar
The baby was born
To a homeless mother*

*She was happy
To see his charm
She was obliged
And very calm*

*She blessed her child
And kissed his cheek
She knew that everyone
Gets what he seek*

*She spent her time
Around her babe
And made him play
With toys she made*

*Then came the blessings
In disguise
A merchant got a view
Of her sculptured toys*

*He gave her gold
And precious stones
He bought her cart
And a brand new home*

*She refused the gold
And diamonds and jewels
But took the cart
And went ahead.*



11

The Poise

*When I came out
From my shell
I was featherless
Looking like hell*

*I was fed with
Two more kins
They were beautiful
I looked grim*


*We then played
In small old nest
We were forbidden
From any quest*

*I was accountable
For all mischiefs
I got punished
they were relieved*

*it made me stubborn
and a bit selfish
I care for no one
But my own wish*

*One fine morning
I weighed my feathers
I gathered the hope
And all my courage*

*I took a long leap
And tried to fly
Now I was up
High in the sky*



*I am happy
For what I have done
I am confident and brave
But not gruesome.*

12

The Eternal War

*Amidst the clamor of rain, I stood
gazing, through the heavy drops, at her
She was sitting resting his head on her lap
Maybe weeping, but calm*

*What I recall is befuddlement
wishing to go near, but wanting to stay
wishing to console, to help, just by staying there
what was I thinking? I don't know*

*I suddenly felt it was fire showering from the
skies*

*I startled at the fieriness of the drops, and
then it was gone!*

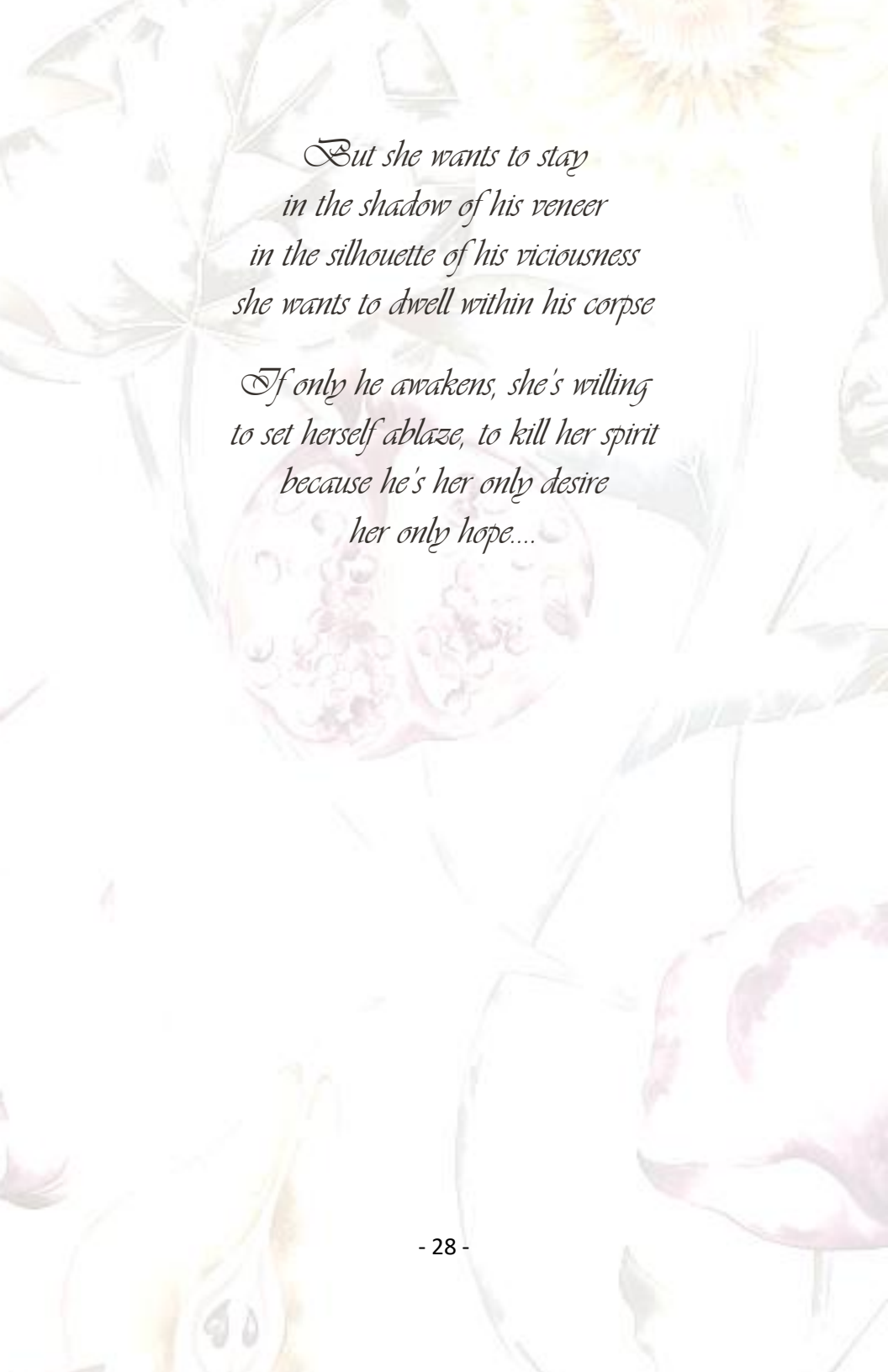
*And then I heard her cries, in my head
she was soundlessly creating stirs, asking for...*

*I stared at her, at her still figure in the rain
Her blurred outlines, still enchanting
Why then did he look featureless, mere flesh
Why was she endlessly beholding the carcass*

*I felt the stir in my mind again,
she was saying, something that felt as hope
that carcass is of her hope, her dreams, her soul
she wants him to rise*

*She wants him to rise and imbibe her
as his soul
she wants him to awaken and embrace her
once and for all*

*But how well she knows
he'll rise to be a soulless corpse
not to embrace but propel her
not to imbibe but finish her*



*But she wants to stay
in the shadow of his veneer
in the silhouette of his viciousness
she wants to dwell within his corpse*

*If only he awakens, she's willing
to set herself ablaze, to kill her spirit
because he's her only desire
her only hope....*

13

The Epilogue

*My mind is doubtful, my emotions are dead
my conscience is quiet....*

*I don't know where I am, I can't see
anything*

*My vision is obscured, darkened by the
glare of luminosity*

*I think I imagine faces, faces of sorts
some euphoria stricken, some with guise, some
guilelessly gleeful*

*I feel they stand tall, as I stand on a
lectern maybe*

*They are bigger than me, like colossal giants
I can't dare to look them in eyes anymore,
they might swallow me*

*I fear, and I look away
But no fear stays too long, fear is engulfed
by the black hole of numbness
What do I feel now..? Little frigid blob,
rolling down my facial skin*

*Can it be a tear? Seems Implausible,
because
there are no pangs of conscience, not anymore
My mind begins to respond, it is, as though,
recuperating a fit*

*As I start to recall a similar setting,
a setting where I am among these people,
and euphoria stricken
a young fledgling
I stand there celebrating the man on the
podium*

*Getting transported by his monologue to a
dream world
Where I imagine myself to be in his place,
addressing everyone
doing a soliloquy, impressing an illusory
audience
by a concoction of homilies and make-believe
inspiring memoirs
filled with complacency
Another frigid blob rolls down*

*It is hard to believe, it was the same 'me'
who had indefinite fancy
full of varied emotions, ingenuity, ambitions*

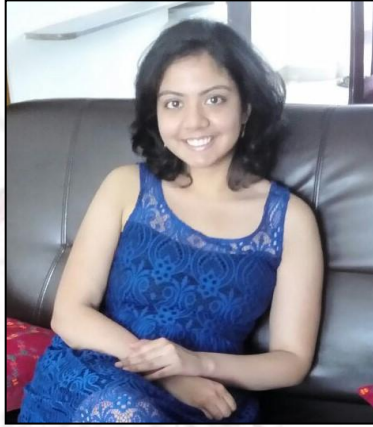
*I too had fervor, zeal, eagerness to live
Then why now, am I a living corpse?
Why am I doled out in freckles of energy
across my living fetid carcass?*

*Why don't I feel happy or sad or rueful
Why don't I feel anything?
Perhaps, now I'm not young
not juvenile*

*My youthfulness fell prey to countless wounds
wounds of aspirations, wounds of dismissal
rebuff, desertion, ill-founded groundless hopes
But finally, to my own incredulity, I'm
here!*

*Standing in place of my nonage hero
living my dreams
but with a juxtaposition that
I'm not living anymore...*

About the author



Anshika Upadhyay is sensitive and powerful writer. She also writes a blog with the name Anshika's Reveries. Her story book "Abhivyakti" is a compilation of short stories in Hindi. She is versatile and imaginative but at the same time realistic and has a capacity to give words to her feelings.

She is an alumni of University of Michigan Ann Arbor, USA. from where she has earned her MS degree in Electrical and Computer Engineering.