

Poetic and ...

Anandí Zhang



First edition 24 November, 2021

Paintings for front cover, Poetic and Pensive: Lisa Suchanek

Calligraphy: Anandi Zhang

Gratitude

To Sri Aurobindo and The Mother

To life experiences that inspire

To Alan, Amy, B, Franz, Li Fang, Loretta
and Pranav for giving valuable feedback.

To Yogini Roygaga for intuitively
selecting and arranging the poems.

Auroville
All reveals
All heals
All rejoins
All rejoices

Poetic and Playful



逗 (dòu): To tease, play with; amusing, playful

String the instrument
Clear your throat
And sing!

Melodies travel.
People will stop and listen
Perhaps sing along
Perhaps sing their own songs.

Chirping birds lure me
To rise early
And walk into
Their soundscape.

A Tree's Asana

Arms, hands and fingers
High up in the sky

Legs, feet and toes
Deep down in the soil

What a stretch!

You walk into the garden
And become part of
The landscape.

You gaze at fishes in the pond
I gaze at you through the window
Lord gazes at us and
Brimms with a borderless smile.

I put a hand
Into the pond
Not to catch fish and fry them
But to fish for their tiny kisses.

O those soft itchinesses
How they pluck on
The cords of my heart!

A frog
Hopped
And landed
On a lotus leaf
A floating foundation

A frog and I
Stay close
In silent wonder.

Shall I make a move
And give it a kiss
Before it hops off
Before it turns into
A prince?

Night draws the curtain.
In the lotus pond
A frog starts to sing solo.

A mosquito inside the net
A humming musician that annoys
A constant companion
through the night
A relation of blood
A hide-and-seek game of
Life or death

A rain

A child stood
Beneath a tall bush
Full of white blossoms.

Then lifting a hand
To shake the branch above
He received a rain
Of scented petals.

Eyes closed
He spread arms
And swayed in the rain.

Then he left quietly
Contented
Ready to start
A new day.

When trees greet the sky
She responds
By twinkling her myriad eyes.

The dog stops barking
and wags its tail
When I drop guard
and walk near.
Then it lies down
feet in the air
To be caressed
and cuddled.

A cat took shelter
Next to my scooter wheel.

"Move, or you'll stop moving!"
I warned.

The snake
Sneaks away
On seeing man.

Two pairs of eyes
Lock gazes.

"Will you come in?
Or shall I get out?"

I ask the cow
Across gate and fence.

We bent down
Over grass
And discovered
Velvet bugs
Together

A bug walks on a book
And starts to
Read between the lines.

I dozed off
Reading a book.
No need for a pillow.

Can't you see
How occupied I am?

I attend to things
A thousand and one

Then, in one moment
You sneak in

You hold me
In Thy gaze eternal

I slip into the Sound of Silence
With a smile and a sigh

Tick, tick, tick
Rotate arms of the clock

Tick, tick, tick
Finish items on the calendar

Another day passes.

The moon, lusterless
Lingers on
When the sun is
Already up.

See-Saw

(a game for children of all ages:-)

See-Saw

See-Saw

Up and down

Round and round

I am up, you are down

You are up, I am down

I am in the centre, so are you

I see you, you see me

Who oversees
You and me
And us all?

Joy

I made a kite
For a child to fly

Who is in joy?
The maker
The player
Or the kite
That is born
And flies high?

O Joy
How contagious!

Kolam
A winding pathway
To Beauty.

Life Tastes Like a Candy

Gently unwind the coverings

Savour it and let it melt

Feel the sweetness

Flow down and spread

Absorb it

Be sweet.

You open your mouth wide
Not to speak
But to yawn.

I see you draw
A full stop
To our conversation.

God is the Master Chef.
Order the Dish of the Day,
Or whatever best suits.
You have enough to pay.
Pay yourself.

Thali or potluck
Diversity in one plate.

Leader and Follower

In a game,
The facilitator instructs:

Find a partner,
Let your index fingers touch.
One is A, the other B.
Decide between yourselves.

Now

A to lead, B to follow

B to lead, A to follow

A to lead, B to lead

A to follow, B to follow

...

That to lead,

We to follow.

God plays forever
In all roles
Without
A slip of absence.

Why does a new-born
Have to cry?

How will Laughing Buddha
Descend into this world?

With a grin?
I guess.

A few white hairs...

Shall I keep pulling them out
And become bald one day?

Or leave them to grow
Into white snow?

○ My Snow-White dream
Of charming maturity.

To the future

You're gifted a ticket
To the future.

One question remains:
What will you take along?
What seed idea?

Poetic and Pensive



Plunge into Deep Waters

Mind empty

Mouth shut

Heart open

Eyes shine

Zoom in on

What matters

Plunge into

Deep waters

Don't pose.
Be poised.

Run a business
Work like bees
To realise
The value of the being
The futility of busyness

Patterns
Repeat

Alas!
Into the same pitfalls
We fall

Pass

I walk past the Beach Road
Wind blows past me
Breaths pass through nostrils
I am alive, living, breathing

When shall I pass
Life and death
And land on the other shore?

What led to
Buddha's enlightenment?

Tapasya?
Meditation?
Self-inquiry?

Or
The rustling peepal?

Quest drives me onward
Questioning drives me on wild

Eyes fixed
Fingers dancing
On the screen

O mobile phone
Our toy
Playmate
Lover

Losing Self-control
They dream of
Controlling

Why blame and complain?
O this endless useless game!

Virtue
A virtual reality

You subtly hide judgments
Giving passing hints in a casual talk
As if it slipped out of
A well-guarded tongue.

A crude and clever art
Serves to sabotage
Yourself and all
Still.

O Family
Why don't you treat me
As well as a guest?

Life is a switchboard.
Who is the one
Holding the remote control?

Light on
Darkness recedes.

On, off

On, off

On, off

On, on, on

Sometimes
Children play wild
And forget to
Put things
Back in order.

What can a mother do?
Continue to smile
Or feign a stern response?

Call for help
Be the help

My mood is
In monsoon.

Rain or shine
It will pass.

It rains.
Plans change.
The river of Life
Flows.

The river of Life
Flows...

...

Cellphone Spiritualised

A cellphone on a sacred book
Gets spiritualised
It glows with Joy and Light
Receives and sends out
Messages of That
That Only

A puppet show is on.
When it is over,
Hail the show
And salute the artists
Holding and pulling on the strings
Giving voice to the characters
From behind the screen.

The world now
Is a movie
In slow motion.

The Maha Director-cum-Actor
Intent on perfection
Fine-tunes
Every frame.

God must be a homeopath
Diluting divinity
And know for sure
Each will follow a path
And arrive home.

How many secrets
should one subtly conceal
to lead a less eventful life?

Bathed in Buddhist aura,
we are but steps away from
Heaven.

Alas, why do so many of us,
heavy-hearted,
fail to move forward?

A fire ignited
Dances up
And receives
The flame and mist
Of Her Grace.

Be humble.
Don't be little.
Don't belittle.

Time for realising
Declaration of Interdependence.

A rainbow bridge emerges
After rain and shine
In the vast space
Over the ocean.

Behold the glory
Luminous and transient.
Soon it will dissolve
And merge into
The eternal expanse.

We play child-like games
And disguise as adults
Feigning innocence and maturity.

A meeting

One heroine

A couple of

Supporting actors

A few silent observers

Many a script-writer

All wanderers

You dress up
To attend a flower exhibition.

Shall we admire the flowers
Or you?

When you pretend that
I don't exist
I have found a gateway
Not to care
But to be air
And ether

Life
Lives on.
And on.

Violence

Violates

Patients
Lose
Patience
Pretty soon.

Does it happen to you?
Or
Do you make it happen?

Power
Stays in power
By empowering

Piles of books
No knowledge.

Seagulls

Seagulls fly
Over sea
Over land

Pausing
On top of
Trees and towers

Then take off again
Alone or in a flock

Ever lively
Never lonely
Never bumping
into each other

Heaven and Earth
High and low
When set apart
Man cannot but accept
The eagle's sneer

Piles of cow dung
Excretions of the past
Abundant compost
For a new dawn.

Cows never hurry
Walk or milk.

Saree
Covers up
To reveal.

A grey fog
Forerunner
of a very sunny day.

Ultimate Programmer

Hey, ultimate programmer
Make Thy app user-friendly.
Let us upload our aspiration
Download Thy inspiration
With ease.
Let us each play a part
in Thy Lila
As true volunteers
Without a grudge.

Play
As a child
In Thy eternal home.

Flow
As a river
Into Thy oceanic bosom.

Scale
The depths and heights
As a fish or an eagle
In Thy creation.

Plunge
Merge
Dissolve
Into Thee.

Only Thee.

Silence
Is a womb
Pregnant with
A New Creation

Poetic and Precious



心 (xīn): Heart

Poetry is a way
To tease time
To heal hearts.

Time passes
We become alive.

Imitation
Limitation
Illumination

Your choice?

You looked into my eyes
I into yours
Not a word was spoken
Not a word was needed

A look
A smile
An invitation
Into each other's world

A herd of cows
On the road

Time to slow down
And snail the way back home
Amid bodies of light and might.

Chuckles
Rings of laughter

O Mother

Thy gaze follows me everywhere.

Thy Grace wraps me up
in a cocoon of Love.

Shall I peck at the cocoon
and emerge as a butterfly?

I know Thy heart will not
be broken.

You will only break into
tears of joy
for Thy child.

A Drop

I plunge into this world
My head giddy
I lose my balance
And drop into countless pitfalls

Then rising out of the mud
I grow a lotus bud
With a drop of dew on the tip
And a drop of honey in the heart

I tried to be funny
And told a joke.

Nobody laughed.

I had to laugh
At myself
Alone
In a crowd.

Then
Everyone laughed
Including myself.

Concern
Clouds

Partner

Not to satisfy
Passing passion

But to sustain
Patient practice

Erect the spine
Align with the Divine.

* This is a mantra from B.

There is no darkness.
There is Light only
Playing with
Veils and shades
Of Her own Make
On the infinite canvas.

i build obstacles
And pray to Ganesha
To remove them.

Distance

You sit afar
But your eyes and heart
Have come near and dear

Eyelids depart
Only to meet again.

For the eyes that see
We are never apart.

Guru

Guru is a water tap

Turn it on

To clean or drink

Stairs of Knowledge

It takes a while
To ascend the stairs of
Knowledge

But once up there
All is bright vastness
Sea and sky meet and mingle
In a single storyline of Infinity

Smiles

Reveal the teeth

Wrinkle the skin

Ripple sweetness

O Heart,
Throb!

I
Am
In
LOVE

I empty myself
To make space
To behold and hold
Eternity in a moment.

Dance in Light and Shade

A little leaf
Fell off the tree.
Attaching itself to a fine thread
It took on a new life
Swaying and swirling in the wind
A free dance
In light and shade.

We have met
Countless times.

Make
A present
Of today.

Create it.
Cherish it.
Celebrate it.

Rounds of
Running around
Recede

Slow down
Simply
Sweetly
Be

A gardener grows flowers
And blooms among them.

Samadhi flowers
find a way back to soil
in a compost
called
"New Earth".

Abolition of the Ego

Eucalyptus
strips and sheds
its bark
and lays bare
the inner skin
in the sun.

Mother named *Eucalyptus* flowers
“Abolition of the Ego”.

O Man

Cast country, class or caste

Join the cast in the Lila.

A creeper on rooftop
Aspires to ascend
Higher still.

If not by itself
Through its scent
Possible still.

Your footsteps
Silently steal
Into my inner chamber.

Rise, O Spirit
Master and Dweller of the house
You are not locked outside
You have the key
Open the door from inside

I took a walk
In drizzling rain.

She took an umbrella
And leaned it
Over my head.

A walk together
In rain and shelter.

Got caught
In the rain
Got free
In the rhyme

Lantern lights
Swirling fans
A plate of food
A chat with friends
A laugh over
Something
Or nothing

A moment to enjoy
A moment in joy

Her voice
soft
Sweet

Melts all
Rashness
Roughness

Worry
Wears

surfing

Ride on the waves

Soar high

Dip low

Breathe

Look forward

Be one with the rhythm

Of La Mer

Master of movements

A child at play

In Her vast embrace

Collector

I am a collector

Not of

Taxes, gossips or complaints

But of

Smiles, fragrances and nectars

I strayed off the main road
And stumbled upon
A path back home.

O Lord
Where else will you lead me?
I am already at home.

There is no secret
Only unwillingness
To discover

Gold Mine

I roam around
seeking for something.
What it is, I don't know.

I tire, disperse
and frustrate myself.

Then, the gears shift.
And all is different:
I stroll around
Mesmerized by

That which comes out
through layers of veils.

I close my eyes and
discover the Gold Mine within

I open my heart and
find myself surrounded by gems.

I sing and dance with
myriad versions of my Self.

Then a smile emerges
sweet and lingering
Rippling out to the whole body
and beyond.

Every moment
Counts

Sun shines
On a pond.
Fishes stir water
Reflecting
The dance of Light
On the ceiling.

Confirmation

When it comes from the Heart
Conveyed through the eyes
Words become excess

I chase cows out of fence
And welcome them
Into my heart

In Earth School
Education never ends.

River and mountain
Travel companions
On a winding journey.

Squirrels

Hey little ones

I see you

Climb up ladders and pillars

Crawl under eaves and leaves

Defying gravity

Always alert

Always exploring

Always on the move

Hey little ones
I see you
Savour dew on flowers
Smell their subtle fragrances
Relishing flavours
Forever calm
Forever dynamic
Forever in the flow

Saturated
Satiated
Surrendered

Let the dead leaves drop

The dead past leaves
The living Grace descends
Drop by drop
Into a flow
Down to the earth.

The future emerges
Out of the brown and black
To the fresh and vibrant New.

Fear

Agitates

Breaches

Contracts

Divides

Engulfs

Freezes

Grips

H, I, J ...X, Y, Z

What about Love?

To a Child

A child
Senses everything
He laughs and cries
And plays mischief

To him
I say

You know everything
And you are dearly loved
This is an invitation
To play
In another Way

I have said YES
Before you propose.

Life goes on in
Circles
Cycles

When you say
"I hate you."
I know you will
Come to know Love
Of yourself and me.

I just knew it.

Die to...?

Live to...?