

THE TWILIGHT ZONE



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(CENTOS - POETRY)

Dr. LANKA SIVA RAMA PRASAD

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THE TWILIGHT ZONE - A Collection of Poems in Centos
————— Dr. Lanka Siva Rama Prasad

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First Edition : May, 2008

Price : Rs. 100/- \$10

Published by :

Dr. Lanka Siva Rama Prasad

16-10-1294, Prasanthi Hospital

Shiva Nagar, Warangal-506 002

Andhra Pradesh (India)

Phone No. 0870-2505702

Cell : 99494-40726

Kalaratham Series : 17

Writers' Corner :

Srijanalokam, Warangal - 506 002. A.P.

Composed & Printed at

Vasavi Printers

Warangal.

The Twilight Zone...

.... is about the final scene of a life's drama. At the threshold to the palace of death some vivid dreams and a few Night-mares disturb the traveller moving on the time-line. When the thread of life is cut short by the three Fates or Moirai sisters, Death appears in one of its innumerable ways and forms. For some, whole life unfolds before them in the memory lanes. In that stupefying slumber all the past merges, coalesces and converges in to a frozen dream.

"But some of the dreamers of the day are dangerous people, for they dream their dreams with open eyes and make them come true."

- T.E. Lawrence

- and for some others life is a beautiful dream and an enchanting song of music.

Dr. LANKA SIVA RAMA PRASAD

May - 2008

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1. SITA AND RAMA

(END OF TRETHA YUGA)

More patient than the earth goddess
 She is so silent but he is resilient
 For two different bodies with one breath of life
 When separated by a dark demon
 And found each other again
 Is there any need for words?

But his words are sharp swords!
 She is like a deer shivering in sheer bewilderment
 The long wait and the endless sufferings all gone unnoticed
 How can her man, lord and god abandon her on any pretext?
 In the name of Dharma has he forgotten his dharma!

The test of fire was over! Or is it over?
 When a lowly drunken man was loquacious
 He again abandoned her
 Exiled a pregnant woman to a predacious forest.

The burden of his obsession with Dharma wilted them both alike!
 And in the final confrontation
 In front of her grownup children
 She walked into her mother's fold
 This time not to return!

Frozen in her memories
 Like a lonely god he stood there for a while
 And when his turn came
 Silently he entered the waters of river Sarayu.



2. SRI KRISHNA

(END OF DWAPARA YUGA= 3228-3102 BC)

How much darkness can suppress the glorious spark of light?
 Pitch dark inside and outside
 In a prison cell of Mathura city
 On the eighth day of the moon
 An eighth child was born to the parents in prison.

Seven kids before him were slain by the king Kansa
 Worried parents shifted him stealthily to Vrepally
 Who grew up among the cowherd boys and milkmaids.
 River Yamuna revered his footsteps on its banks
 Resisting umpteen number of attempts on his life
 He killed the wicked king and freed his parents

Studied under the sage Sandipani
 Brought back his son from the palace of death.
 Saved Madhura seventeen times from the onslaught of Jarasandha
 Built a fortified city in the island of Dwaraka to thwart that Magadha king
 Married a beautiful damsel Rukmini in an unprecedented love affair
 Seven more spouses enriched his house.

The friendship and proximity to Pandavas
 It is the emergence of a statesman and a king maker
 Later in that great Bharatha battle
 A charioteer dictated the results of that internecine war
 And like a teacher he guided his remorseful disciple
 Who stepped backward in the face of imminent destruction

The emergence of the celestial song of Bhagavad-Gita
 Unfolding the secrets of the universe, the immortality of the soul
 The rewards and punishments of thoughts and actions
 The doctrine of Karma, the religion of love and devotion
 The teacher of the universe taught the humanity the real meaning of life.

The battle of Kurukshetra was over
 Gandhari, the mother of Kauravas was in tears
 She cursed Sri Krishna-
 ‘Thirty six years hence you shall perish
 Like me you shall see before your own eyes
 The death of your kinsmen and friends’
 Sri Krishna accepted it for that is the purpose of his incarnation.

And on that fateful day
 A pilgrimage turned into a perilous orgy
 An orgy became a battle and decimation of all Yadavas.
 Balarama entered the ocean
 All knowing Krishna retired to a forest and taking rest under a tree.

Mistaking his great toe for a deer’s ear
 A hunter shot a fierce arrow
 The arrow fitted with the last piece of a cursed pestle or musala
 The curse of Gandhari and Doorvasa took its toll.
 The savior of the world left one and all.

**Foolish men conceive Me, the Unmanifest
 As the Manifest and in many forms.
 They do not realize My higher nature,
 The everlasting and the Supreme.**



3. KING SOLOMON (971-931 BC)

The third king of Israel, son of David and Bathsheba
 Named by Nathan the prophet as Jedidiah- beloved of the Lord
 King David in his last days called him Solomon
 Shalomo or the child of peace had no time for peace on his board

Serial murders he committed to gain the throne
 Brother Adonijah, general Joab, priest Abiathar paid their price
*'The king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion
 But his favor is as dew upon the grass'* - said Solomon the Wise

When God appeared in his vision he chose 'an understanding heart'
 In the morning he found a sapphire ring of Adam upon his royal cot
 The language of birds and beasts, the whisperings of trees and flowers
 The mysteries of the earth, the air and the sea encoded and decoded
 The ring helped the king, to hear and solve the disputes of harlots and others

Thirty thousand forced labor, seventy thousand burden bearers
 Eighty thousand hewers of stone, thirty-three hundred overseers
 Adoniram as in charge, after four hundred and eightieth year of exodus
 A great temple of ninety feet long, thirty feet wide and forty-five feet high
 After seven years of hard work, in the completed great temple
 King Solomon offered his prayers to the Lord of Lords.

He put to test his theories, and proverbs followed
*'One faithful man among a thousand have I found
 But one faithful woman I have not found among ten thousand'*
 Married many women just for political reasons
 Pharaoh's daughter, Arabian, Jewish, Ethiopian princesses
 All brought their gods along with their retinue
 Impressed by his wealth and wisdom Queen Sheba offered herself
 The Ethiopian offspring Menelik I was the forefather of the Lions of Judah
 Debauchery, drinking, extravagancies, and excessive taxes on his people
 His heart groaned but he was deaf
'Even in laughter the heart acheth, and the end of mirth is heaviness'

The distance from the Lord has grown
 The priests of Moloch, of Ishtar, of Osiris and of Baal
 The licentiousness, the superstition, the human sacrifices
 The foreign wives and their invasion reached the sanctum sanctorum

Discontentment and rebellion sprouted everywhere
'Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways and be wise'- preached he.
 To pay the loans he bequeathed twenty cities to Hiram, the king of Phoenicians.

Asmodeus, the king of demons, his alter ego played the game of deceit
 King Solomon lost his ring and was tossed into a distant desert
 In that wilderness he recalled his earlier life, framed to imprisonment
*"Happy are they that are dead, more than they that are living
 But happier than all are they that have never been born, lamented he-
 For they have not beheld the evil work that is done under the sky."*
 Freed from the prison by the Lord's grace, he repented and repented
 Experienced the sufferings of populace, understood the meaning of God's ways

Vanity of vanities vanished from him
 The greatest song 'the song of songs' emerged
 Now once more he could understand the language of birds and flowers
 From the wilderness he reached the king's palace as a gourmet cook
 In the cookhouse while preparing a fish dish he found the ring of Adam
 The magic ring, which he lost in the struggle with Asmodeus, is regained
 Solomon apprehended the demon that fled into the depths of earth
 By displaying his cloven hoof and sulfur smell.

But Lord God was angry at his wayward ways
 Old Solomon fell to the wishes of his vivacious wives
 He built altars and temples for foreign gods
 So Lord raised up an adversary against Solomon, Jeroboam, the son of Nebat
 When Solomon tried to kill Jeroboam, he fled to Shishak, the king of Egypt.
 Forty years after this incident king Solomon breathed his last
 And was buried at the city of David.

King Solomon what a contradiction!
 A dispenser of justice, a builder of splendor, Solomon the Wise!
 A despoiler of his people, a blasphemer of his God, Solomon the Foolish!
 The immortal writer of the Song of Songs, Solomon the king Poet!



4. ZOROASTER (628 –551 BC)

In the neighborhood of Lake Urumiah
 In Adarbaijan of the west of Iran
 In the household of Spitama
 A child was born to virgin mother Dughdhova

Three sages heralded his arrival
 King Yim of Iran saw him in his vision
 A new star and many wonderful omens on the horizon
 Arrival of angels and archangels
 To worship the messenger of Ahura Mazda,
 The supreme lord of the universes
 The newborn in all smiles instead of cries
 The birth of Zarathustra, an old camel and the righteous master

To destroy this divine child
 The wicked Turanian king Durasrobo
 Plotted and plotted, like a cunning fox, tried and tried in vain
 On the top of mount Sabatan
 In the ecastic rapture of trance
 A divine communion with the Supreme Being
 Zarathustra became the Magian prophet

His travels to far off lands of China and India
 Six great visions of paradise
 The victory over the temptation of Buiti the demon,
 The lord of combined forces of evil, Ahriman,
 And the conversion of Vish tasp, the reigning monarch of Iran
 The gospel of Zoroaster grew like the salping of a Cypress tree
 Planted in front of the great fire temple at Kishmar

Three kinds of fires for the three classes of people
 Holy-wars, crusades, fights and blood-shed
 To propagate the faith amongst the demon worshipers
 And a holy war against the Turanian king Arjasp, an infidel wasp
 Who retreated into a burrow for eighteen years

Demons have their say in dark days
The Turanian wasp invaded Iran like a storm
The ominous and fearful hyena of death
The odoriferous stench, cry, woe, and destruction at length
Eighty priests were put to sleep in their meditation

And in the sanctum sanctorum of Nush- Adar
Holding a rosary in his hand, before the holy altar
The great master was in his deep meditation
Devil has its field day on that fateful day

Turbaratur, an enemy soldier attacked the great one from behind.
Crushing the divine head with a heavy sword
The fire from the rosary thrown by the old camel
Consumed the infidel, the Turk Turbaratur
The old camel is gone but not the foot prints

After the sacred fire, Asha the righteousness
Protects its believers from evil and misdeeds



5. GAUTHAMA BUDDHA (566-480 BC)

Three sights on a city street
A disabling oldage, a disseminating disease,
And a deceased one's last journey

The warrior prince Siddhartha sighed
'Is this that happy earth they brought me forth to see?'
The fourth sight was good- of a saint -
Calm, tranquil and peaceful.

So he left his wife and a beautiful child
Into those wild and wicked forests
Six years he searched for a tree of shelter
Strict austerities and self-mortification did not bring any solace

For forty-nine days he meditated under a papal tree
The answer was clear
The path of liberation is to conquer desire

On that night in the first watch
The future Buddha recalled his past lives
In the second watch
The secrets of birth, death and rebirth.
In the third watch
The revelations of the three basic components of Dharma
The four noble truths
The eight fold path and the middle way
He preached to those five ascetics, *the turning of the wheel of law.*

At the age of eighty, in Beluva village near Vaishali
He told his favorite disciple
***'Like a worn out cart, I am now grown old
O Ananda! Be ye lamps unto yourselves
Hold fast to the truth!'***

Chunda a local iron- smith of Pava served
 Sukkara maddava(a curry made up of rice, mushrooms and pork)
 And that was his last meal
 Tathagatha knew that it is the time for his departure

Between two saal trees Ananda made a bed for him
'Decay is inherent in all component things
Only truth remains forever
Workout your salvation with diligence.'
 He blessed them all and the world.

On the same auspicious full moon day of Vaisakha
 His birth, nirvana and mahaparinirvana
 With eighty years of life in between.
 It is the Light of Asia
 Who taught the world of active piety
 Who freed people from the bondage of vile caste
 And a new religion was dawned on the horizon of east.
 It is a religion of Hope.



6. SOCRATES (469-399 BC)

Son of a stonemason and a midwife
 Who destined to deliver logic out of stone hearts
 A perennial gadfly to friends and enemies alike
 A midwife of thought and carver of truth

Annoyed Athenian public with his constant criticism
 Talking was his business, goodness his objective
 Exploded the hypocrisy and pretensions of his times
 Aristophanes ridiculed him for having his head in 'clouds'

Socrates who proclaimed that the unexamined life is not worth living
 At the age of seventy he was accused of corrupting the youth of Athens
 And for not believing the gods of city
 Meletos, Amytos, and Lycon brought the trumped up charges

The court of five hundred and one labored to prove him guilty
 The majority condemned him to death by drinking hemlock
 Thirty votes this side might have tilted the scales
 Socrates refused alternatives and argued in the face of death.

***'And now it is time to go
 I to die and you to live
 But who of us goes to a better thing
 Is unknown to all but God.'***

The sentence was delayed for three weeks
 Crito arranged for his escape but the philosopher declined
 Firmness of soul and magnanimity
 The prerequisites of a philosopher- he reasoned

Plato describes the final scene...
 Xanthippe his violent tempered wife was weeping
 He sent her home gently consoling and continued his discourse
 On the relationship between pleasure and pain and about life and death.

At sunset he drank his quota of hemlock
His friends and even the prison's warden burst into tears
He requested them to allow him to migrate
From here to there in decent silence.

'Crito! We owe a cock to Asclepios, pay it without fail.'

He requested his disciple and closed eyes
The poison took its effect on that philosopher
Who brought philosophy down from heaven to earth.



7. ARCHIMEDES (287 – 212 B.C)

Eureka! Eureka! I have found it! I have found it!

The bizarre incident involving a naked man exhibiting his absent-mindedness
A philosopher, mathematician and pioneer in the domain of mechanics
Who solved the problem of the crown of pure gold straight in the bathtub

Son of an astronomer and a kinsman of king Heiro
When the king asked him to construct weapons of offence and defense
'Give me a lever and a place on which to rest it, and I will move the world'
And proved his words by moving a beached galley smooth and gentle.

Inventor of Archimedes screw and destroyer of Roman 'Sambuca' galleys
Set the Roman fleet of Marcellus on fire with lenses and optics
Built gigantic cranes that tossed the enemy galleys into the bottom of the sea
And kept the Roman general Marcellus at bay for nearly three years

When Roman ingenuity failed, they tried the weapons of treachery
Syracuse fell into the hands of Marcellus
The victor expected the presence of his ingenious rival
Word was out to bring that insolent old man
But the lone defender of the city was engrossed in his problems and puzzles
A Roman soldier found him drawing funny lines on the floor
When the absent minded inventor did not heed his orders
'I really cannot go until I have finished my problem'

The soldier got mad and struck him with his sword
The great mathematician fell on top of his unfinished problem
The general grieved at the incident
He turned his face away from the murderer, his own soldier
The great sage was given a decent burial

His tomb was marked by the figure of a sphere inscribed in a cylinder
That's how Cicero found the inventor's final place of reminder
The tomb was concealed under overgrown briars and thorns resilient
Like, once its resident, it was bare but still and silent!



8. MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO

(106-43 B.C.)

Nailed to the rostrum of the forum
 The head and the hand of a Roman orator
 Fascist reminders to the future word pushers
 'I provide words, of which I have plenty' said he
 Do the gods exist? asked he
 'The good of the people is the chief law' argued he

He annoyed Caesar, antagonized Antony
 His words were daggers
 His speeches were poisoned arrows
 The fourteen Philippies he wrote
 Transformed his former friends into formidable enemies

At six-two he was rash enough to clash with his younger opponents
 Antony did not like this
 Mark Antony earmarked Marcus Cicero
 A gang of bounty hunters led by Herennius popillius
 Waylaid Cicero on his way to Caieta.

Surrounded by swashbuckling enemies
 Cicero stretched his neck out of the litter
 Herennius Popillius's sword flashed for a second
 The head of the word provider rolled on the highway road

The head which dared to think and speak against Mark Antony
 The hand that wrote Philippies in litany
 Were found nailed to the rostrum of the forum of Rome
 Reminding the citizens the tyrant's invisible hand and game.

'I shall die in the country I have so often served'

Cicero said to his attendants on his last leg.
 But the executioner's plans were on different peg.
 For the Tongue talk and pen attack, Penalty, the head paid.



9. JULIUS CAESAR (102-44 BC)

How can one resist a crown
When offered thrice in succession
In a republic he wished to be an imperator
His designs on Rome, even eluded Cicero the orator

The high priest of Jupiter, the ardent devotee of Venus
'Omnium mulierum vir'- every woman's husband
Nicknamed as sotto- voce or queen Nicomedes
Divorced his spouse, for Caesar's wife should be above suspicion
He wept under the statue of Alexander the great at Gades
For not doing anything worth remembering...

The dashing, daring, brilliant effrontery and extravagant
To pay off his debts and to conquer the world
Formed the first triumvirate with Crassus and Pompey
Arrested Cato the younger for his out burst
Thus erecting a tombstone for free speech
Conquered eight hundred towns and subdued three hundred states

After killing one million people in that process
Helvetii, Nervii, Belgae, Goths, Gauls and Britons
Loss at Gergovia gained in Alesia
Now time to settle a few things at home and Rome

The triumvirate was drifting apart
Crassus's death in Syria, Pompey's friendship with the senate
Rome in majority welcoming Julius Caesar
Pompey sensed trouble and fled to Egypt

In pursuit of his enemy Caesar first fought an army without general
And later a general without army
Pompey's head adorning a pole, the master of Rome
An epileptic bald-headed man of fifty-four fell to the charms of
Twenty one year old queen bee Cleopatra
Nine months were nine moments in that Egyptian spring and spell
Sufficient time for Roman revolts...

The journey to defeat Pharnaceus, the king of Pontus
Veni, vedi, vici- I came, I saw, I conquered
 His message was clear to Romans
 Came to home town as a victorious soldier
 Declared himself as the dictator for ten years
 Donned the robes of god, images installed, the Jupiter Julius
 And the divine sister of Venus,
 Cleopatra claimed her half of his side

The ambition to become a king and emperor
 Many of his past friends disapproving that
 Calipurnia's dream and Artemidorus petition of doom
 Not reaching the mind of the soldier who wished to play God
 On that fateful day twenty-three daggers saluted him
'Et tu brute? Then fall Caesar!'
 Words echoed the blood stained senate hall.

On a day of thunder, howling wind and terror
 Casca first and Brutus last they slashed him and carved him
 'A dish fit for gods,'
 Lying still beneath his rival Pompey's smiling statue
 The man who doth bestride like a colossus in narrow streets
 And he said once, **'what is history?'**
Bold letters written in blood and fury!



10. CLEOPATRA (69-30 B.C.)

From the cocoon of a splendid Persian carpet
Emerged a beautiful butterfly
Her nose, it is said, had it been shorter
The whole aspect of the world would have been altered!

The war-worn general, the great Caesar
The instant fall of him under the spell of this ambitious child
Rest is history, his story and her story.
Luxury and extravagance, beauty and voluptuousness
The incarnation of the goddess Isis- Aphrodite
The birth of Caesarion Ptolemy, the stay at unwilling Rome
After the death of Caesar, she had to go home.

Three years of civil war, favored Mark Antony at helm
The colossal warrior capable of conquering the world
Became Bacchus in the arms of this Egyptian mermaid
Antony neglected Rome and his home
His wife Fulvia's death was the final straw in the game.

The triumvirate was in split
Rome and Octavius in a convulsive fit.
The war was imminent against those who determined to die together.
Cleo's retreat and Antony's flight ensured victory to Octavius

After the debacle at the great battle of Actium
Cleopatra barred herself in a mausoleum.
Rumors of her death reached Antony
He fell upon his sword, but death brushed him for a while, in agony

Then came the belated news
The queen bee is alive and waiting for him
Dying of his wound, the lover Antony,
The soldier who wished to break those strong Egyptian fetters

Bade farewell to his faithful soldiers.
 Cords and chains hoisted him up the walls of mausoleum
 Clasped in Cleopatra's arms
 The great orator welcomed his eternal sleep.

Antony dead, herself doomed
 The queen bee yet buzzed a siren song
 Cold and determined Octavius closed his ears
 Closeted in a room with her close aids Charmian and Iras
 The eastern star in her all regalia paid libations to her Antony

And in that basket of figs, death's messengers lie in silence
 "So it has come" whispered the queen
 Iras collapsed, Charmian in tears
 The great queen with a nose that was always out of joint
 The enchantress who knows everything about love and hate
 Applied an Asp to her breast and another one to her arm.

The fangs of death are so painless
 The kiss of death is so mystique
 It hurts you not, but others..
 The majestic queen in her death mesmerized even the death.

**'Where art though death!
 Come hither and come!
 Come, come and take a queen!
 Worth many babes and beggars!'**



11. JESUS CHRIST (4 BC- 33 AD)

Eloi, Eloi, Lama Sabachthani?

The Lamb of God cried in anguish.

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

High on the cross the bleeding child looked up at the Lord

A sponge full of vinegar on a reed touched his lips

'Father! In your hands I place my spirit' his lips parted.

'It is finished'

The seven words from the cross, stayed here forever

Before that, Judas Iscariot drew near to Jesus to kiss him

At the Mount of Olives, the Gethsemane garden shivered

The soldiers seized Jesus and the Pharisees provoked Pilate.

Peter denied thrice and a cock crowed

The crowd threw an old garment and stuck Jesus on the face

'Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee?' heckled they.

In the praetorium, Governor Pilate called Jesus and asked-

Are you the king of Jews?

'**My kingship is not from this world**' the lamb replied

'Hail, King of the Jews.' The Roman soldiers scourged him.

Pilate and Herod found no crime in him

But the frenzied crowd preferred the release of Barabbas a murderer

'Crucify him, crucify him!' They cried

Wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, Jesus came out.

Pilate washed his hands before the crowd

'Crucify him and let his blood be on us and on our children.' Cried the crowd

Simon of Cyrene carried the cross for the bleeding Jesus

They brought him to Golgotha and they nailed him to the cross

Golgotha was in tears when the cross was thrust in to the hole

'**Forgive them, Father! They don't know what they are doing.**' Jesus wept

To the penitent brigand he offered his solace and place

'**Before the sun sets, you will be with me in the bliss of paradise.**'

The three Mary women were there with the agony of sword piercing their hearts
'Woman, behold your son!' to his mother and other,
'Behold your mother!' said he.

As the mysterious darkness was lifting and the loneliness was looming around
He cried out, **'Eloi, Eloi, Lama Sabachthani!'**
O God! Why hast thou forsaken me?
'I thirst!' he cried, the sponge of vinegar touched his lips
The cry of a victor reverberated the hills and sky, **'tetelestai'** - it is finished!
And he said **'Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit,'**



12. ATTLA THE HUN

(395 - 453 A.D)

Ioung! Ioung! Oouns! Huns!
Twang! Twang! Pillage and ruins!
The whole civilized world shivered hearing their name!
Death and destruction left behind their hoofs and game!

The cavalry of Attila the Hun, struck terror in populace
The grass never grew on the path they marched.
Torture, rape, massacre and burning marked their trails
Armed with quivers bristling with arrows
The fur clad short, squat, bowlegged grotesque warriors
The largest army in the occident
Vandals, Ostrogoths, Gepidae and Franks
Who fought under the banner of a nomadic monarch
The arch destroyer and the scourge of god
Attila the Hun, the nemesis of then known world.

Crowns tumbled, heads rolled
From Baltic to Danube, between Black sea and Adriatic
The emperor Theodosius himself paid the tribute to the robber
Attila the Hun, the arrogant one of all the blood thirsty ones

The bloodiest battle in the plains of Chalons
A crushing defeat taught him
The value of God and the finesse of military techniques
After learning the lesson
Attila attacked Aquilla, the gateway to Italy

The massacre was over, the pillage complete
Attila and his men marched on, on the fields of no resistance
Destroyed crops and deserted towns welcomed him
But no sign of enemy, Aetius and his legions

Then came the Italian summer!
Fever and cholera struck terror where emperor's army failed
Pope Leo mediated, Attila retreated

Now preparing for the third invasion
While executing his rebel German vassals
He found a beautiful girl Ildicho
Killing her parents and brothers
His four hundredth marriage
To solemnize amidst of chieftains from Asia and Eastern Europe
A nuptial feast! A day long eating and drinking

A fawn girl of sixteen in the clutches of a sixty-year-old yellow lion
Blood rushed into his thickened vessels
A terrible cry caused tremors in the tent
In the dawn's light, the white furs were crimson with his blood
The dead and naked body of Attila was dark yellow and stiff
Ildicho, crouched in a corner, frozen and dumb with terror

'There where I have passed the grass will not grow again'

He boasted once and that was true!
They buried him with all the treasures he won
Impaled upon their horses to keep watch,
Four of his warriors were posted at the four corners of his tomb
At his head lay a bow and arrow
Grimly reminds us the past terror and sorrow!



13. SALADIN (1137 – 1193 A.D.)

For the greater glory of God
They slaughtered one another
Flesh and bones floated in the frenzied blood streams
Agony and cries reverberated like ceaseless noises of cicada

In those deadly silent mountains of Kurdistan
Sprouted an adventurous mountaineer Saladin Joseph Ben Job
Whose impetuosity rallied all Moslems under one flag
Like a bright and clean Damascus blade

Small, well formed, delicate and an ardent devotee
Who prayed Almighty eight times a day
The strength of his arm his devotion and dream
Drove the Christians away from Jerusalem.

On the anniversary of Mohammad's ascension into Heaven
A victory by divine intervention
He won Jerusalem
The seat of the sacred stone of Mohammad
The seat of the Holy crucifix of Jesus

Richard, the lion hearted, spear-heading the Christian onslaught

Dissent and bickering in his own rank and file
Ill health and bad luck impeding his progress
Tide after tide the flow of crusaders hitting upon the bastions
Saladin retreated to Jerusalem
Fortified the city and prayed the Almighty
Enemy advanced within the sight of Jerusalem

Lo! A miracle happened on that Friday!
Richard changed his mind and returned to England, calling it a day
But the joy in Saladin's camp is short lived
On deathbed Saladin spoke to his son Ez-zaher

**'Avoid blood shed,
For blood never sleeps.
Follow in the way of peace
For this alone is the way of God!'**



14. JOAN OF ARC (1412-1431)

Dressed as a man, a maid set out for Chinon
 A peasant girl who heard the voice of Adam Kadmon
 To free France from the conqueror's yoke and ordeal
 And to crown the true king in Rhemis cathedral

The visions and apparitions of great saints
 Disturbed and haunted her days and nights
 Pleading her case with Robert de Baudricourt
 Convincing the theologians at Poitiers court
 She comforted Dauphin Charles, the heir in despair
 Marched towards Orleans with four thousand force
 The force fortified with broken spirits and token confidence

And what a transformation it was!
 Assault after assault; the Bastille of Augustines
 The tower of Tourelles; Jargeau and Beaugency
 All fell before Joan's troops
 The triumphant march to Rheims
 The coronation of Charles VII
 Her destiny was fulfilled

Complete recovery of France was her aim
 Spineless Charles in his usual calm
 The miserable failure of the attack on Paris
 Her jealous enemies demanded her censure
 On the day of betrayal
 In a sally outside the town
 The Burgundians captured her and sold her to English

The drama of inquisition was on!
 Forty theology specialists with Pierry Cauchon as their head
 In one of the most appalling travesties of justice
 Sat on the sill for one year and made her to sign her own death warrant
 Brandishing her as a relapsed heretic and a witch
 They condemned her to die at stake.

Kings' memory is short and cowards prefer silence
In the market square of Rouen
As the flames gathered around her
She kissed the cross in her hands
JESUS! She cried out the one word
One fire engulfed another fire

In her place at that stake
Amidst of the heap of ashes
Her heart was found unburned in the pyre

Twenty-five years later the king woke up from his pretended sleep
Joan was absolved by another trial
Five hundred years later
Pope Benedict xv raised the peasant maid of Domremy,
To the altars among the saints of God.
The saint of French patriotism
Who has become a fit blazon for the soldiers' banner
A country girl's story unparallel in the annals of history.



15. QUEEN ELIZABETH (1533-1603)

Sharper than the executioner's blade her looks and her deeds
Gloriana, to whom many a lovers and soldiers forfeited their lives
 The daughter of Anne Boleyn and Henry VIII, an enigma and a doubt
 'A man on the throne' having possessed of a hundred thousand devils
 Robert Devereux, Lord Essex -neglected her heart and his position
 A ring that reached the Queen, many months later tormented her soul
 Two years after Lord Essex's death the Virgin Queen preferred a long rest.

Lost her mother Anne Boleyn on the block at the age of three
 Fear and death, ill treatment and imprisonment and the stigma of her birth
 Sorrow, loneliness, taught her cold egotism and imperiousness
 After the death of Henry Tudor and her brother Edward VI
 Her half-sister Mary sent Elizabeth to the Tower that swallowed her mother
 Philip of Spain and a brighter destiny saved her from a traitor's death

After the five tragic years of '*Bloody Mary's*' reign
 People greeted Mary's death with the simple coronation of Elizabeth
 Many suitors dillydallied with her but none to the marriage altar
 She loved England more than her passionate lovers

Defeat of Spanish Armada and establishment of Anglican Church
 England reached the pinnacles of power and glory
 Shakespeare, Marlowe, Spenser, Drake and Raleigh
 Cecil and Walsingham; an age of great men for England
 Yet the Virgin Queen is lonely at the end

The ring that she gave to Lord Essex was there, staring.
 The eluded motherhood, the unquenched thirst of love
 Are they not above power, scepters, and thrones?
 This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this Church, this England...
'I feel time knocking at the gate. I am done.'



16. SIR ISAAC NEWTON

(1642-1727)

'Qui genus humanum ingenis superavit'

Who surpassed all men of genius- was a farm boy

**'Sir Isaac Newton was the boy
That climbed the apple tree, sir!
He then fell down and broke his crown
And, lost his gravity, sir!'...**

This quatrain in the Irish Schoolmaster may be hilarious
But he is the one who discovered the laws of gravity.
Eight tens and five years he lived but for him,
He is always a boy playing on the seashore picking up pebbles,
Whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before him.

The fall of an apple provided him food for thought
His reflecting telescopes, refrangible light rays
Theory of calculus and the theme of gravity
The motions of the planets, the path of comets, the tides of the ocean,

The discoveries ever made by the greatest English mathematician
His triumphs made him an ornament of the human race.
As a parliamentarian and the Master of the Mint
And a knighthood was offered to him for his work and talent.

With a stone in his bladder, congestion in lungs
Last three years of his life was a period of torment and agony
He breathed his last in prolonged unconsciousness.
About this colossus Pope has written an epitaph-

**'Nature and nature's laws lay hid in night
God said: "Let Newton be" and all was light.'**



17. WILLIAM BLAKE

(1757-1827)

An artist at the age of ten and a poet at twelve
 A dreamer with a powerful imagination
 A visionary who sculpted his visions in art and poems
 A boy who had no formal education except in drawing school
 An apprentice to an engraver rose to the heights of mysticism

**'Pity would be no more
 If we did not make somebody poor;
 And mercy no more could be
 If all were as happy as we'.**

Poverty his companion and poetry and art in divine union
 A mirage that failed and a marriage that lasted
 'Canterbury Pilgrims and Inventions to Job' of engravings
 'Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience' of poetic etchings
 Sympathizing French revolution he rejected a job from Royal family
 Life moved on with friends and patrons saving him from pangs of hunger

For him death is going out of one room into another
 Forty-five years since their wedding day
 He tried to draw his ever-loving loyal wife
 Sinking in the sea of sickness
 He died 'like a saint' composing and singing hymns to God

**Bring me my Bow of burning gold:
 Bring me my Arrow of desire:
 Bring me my spear: O clouds unfold!
 Bring me my Chariot of fire.**



18. HORATIO NELSON (1758-1805)

‘Fear never came near me’
 And it never came to him
 The Corsican bug at Calvi, a wound
 And he lost his sight of right eye.
 An attack on Santa Cruz it cost him his right arm.

To rough at sea a puny weakling of twelve
 Appointments in Triumph, Carcass, and Seahorse
 A midshipman becoming a captain
 A respectable marriage with a young widow
 A glorious victory at Egypt and a grand welcome at Naples
 There he met the ladylove of his life first time.

A servant girl with enchanting beauty became Lady Hamilton
 The British ambassador who bought her, brought her out as a lady
 In between the first and second meetings
 Lost were five years and an eye and an arm of a warrior
 Love is blind and she found in him her charming prince of dreams.

‘I have a right to be blind sometimes’

In the blink of disaster his determination won many a war
 Nelson’s eye is blind to fear and retreat
 His name spelled victory and his actions are ‘Nelson touches’
 Danes went down, and due is the last scene at Trafalgar

Twenty-six against thirty-three of the great Napoleon’s warships
 The triumph of Trafalgar of British at the cost of its great hero
 A lethal shot smashing his back, paralyzed below
 Shivering on a purser’s mattress by the tremors of cannon balls
 Death danced on the deck of the warship Victory...

In his thoughts and words reflected was Lady Hamilton
 And his daughter Horatia, his country And God
 He knew the victory is there and nearer is end
‘Now I am satisfied. Thank God I have done my duty’



19. NAPOLEON BONAPARTE (1769-1821)

The ascent of a little corporal to an embodiment of a romantic monarch
 A ruler, a lawgiver, a conqueror and a dreamer of unified Europe
 The Emperor of the France reduced to a small sovereign of Elba
 Hundred days glorious march of a monarch ending in general ignominy
 Six years in a rock cage, a Corsican eagle's destiny to final retreat
 A great saga of, romance, victories, defeats, Spanish ulcer, and tears.

A captain of artillery becoming a general with a 'whiff of grape shot'
 Passionately in love with a charming Creole widow Josephine
 Four days after the marriage he left her to win twenty-six battles
 A revolutionary hero at a time of politico-economically troubled times
 Victories in Egypt nullified by Nelson's blow and retreat at Acre
 By speaking to the soul and electrifying the men he became the first consul.

Robes Pierre, Barras, Rousseau and Voltaire in his thoughts
 Talleyrand, Berthier, Fouché, Massena, Ney and others as his arms
 The gradual transformation of a liberator in to Caesar
 The child of the revolution morphed into an awesome annihilator
 Quenching the thirst of Paris, canal irrigation, military education,
 Codes of Law but the measures were discipline and obedience.

The war with England, Nelson's second blow at Trafalgar
 But the victory at Austerlitz, the Spanish conquest cost him dear
 Divorce to Josephine and political marriage with Austrian Archduchess
 Eight years of total absolutism and carnage ending with the invasion
 The Russian snow buried the army and the hopes of the Corsican condottiere

'Men must be led by an iron hand in a velvet glove'

For an emperor who led men like pawns, soldiers were like small change
 Defeat at Leipzig, exile at Elba, the escape and the famous Hundred Days
 Waterloo and abdication and a brief interlude of 'Vive l'Emperor'
 In a desolate African island St. Helena, a new life with hope and courage.

Six years is too much even for a Corsican eagle to live in a cage
 Amidst of Cancer and Spanish ulcer, spasms, pain and scream
 Finished dictating two drafts of first dream and second dream
 On that last day he cried out in delirium...

'France! Armee.... Tete d'armee.... Josephine!'

In Elysian Fields, welcomed by Kleber, Desaix, Duroc, Murat and Ney...



20. LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

To be Mozart and to be with Mozart
 A half fulfilled dream halted by mother's illness
 Ex-tyrant and pathetic Pater drinking away his own life
 A piano emanating sonatas and wind septets
 A 'Tone poet' treading on the footprints of Masters of the art.

To be Beethoven or not to be Beethoven
 Outbursts, eccentricities, suspicious pride, intolerance
 A disastrous affliction, the devil of deafness, slowly creeping in
 'Speak louder, shout, for I am deaf!' his silent cries nobody heard
 A beloved piano becoming an instrument of torture
 A rebel tone poet who broke the conventions
 The Vienna Woods and love sonatas flowed like rapids...

To be deaf and amidst of applause pretending not to be deaf
 Explosion of million tones into polyphonic expressions
 'Oh Providence! Permit me once again to experience a day of pure happiness!'
 The whole world experienced it 'The Choral Symphony' with joy
 Eroica, Fidelio, Coriolanus and Egmont, Opus 106 and Mass in D
 Imageries on his mind screen exploding into perfect music score
 Imprisoning himself in a small room he and his unearthly music
 Overtures, symphonies, piano and violin concerts like divine water falls!

To be cheerful and not to be cheerful contorted his heart
 Countless cheers but the Count of music is cheerless
 A nephew's burden exhausted him to the hilt
 December chill descended into him as Pneumonia and dropsy

When his attending physician tapped his abdomen to let out the water
'Professor! You remind me of Moses striking the rock with his staff!'
 Amidst of gloominess and glowing hope
 He wished to work on the tenth symphony
 Four months in solitude one finally loses patience in the end
 A sudden flash of lightning and a roaring thunderclap
 Like a general giving orders to an army he stretched out his arm
'Applaud, my friends, the comedy is finished!'



21. GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON (1788-1824)

**'There is a pleasure in the pathless woods
There is rapture on the lonely shore
There is society where none intrudes'**

Life, a pilgrimage to this childe intruder
Heralded into a society of romance and liberty
A soldier and a poet flashed like a lightning in clouds party

The fortuneteller was right
On his sick bed with fever and rheumatism
Byron chided his physicians
Who applied leeches to suck his bad blood?
Ah Christi, Ah Christi- tears flowed in flood.
All those wanderings, poetic musings and romantic evenings
Where art thou?

He, a beautiful alabaster vase lit from within
But the clubfoot caused him great mental pain
In his wanderings in the realms of nature
Donning the robes of poetic regalia

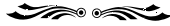
An encounter with Ali Pasha, the bandit despot in Albania
The emergence of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage
Applause of London society and lovelorn women
The lady of fame smiling but with ominous look
A disastrous marriage and a scandal followed him

Hounded from his country, met Claire, Mary and Shelly at Geneva
Poems flowed like waves of pure perennial waters
The Prisoner of Chillon, Manfred, Beppo, Mazeppa and Don Juan.
The stormy affair with Countess Guiccioli

A changed man in health and happiness
Joined his hands with Greek rebels

To bring liberty to a country that gave liberty to the world
'Io lascio qualche cosa di caro nel mondo'
'There are things which make the world dear to me'
But sickness overpowered him and silence followed it...
I am tired and I want to sleep now-

But I have lived, and have not lived in vain
My mind may lose its force, my blood its fire...
Torture and time, and breathe when I expire....
Like the remembered tone of a mute lyre....



22. PERCY BLYSSHE SHELLEY

(1792-1822)

**‘The trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?’**

A born rebel among the Trinity
Byron, Keats and Shelly
A fervent apostle of liberty
Fastidious about manners and appearance
A stray fever and an astray father

A love affair all-blossoming into poetic romance
His abandonment of religion, Oxford showing him the door
Wedlock with suicide prone Harriet Westbrook
Life long turmoil of a ‘ménage a trois’ with his wife’s sister

A jolly trip with Mary Wollstonecraft
A brief tumultuous journey in the sea of moneylenders
Alastor, a masterpiece flowed in blank verse
Friendship with Lord Byron
Harriet’s drowning in the Serpentine River
Marriage with Mary

Prometheus Unbound, The Cenci, Ode to the West Wind
The Cloud, The Skylark, Song of Proserpine, Epipsychidion
Adonais, an elegy on the death of Keats....
The creative genius in his best moods

His obsession with sails and water
A new boat Don Juan carrying its crew into the sea
That evening they were in no mood to hear the warnings
A thunder squall broke with vengeance.

Ten days later
On the shore near Via Reggio
A slight, tall body
Face and arms entirely eaten away by fish

Sophocles and Keats in the pockets of the jacket
The water and the waves he loved so much were washing his feet
Trelawney, Leigh Hunt and Byron made the funeral pyre

**'The awful shadow of some unseen power
Floats though unseen among us- visiting
As summer winds that creep from flower to flower
Like hues and harmonies of evening...'**



23. JOHN KEATS (1795-1821)

A glorious journey cut short by consumption at the age of twenty-five
 A young poet's stay in the Chamber of Maiden-thought of beehive
 He who wrote a world in poetry and his own epitaph
'Here lies one whose name was writ in water'
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?- to that pensive dreamer?

'The coarse-bred son of a livery stable keeper'
 'This miserable self-polluter of the human mind'
 His contemporaries cried behind-
 London and Edinburgh literally unkind-

Endymion, Isabella, Hyperion and Lamia
 Shades of erotic nostalgia and violent self-pity
 Aroma of sadness and dejection
 The sensuous mysticism and music of words
 For him **'a thing of beauty is a joy for ever'**

Odes followed one another
 Nightingale, autumn, Grecian urn, and Melancholy
 Truth exploded- 'Beauty is truth, truth beauty'-
'That is all ye know on earth, and all you need to know'-

Flint and iron from life's bitterness
 Sensuousness and poignancy from tragedy
 His longing for warmth to liven up his soul and body
 As an outcast, and abused romantic poet he reached Rome
 To join 'the inheritors of unfulfilled renown'

'Lift me up for I am dying- thank God it has come' he cried
 Letters from his beloved Fanny remained unopened
 Blood in cupfuls was billowing with waves of cough
Shall I awake and find this all a dream!
Fled is that music:-Do I wake or sleep?

Where are the songs of spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,-...
The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft;
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.



24. ABRAHAM LINCOLN (1809-1865)

From log cabin to White House
 A dream flowed like a desert stream
 That dreamer of dreams had another dream
 Incubated in the Serapium of the American Civil War
 Dubbed by his rivals as a third rate country lawyer
 Steered his nation through the agony of the worst squabble.

From tiredness to restful sleep a dreadful dream fluttered like
 a desolate storm; In the midst of subdued sobs and ghastly silence
 Dressed in funeral outfit a body was there on a catafalque
 'The president, he was killed by an assassin'. Replied the guard.
 Disturbed but calm he assured his wife later-
 'Well. It is only a dream, Mary, let us say no more about it!'

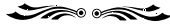
From a restful store manager to a responsible legislator
 A romantic dream with tragic end and a fizzled out engagement
 Winning the hand of Mary Todd amidst of mental storm
 'The champion story teller of the Capitol' who declared-
'This nation cannot exist half slave and half free'
 His rival in love Douglas defeated him for senate seat; but he won
 The candidature for the presidency and the office, his wife's dream.

From slavery infested country to a nation of free men
 The journey was very long and tedious
 The hatred of the South for the North flared up like a blasted volcano
 Slave owners cursed the Northern people as the moon-struck theorists
 Secession threats and assassination attempts spread like poisonous fumes
 Troubles in and out but he signed a proclamation of complete emancipation
 Fulfillment of a dream and a great step of mankind towards equality.

From fratricidal war to permanent peace
 His re-election and the thirteenth amendment
 The war was over at last and five days after the victory a nightmare followed
 In the Ford's theatre, amidst of the play 'Our American Cousin'
 A momentary security lapse? Or a play of the Fates?

John Wilkes Booth used both his pistol and dagger
The dagger slashed Major Rathbone but the bullet found its target.
'Sic semper tyrannis'. The assassin jumped out and vanished into darkness

From a wandering frontiersman to a war-time president
With malice towards none, with charity for all
The believer of eternal justice and boundless mercy of Providence
The national hero of America his own dream came true!
'Now he belongs to the ages'.



25. KARL MARX (1818-1883)

'Force is the midwife of every old society pregnant with a new one
 -Heralds a transitional dictatorship of the proletariat
 A classless government and an utopian society emerges
 And the state would wither away to the museum of antiquities,
 Along with the bronze axe and the spinning wheel.
 So Proletarians of countries unite! You have nothing to lose but chains!'

Karl Marx with his friend Friedrich Engel
 Unveiled the famous Communist Manifesto
 The bourgeoisie world predicted its own doomsday
 The capitalists all over trembled in their sleep
 A revolution of unprecedented proportions was sown with gusto

Who is he? A prophet with new visions or a scientist of social revisions?
 Is he a turning point in the human thought? Or a new age philosopher?
 How many of us knew him as a passionate poet who penned verses to his lover?
 A political thunderer who has contemptuous attitude to money
 Who were a dear Devil, the Moor and the Old Nick to his near ones!

Poverty haunted him like surplus value
 Friends disappeared in the wheel of Negation of negations
 Jenny his wife, Helene his maid and Engel his friend
 Their support was immense and was his capital.
 He disregarded the capital with cold, business like gratitude

Ill health, in his last six years appropriated his energy
 Living in two little rooms, his wife a baron's daughter
 Died of cancer after suffering for years in that cold world
 His pursuit in search of true liberty to the masses kept his life to glow on

Two years later the founder of scientific communism too breathed his last
 Showing this world of proletarians **a way to emancipate them.**



26. THOMAS ALVA EDISON

(1847 - 1931)

The wizard of Menlo Park
 The man who repelled darkness
 The father of mechanical civilization
 Over thirteen hundred patents to his credit
 Even in his semiconscious state
 Wanted to know the campaign that was going on to preserve him.

He was waiting
 'It is very beautiful here' he mumbled.
 Before him was the darkness
 Once he defeated it.

Now he was kept in a dark room.
 His teacher described him as 'addled'
 Sitting on eggs he tried to hatch by imitating the hen
 Dosed their servant with Seidlitz powders so that he can fly
 His traveling laboratory burnt the coach
 Angry and dumb stuck conductor boxed his ears and made him deaf.
 Later saved the station master's child at the same railway station

Edison universal printer brought him forty thousand big bucks
 Carbon transmitter in Bell's telephone, phonograph,
 October 21, 1879; the first foot steps of electrical lamp
 Kinetoscope, the forerunner of cinema; all flashes
 Fluoroscopy made doctors to see the inside out

Are you suffering? He replied 'just waiting'
'Life hereafter?' He said **'I do not know'**
 The room was still dark!

It was the early morning hours of Sunday
 His friends and associates were waiting in the hall below
 Fifty-two years ago they all counted hours along with him
 For how many hours the carbon lamp would live.

On 18th October 1931 at 3:24 A..M.
 The lights in his room went on
 The relentless burning light
 That invented countless practical devices
 A servant of humanity and a complete man was finally at rest.
 If he were to be alive
 He would have invented a device to know death beforehand.



27. SWAMI VIVEKANANDA (1863-1902)

The Supreme Swan's choice of its torchbearer
 The atheist student hell bent on realizing God
 An outward crazy master and an inward skeptic disciple
 A tortuous journey through thick and thin of turmoil

The pure waters of Vedic truths in which the Swan swim
 Twelve inmates of Baranagar monastery wished to follow them
 All over the country he traveled spreading the Master's word
 About the superiority of the salvation of mankind than the self world

At Kanyakumari he swam the confluences of the seas
 And on those outcrop of rocks meditated about his country
 A great past with rich spiritual heritage and the present worst state
 A country that had everything, now broken by casteism and lost itself

The flame Narendranath Dutta is now Vivekananda a light for all
 The light entered the West and what a brilliance it is!
 'Sisters and brothers of America....'
 His short but sweet speech swayed that nation and the world

'The Atman in everybody is the same; it is the Shining one'
 The mission is clear; to root out the casteism and to spread humanism
 With Ramakrishna missions and the treatises on Hindu philosophy
 The agnostic turned seer brought back the glory of his country

'When men are once trained it is essential that their leaders leave them'
 And he knew the point of time he has to leave
 He insisted on serving the morning meal to Sister Nivedita
 Like Jesus who washed the feet of his disciples on that last supper

'India is immortal' he told them, **'if she persists in her search for God'**
'But she goes in for politics and social conflict, she will die'
 He went into meditation and the deep silence permeated the premises
 A little blood in the nostrils, eyes and about his mouth and the rest was silence.



28. MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI (1869-1948)

His weapons of success were prayer and faith
 For him God is truth and truth is God
**'And the whole world is the garment of the Lord
 Renounce it and receive it as the gift of God'**, he said

For three hundred million people he was a saint and Mahatma
 With a spinning wheel and a turnip watch he weaved a nation's cloth
 His preaching from Gita resembled Christ's Sermon on the mountain
 He lived his life and spoke his word and their steps were the same

**'Do not take the crutch from the lame man's arm,
 Until you have taught him to walk'** he warned
 He taught his countrymen truth and non-violent resistance
 They walked along, with heads held high and firm

A nightingale called him Mickey Mouse
 'A man with horns, a spectacle' to some eager boys
 'Like Jesus Christ who died for his kingdom on earth',
 A great political genius to critics and a naked fakir to Royalty,

'Politics is my religion and Religion is my politics' he proclaimed
 As Satyagraha his weapon, love his instrument and truth his principle
 Marched in to the rural India and into the hearts of poor and downtrodden
 In him the struggling country found a messiah after Gauthama Buddha

Soon after partition and the great divide, brothers killed one another
 Before his own eyes his own people owned violence and eschewed love
'Perhaps it is more valuable for humanity that I should die' he wept
 The air was chilled with the occasional cries of 'Gandhi murdabad'

How can a righteous battle produce a catastrophic result?
 Among the visitors on that day at Birla House was a man with a pistol
 Three bullets pierced the chest of the saint of love and non-violence
Hey Ram! Hey Ram!! His lips parted and on his white shawl blood trickled.

'Generations to come, will scarce believe, as such a one as this ever
 In flesh and blood walked upon this earth', the whole world mourned
'Short lived is the spring in the garden of the world', he said once
 The spring left that garden; the garden has now no true waters of love.



29. JOSEPH VISSARIONOVICH DJUGASHVILI (1879-1953)

A rebel to the core the Russian Prometheus
A hunted man for being revolutionary and a leader of expropriators
And when the czar's machine guns massacred thousands
The Russian snow became red and a volcano began its explosions

One statesman found two faithful companions
A revolutionist and a master builder strategist
After the final exit of that statesman
Extinguished was the firebrand revolutionary
The hammer of the builder hit hard his adversaries
Hailed as anti-Christ and the silent man of the Kremlin
The mysterious ogre bent upon bringing Utopia to his people
No fifth columnists or comrades or saboteurs
In that great purge no sentiments, no feelings

A non-aggression pact with Nazi Germany
A fuehrer-dictator following the footsteps of Napoleon and Kaiser
Six million buildings gutted to the ground
Cities in ruins and people on run
The horrors of the war decimated millions
From the grave, Russians tore the enemy into pieces

'There is no God but Lenin,' they believed 'and Stalin is his prophet'
'Y a Stalin, I am the man of steel' he believed in himself

After dinner his guests left his dacha
Into his private room even the air shudders to enter
Who can dare to wake up the most powerful man
Who quaked his country and purged even his ex-comrades...

Almost twenty-four hours the tyrant was in his abnormal sleep
The bulletin of a dying man was in the air for three days
The doctors gave a name to the malady
Divided into two factions friends began their plots to the hierarchy
The most powerful man was made powerless by one stroke
A long and furious glance and a cursing hand moved and halted
A corpse and behind it a relieved country...!



30. ERNESTO 'CHE' GUEVARA (1928-1967)

For all those children of revolution
 The world history is 'before him and after him'
 The staccato sounds of machine guns
 The wheeze of Asthmatic grumbling and a poet
 He wrote the truth of the day with pen and gun.

For all those who step on the unmapped road of revolution
 A guide, a lamp, a star, a martyr and a secular saint
 Is guerilla warfare a romantic myth? Or a transit to be a legend?
 Five thousand dollars for his eyes and hands
 A fair reward probably for the rangers but what a price!

For all those who practice unconditional renunciation
 The home is where they can fight the revolution
 The path is where fire and blood floods the battle-line
 Like an underground current when they explode into a great geyser
 Caesars of imperialism shiver in their boots!

For all those who understood and walked with him
 'El Che' the Argentine, he is, the revolutionary doctor and soldier
 Eighty-two men and the fiery prophet of the dawn Fidel Castro
 When they marched as 'Granma' into the sugarcane fields
 Fifteen survived the fierce battle and in defeat they saw victory
 Pessimism, mazamorra and perseverance and a lot of guerilla victories
 After the fall of Santa Clara, Batista fled and Cuba liberated

For all those who thought they understood him
 The possibilities and improbabilities of an Argentine fighting for Cuba
 A doctor soldier with dreaded asthma winning war and becoming a Cuban
 A Cuban minister's sudden disappearance into the jungles of Latin America
 New battle cries of war and victory and many imageries of a revolutionary

For all those who bare their chests against bullets
 The hole in his heart, the Bolivian rangers made to bleed the revolution
 The strapped hands that were chopped later to gain reward
 The open eyes that illuminate the path to the future revolutionaries to tread
 The still photos and images of Ramon or Ernesto 'Che' Guevara
 And the ashes of his incinerated body scattered all over are the totems
 Fear trembles before them for they understood him as their guide and leader.



LESS POESY MORE COMPOESY...

If poesy goes in the tune of preparation, this compilation of words and thoughts is an extension of a freak thought into a poetic mead. My preoccupation with death as the final truth has always pushed me in search of it in the sayings and philosophies of the distinguished people good or bad who made their names more lasting than others.

The immortal story of a slave trying to escape from Death by borrowing his master's fastest steed and galloping into another city to where Death on dark horse pursues him to fulfill the appointed time and meeting is always an inspiration to me. In Kath Upanishad the boy Nachiketha gains his knowledge about Death from Death itself.

Is the goal of life is death? This question baffled philosophers and scientists alike. For me its search is a driving force. In that spiritual journey I happened to come across the great work of M.V.Kamath- **philosophy of life and death**, Walt Whitman's poetry, All about Death by Peter Potter, Deathing by Anya foos-Graber and a myriad of other books apart from our ancient literature Vedas and Upanishads.

The Wordsworth Dictionary of Phrase and Fable, 100 great nineteenth century lives edited by John Canning, 100 great lives of Odhams press, Living Biographies of Famous rulers by Henry and Dana Lee Thomas did help me in compiling this work. My own book 'In search of Truth' is about Death. My poetic rendering 'Shades' is all about life and this 'Twilight zone' is a natural extension of that thought process.

I consider this work as a patchwork cloak otherwise known as **cento**, mosaic or patchwork verse and it is applied to a kind of poetry made up of separate lines taken from different poets. Aristophanes did that from the works of Homer and Aeschylus. Greek and Roman poets took shelter under Anacreon, Hesiod, Pindar and Virgil. Dodsley, Mark Twain, Laman Blanchard, J.A.Morgan, 'Uncle George', and Philip Drew tried centos to certain extent successfully.

And the bottom line is about the innumerable ways of that mysterious cavalier-

**"I am the Dark Cavalier. I am the last lover.
My arms shall welcome you, when other arms are tired.
Come! Come! Come to my arms!"**

- Dr. LANKA SIVA RAMA PRASAD

RESUME

Dr. LANKA SIVA RAMA PRASAD

M.B.B.S.

M.S. (General Surgery); M.Ch. (Cardio Thoracic Surgery)

Fellow in Vascular Surgery

Post Graduate Diplomate in Human Rights

Post Graduate Diplomate in Television Production

Cell Animation, Computer Animation Specialist

Web Engineer and Web Designer

Dreams Analyst

AUTHOR :

1. Alchemy - (Telugu Poetry)
2. Vana Mabbula Kanti Khadgam - (Telugu Poetry)
3. Tea Cuppulo Toofan - (Telugu Poetry)
4. How to be Happy - (English anthology)
5. In Search of Truth - (Fiction - Telugu)
6. Genome - (Biotechnology Novel-Telugu)
7. Numerology - (Sankhya Sasthram - Telugu)
8. Dreams - (Swapna Sastram - Telugu)
9. Dr. Jaya Dev Cartoons - (Telugu)
10. Moodu Swapnalu - Oka Melakuva - (Telugu Poetry)
11. Shades - (English Poetry)
12. Bhagavatham - (English - Translation)
13. Tangeti Junnu - (Telugu Poetry)
14. In Search of Truth - (Fiction - English)

OTHER ACTIVITIES :

1. Founder of Writer's Corner
(Srujana Lokam)
2. Founder of Waves
(Warangal Aids Voluntary Educational Society)
3. Prasanthi Publications
4. Praja Creations International
5. Columnist - Andhra Jyothi (Nivedana)
6. Cartoonist & Artist



THE TWILIGHT ZONE
THE TWILIGHT ZONE
(CENTOS - POETRY)

SITA AND RAMA (END OF TRETHA YUGA)
SRI KRISHNA (END OF DWAPARA YUGA (3257-3102 BC)
KING SOLOMON (971-931 BC)
ZOROASTER (628 -551 BC)
GAUTHAMA BUDDHA (566-480 BC)
SOCRATES (469-399 BC)
ARCHIMEDES (287 - 212 B.C)
MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO (106-43 B.C.)
JULIUS CAESAR (102-44 BC)
CLEOPATRA (69-30 B.C.).
JESUS CHRIST (4 BC- 33 AD)
ATTILA THE HUN (395 - 453 A.D)
SALADIN (1137 - 1193 A.D.)
JOAN OF ARC (1412-1431)
QUEEN ELIZABETH (1533-1603).
SIR ISAAC NEWTON (1624-1727)
WILLIAM BLAKE (1757-1827)
HORATIO NELSON (1758-1805)
NAPOLEON BONAPARTE (1769-1821)
LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)
GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON (1788-1824)
PERCY BLYSSHE SHELLEY (1792-1822)
JOHN KEATS (1795-1821)
ABRAHAM LINCOLN (1809-1865)
KARL MARX (1818-1883)
THOMAS ALVA EDISON (1847 - 1931)
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA (1863-1902)
MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI (1869-1948)
JOSEPH VISSARIONOVICH DJUGASHVILI (1879-1953)
ERNESTO 'CHE' GUEVARA (1928-1967)

Dr. LANKA SIVA RAMA PRASAD