

Poetry Series

Syed Ahmed Shah
- poems -

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Syed Ahmed Shah(03-08-1960)

12 O'Clock

The clock on my wall
Had stopped at twelve
It has stayed there ever since
Was it midday or midnight
No, it does not bother me at all
What really matters is
The clock has stopped at twelve
Where I would like to live
Forever....

At the beginning
And
At the end...

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Syed Ahmed Shah

A Cynical Vision

A cynical vision draped in moon beam
Stand frozen like a lover-ghost in the sad faced shadow of the banyan tree
At the first streak of morning light, she would leave ...

With death staring at your face, truth hits you as hard as Midday
Let these eyes remain open, just let them be...

A strand of crooked hair
At the foot of the banyan tree
Perhaps, that of a banshee...

Syed Ahmed Shah

A Day In The Shade.

I do not go out on Sundays;
A day in the shade; away
From the Hamletian hell...

I stay inside on Sundays;
A day with music
In the veins...

I stay home on Sundays;
To die...
For a day.

Bokultol, Guwahati, the 18th of March,2012.

Syed Ahmed Shah

A Day Under A Corrugated Iron Shade.

Sunlight ricocheted
From the corrugated iron sheet
Like bouncing beetle nuts
Dislodged from their lofty station; some falling
On the sewer without ceremony.

As I found a safe haven under the shade,
The preacher left; threatening to return
With another day of sunshine.

Bokultol, Guwahati, 18th of March, 2012.

Syed Ahmed Shah

A Diary Entry

Time carried in its womb the promise of a perfect day
Till I overheard the soliloquy of the surgeon's scalpel.

The day began with the hangover of the nightmare that
Robbed me of my daily quota of bliss;
Regular black dots on a straight white line disappearing at a distance
I cannot measure.

The paper bomb came riding a bicycle
Followed by the two liters of pristine nectar
Delivered unashamed beyond the regular dose of toxin,
If I have survived so long, I will survive this one too
Sharma, the smiling assassin might have thought
While concocting his fatal brew.

The ubiquitous head ache did not disappoint
It came as the dowry along with the cat that sports a legend
On its T-Shirt 'Save the Mouse',
Such a saintly soul deserves our true respect.

Twelve atoms of carbon, twenty two of hydrogen and eleven oxygen
A forty-five member group of terrorist spoils my morning cup of tea.
Vicious villains, may you burn in hell along with the endocrinologist.

Should I continue with this melancholy strain to ruin your day?
But I can see you are laughing....

Syed Ahmed Shah

A Greek Tragedy

Alexander cannot continue his conquest
Because Bucephalus, his horse, is mortgaged
Onassis sold off the Boat and the Island
While Jackie ran away with a fisherman...
Oh God, this Euro-Economy is all Greek to me...

Syed Ahmed Shah

A House For All

Let us slice the sky into small bricks
And build a nice cozy house for all to live...

Syed Ahmed Shah

A Jurassic Duel

Eyes blazing,
Tails waving,
They plunge at each other for turf;
Spotting an opportunity to survive
The prey runs off with its life.

Teeth digging into necks,
Oblivious of the world,
The reptiles are locked
In a mortal combat.

Suddenly,
One of them, losing its grip,
Free-falls through the air
And noisily lands
On my feet...

Momentarily pausing and
Shaking its head,
It dashes across the floor and
Climbs up the wall to take-up
A fresh position...

And I
Come back from
The Jurassic Age...

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Syed Ahmed Shah

A Matter Of The Heart

I love the way you hate and
Hate the way you love...

Syed Ahmed Shah

A News By Dr. Nirmalprabha Bordoloi (Translated From Assamese)

A News

Rumors about us
Gave us cover
Like the growing grass
Now that you are gone
Everyone can see me
Naked

- Translated by Syed Ahmed Shah
Bokultol, Guwahati, 21st March, 2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

A Poem By Bahadur Shah Zafar

Translation of a poem by The Last Mughal Bahadur Shah Zafar

My heart finds no solace
In this barren garden
Who has ever found fulfillment
In this mortal realm

Tell these desires of mine
To seek their home elsewhere
How much pain can dwell
In this battered heart

As answer to my quest for a long life
Four days were granted
Two, wasted in prayers
Two, in anticipation

O Zafar, you son of misfortune
It is not in your fate
To get two yards of earth
In the land of your beloved

Translated by Syed Ahmed Shah

Syed Ahmed Shah

A Poem By Madhuchanda Chaliha Bhuyan (Translated From Assamese)

Muffled voice
Missing words
Quiet midday...

A hummed melody
Breaches the
Barrier of language...

- Madhuchanda Chaliha Bhuyan

(Translated by Syed Ahmed Shah)

Syed Ahmed Shah

A Poem Never Fails

A poem never fails...

There are poems read only by poets

There are poems read only by non poets

There are poems read by both

Still there are many read by none...

But a poem never fails

It succeeds the moment it takes birth

And finds utterance in the form of words

On lips and paper...

It may be barely audible

It may be ungainly and clumsy

It may be plain ugly

But a poem, nevertheless ...

It succeeds the moment

It breaks free of the complex system

Of mind and soul

Of heart and head

Of nerves and arteries...

It is only the aborted fetus of poems

That fails; not the poem that takes birth

A poem never fails...

Syed Ahmed Shah, 31st of December, 2014, Bokultol, Guwahati.

Syed Ahmed Shah

A Stanza On Silence (Translated From A Poem By Ruprekha Goswami)

A STANZA ON SILENCE...

Today, I am going to write to my heart's content
A poem that was not meant to be written ever
The cream rising to the surface of the soul
After a violent churning of the inner self...

Today, I cannot put off writing anymore
Hopefully, this is going to be my tour de force...
I need my pen, paper, ink, chair-table
In their rightful places...

Where should I write and how should I write
In the heart, the hands, the eyelids, the lips?

I toss about on the tumultuous waves of desire
I borrow a handful of the moon beam
And force open the window to breathe easy...
I implore the impatient breeze to lure into the room
The wafting aroma of an unknown bloom...

I squeeze my heart to satiate my pen
An offering of passion before my unsteady fingers...

Then?
Then, an all pervading sea of silence
Drowns the heart...

Ruprekha Goswami

(Translated from Assamese by Syed Ahmed Shah)

Syed Ahmed Shah

A Sufi's Lament...

A Sufi's Lament...

Queen
Of the vilest realm
In the crevices
Of the mind...
Like the serpent
She coils, uncoils
To the devils muffled delight...
A thousand hues
A thousand holes to hide
Oh, how she masquerades
As the cliché called love...
Lady ego,
You have entrapped so many
Led so many to their doom...
All of them went smiling
For what?
For whom? ?

3rd September 2010, Bokul Tal, Guwahati.

Syed Ahmed Shah

A Sufi's Prayer...

I wonder often in my sleep
How would I react
When the cold breath of death
Fans my face
Would I just smile..
And say 'Thanks'
I wonder often in my sleep...

Syed Ahmed Shah

A Title Suit Concerning A Drop Of Blood

The mosquito steals a dropp of human blood;
The mosquito takes a dropp of human blood;
The mosquito collects its dropp of blood;
The mosquito recovers its dropp of blood;
The argument continues...

(c) Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati

Syed Ahmed Shah

A Useful Tip For Survival

If you are walking
on the wrong side of the road
and afraid that you will be run over
by a car coming from the rear,
turn around in your axis;
you are now on the right side;
a handy tip handed out free
by an uncle not dead yet;
but trying...

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati, the 7th of April,2012.

Syed Ahmed Shah

A Visit To The Zoo

Fine spring day
Miss the animals in their cages
They have not seen me for ages...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Actually The Woods Were As Cold As The Sunset

History came stealthily like a thief
Through the narrow jungle track
A thousand lamps flickered at a distance
The sound of crackling bamboo melted
In the chorus of the wild
Actually, the woods were as cold as the sunset ...

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Syed Ahmed Shah

Afternoon In Arafat

Allah, return to me
That ambrosial afternoon of Arafat...

In the heart of the desert
A roaring conflagration
Of stones of passion
And bodies of clay...

Funeral pyres
A million delusions
Fly upwards in the wind
Like burning tufts of dry grass...

The scented melody of zephyr
A stream of serene silence...

The Sun goes down
And an enchanting afternoon
Gradually disappears like melting ice
From the plains of Arafat...

Like a dying echo
Silence finally descends
On the Valley of Mercy...

It is Sunset in Arafat...

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Syed Ahmed Shah

Alert Notice

Beware the man
Who wears a coat
On a hot summer day
He may be hiding
Inside his coat pocket
A pack of cards
A loaded gun and
A book of verse
By meâ€¦!

Syed Ahmed Shah

Alien Poetry

Clever turns of phrase
Turning stomach
With stench of
Putrid flesh
Cryptic clues
Entwined in labyrinthine maze
Of mystical obscurity
Glazed vision in a verbal haze
Recipe for base poetry...

Alien
Alien to me...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Allah Ke Bande (Translated From Hindi)

A bird with broken wings
Couldn't take to the sky
Someone's greed robbed it of its
Capacity to fly
Gloriously soaring in the heavens
Oh..how It came crashing to the earth!

Through its clouded dreams
It kept on saying
O servant of Allah
Keep smiling
What you have lost today
Will again be yours...

Only by losing its wings
It learnt to fly...

'Please, carry along the burden of your sorrows
Your tears would help you in the long run...'

When it had lost its wings
The dreams too were broken
Into a thousand pieces
Every single piece reminding one of
Allah's will...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Amnesia

Am I dead
Or am I just being forgetful
I forgot to bleed
When you were killed

Syed Ahmed Shah

Amoeba

Amoeba

I am an old fashioned man

I write poems the old fashioned way

I soak my nib in vacuum

Under the influence of a psychotic trance

And let the pen loose

On a clean sheet of paper...

The letters

At first like bird droppings

Soil the white sky

Then they start waving their pseudopodia

Altering their original geometric identities

Keeps changing

And changing

Acquiring new meanings

In moving frames of space and time...

Do you have patience with a speck of unicellular microbe...

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Syed Ahmed Shah

Anger

Like an aging nutch girl, the lone candle
flickered for a few seconds and died...
The smoke, unwillingly uncoiling,
rises a few inches from the dead wick
and vanishes in the freezing air
like the feverish tail of terrified serpent...

Cricket lovers and midnight revelers
have no time for anger;
but I need a ton of those
strong, sturdy and lasting
like their Denims ...

Oh...my people...my people...

Syed Ahmed Shah

April Requiem

Let us observe two minutes silence
In memory of the mother we betrayed; and
Quietly disperse to our respective caves.

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati, the 10th of April,2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

Art And Stupidity

Some people have elevated stupidity into a form of art
Others have relegated art into a form of stupidity
No wonder my art would never make it to the charts
It is destined to die in a state of obscurity

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, 15th of May, 2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

Bats Upside Down

Bundles of amorphous darkness
Zigzag menacingly
Through the crimson sky
Before clutching at branches
With certainty of the night;
Little omens clinging precariously
To the tolerance of an ancient tree
Mock the ill disguised infertility of the rituals
On the ceiling...

And wait...

Day of colour, Bokultol, Guwahati

Syed Ahmed Shah

Beads...

The day lay scattered on the cold marble floor
Like colorful beads escaping
From a torn rosary string...

The sun stands baffled
Through which door to leave...

(c) Syed Ahmed Shah

Syed Ahmed Shah

Beauty

Geometrical symmetry

Chiseled in soft butter

Perfect

Predictable

Inspid...

Give me instead

The uneven

Erratic

Awfully flawed

Volatile grey

Any day...

(c) Syed Ahmed Shah.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Beyond The Rainbow

Beyond the rainbow of blind colors
There lies the heaven of reason
Romance was never so pure
Innocence never so exciting

Syed Ahmed Shah

Can The Fog Camouflage The Blood Stains...

First you see
Then you look
Only a tiny second stands
Between you and the beasts of the bus
Why take the first step along the corridor of light and shade
The grey marbles only turn darker as you walk ...

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati

Syed Ahmed Shah

Can You Hear The Guns...

Can you hear the guns, Rongmon...
Listen to their blazing booms
This is the hour of reckoning
Arise or you are doomed...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Chalo Ek Bar Phir Se

Chalo Ek Bar Phir Se (Sahir Ludhianvi)

Let us be strangers again, you and I...

I shall no longer harbour any hope of affection from you
Nor should you look this way with forbidden eyes
My words should no longer betray the trembling in my heart
Nor your glances should reveal the storm inside
Come lets us be strangers again...

Something holds you back from entering the room
This vision, I am told, is no longer mine
The indiscretions of my past are now my companions
Shadows of those spent nights follow you too
Come lets us be strangers again...

When familiarity becomes a malaise it is better be forgotten
When a relationship becomes a burden it is better be broken
The saga that is impossible to be brought to its end
Should be abandoned at a beautiful curve on the road...
Let us be strangers again, you and I...

(Translated by Syed Ahmed Shah)

Syed Ahmed Shah

Cheetah On The Chase

If only the heart had legs;
A nimble footed cheetah
Tearing away
From the cage...

Wilderness...
Stretching for nameless miles
Before starving eyes

Oh, the savage beauty of
A cheetah on the chase...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Choose Your Fetters

Choose Your Fetters...

Are free radicals truly free
Free from the tyranny of chemistry
The light from the logic of physics
The body from the diktats of biology
The heart from the moods of the seasons
The mind from the mischief of hormones...

Freedom...

What freedom
You are free only to
Choose your fetters;
Choose the one that perfectly fits your limbs
You see, choice actually matters
You can pick the design of your prison
Even, the size of the cell and
The color of the walls...

Choose with care...

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Syed Ahmed Shah

Circus In My Backyard

There is a circus running
In the backyard...

Agile acrobats
Swinging from branches
Keeping spectators on toes...
Whole family of
Fathers
Mothers
Brothers
Sisters
Children
Babies
And more..

Lunch break...

'The succulent guava,
Jackfruit, mango,
Banana, pumpkin
Are ours for the asking
So are the vegetables
Turnips, cabbage, reddish
Uprooted from the soil
The fruit of human toil
More the merrier
We eat as much as we can
The rest we just destroy'

'This is the circus,
Ladies and gentleman,
Our ancestral domain,
So, we rule with absolute disdain
Of you, our rich cousin.
You have had your share of fun
Now let us have ours'

Oh, sweet, sweet revenge...!

Color Of Sigh

Have you ever
Caught the color of a sigh...

It is bluish
Like venom
Like her eyes...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Colorful Vanity By Madhuchanda Chaliha Bhuyan (Translated From Assamese)

'...several tall buildings had risen from the ruins...'

Let me dip my nib in a spoonful of alkali

Fiery words bathed in ink
Is that what you would like to see
On the white pages!
Dance of death
On the ice capped mountain!

When colorful vanity
From the past
Raises its head
Phoenix like
From the ruins
On dreamy foundations.

The annals smile
Helpless
Speechless...

© Syed Ahmed Shah (translator) ,13th of July,2012, Boluktol,

Syed Ahmed Shah

Comatose

So, you were in love!
You mean...
Comatose in the ICU?
That blue bubble of nothingness?
Now that you have survived and
Came out in one piece
You will know
The seriousness of the affliction
â€˜If it did not kill you the bill would'
So goes the joke
But you are a survivor nevertheless
That is all that matters
Phew â€¦!
What madness!

Syed Ahmed Shah

Crab

The disfigured dream digs deep into the night
Layer upon layer of limpet terror
As the crude city lives on snatches a breath
I crouch like a crab under the comfort of a nightmare...

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Syed Ahmed Shah

Dancing Feet

I keep shuffling my feet;
Afraid of growing roots..

Syed Ahmed Shah

Danse Macabre

Corner her in a narrow lane
Slice open her bulging belly
Fish out the unborn
And wave it on the tip of a sword
Like a human flag...

Rejoice my countrymen
Join the danse macabre of your civilization...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Death...

Death...

When your eyes get doused by grey rains
When your saliva stops dribbling
When your ears turn deaf to music and profanities
It is time you folded your wings and went to sleep...

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, 23rd of June, 2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

Defiance (Haiku)

A thousand cars stop
Molehill at traffic junction
Life stopping life

Syed Ahmed Shah

Déjà Vu

In the past
I may have foolishly endorsed
Liars, looters and murderers
Perhaps only to survive...

Assuming, not admitting,
You are not one of the above...

But I still cannot accept your cup of tea...

It is not what you did
It is what they will do...

I do not for a moment doubt
That you will turn the wheels of industry
Give bread to the hungry
And oil the mighty guns of death...

And overtime ...
They will deify you
Worship you in their homes
And latch on to every word you will speak...

Speak you will and
Only you will speak...
Others will only listen...

And aberrations like me...
We will be dragged to the streets
By your billion devotees
And lynched like dogs
On a Night of Broken Crystals ...

Traitors!
Traitors! !
Traitors! ! !
The wheel will turn full circle...

Achtung! ! !

Syed Ahmed Shah

Devdasi By Devkant Barooah

Whom? to whom would thou offer
Thy hearts hidden treasures,
Thy finely chiseled form? to God?
Our love cannot quench His eternal thirst,
O' the luckless one.

God needs blood, only red blood He needs
From wounded Human hearts;
And to Him you are offering your love?
On whose feet cries the unrequited offerings
Of Rambha, Menoka the celestial nymphs!

(oah)

Syed Ahmed Shah

Die Kristallnacht Idiots

You broke shop windows with sledgehammers
Your arms could hardly lift; and you thought,
Broken crystals would make large sounds and
A solitary fire would look like a thousand and they
Would run away like rats...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Do You Have A Moment To Spare?

Do you have a moment to spare?
An Apple-Second,
Unchained to the business of living?
It is the blank cheque that
Literally makes your mind go blank;
You wrestle with the figure and
Miss your date with life.

Apples are for eating...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Don'T Tourture Me With Your Poems

Touch with a feather or hit with a crowbar;
You have a choice of tools to hurt my body;
But to torture my soul, you have nothing
But poetry, uprooted from the heart...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Double Helix

Double Helix

Take the twisted ladder and
Climb your way to heaven
Or slip ingloriously
Into the dungeons of hell
Man, you are destined
Either for greatness
Or for a fabulous fall
Wonder what shape
Was the ladder
That brought Lucifer down
Was it a Double Helix or
Perfectly Round
But either way
The zigzag sugary steps
Must have been the same

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Syed Ahmed Shah

Dust On A Windy Road

Dust on a windy road
Masks on faces
A Child behind the curtain
We try to run away
From the womb...

(Minha khalaqnakum
wafeeha nueedukum
waminhanukhrijukum taratan okhra)

Syed Ahmed Shah

Dying For The Country

How can I die for the country
When you did not even let me live...

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Syed Ahmed Shah

Earthquake

Must give it to you
Smart fellow
How you scare the shit out of them
Every time you shake a limb...

The way they run out of their comic buildings
To take shelter under the same empty sky
Where they had forced others to live...

It seems
You are the only one
They are really scared of...

Each disgusting
Ball of slime
That passes for human...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Ek Akela Is Shahar Mein By Gulzar (Translation)

Lonesome in this city
Midday till midnight
In search of food and water
And a roof overhead...

The days are like empty pots
The nights, bottomless pits
From these gloomy vacant eyes
Smoke, not tears, emit ...

When there is no reason to exist
One looks for an excuse to exit

These roads, outrunning a lifespan,
Never seem to reach their ends
Restless in their quest
Never saw them taking a break

In this alien city
Looking for a friendly face...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Equation

Whenever I see a lot of people in a room laughing
I look for the man silently weeping in a corner

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati, the 8th of April,2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

Faceless Enemy

Can you spot the round object
Lying on the ground
By the side of the frayed masonry

No it is not a football
The world cup is long over

No it is not an empty cup
Their cup of woe is already full

It is part of a human skull...

Hours ago it had a face...

Face of a four year old terrorist
Who used to terrorize his young sister
With a toy gun

Bang Bang Bang...

See, you have not missed the target
Your faceless enemy is now neutralized...

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Syed Ahmed Shah

Faithful

I left the sea at the shore
Like a dog, it followed me home

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, 15th of May, 2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

Falak...Just Hang On There!

Falak...

Please do not go

Just hang on there

We are here

See...

All of us

Soon, everything will be alright

Falak...Falak...

We need you

We need you to hang on there

Just hold tight and don't let go

Falak...Falak...

Breath...

keep on breathing

You need to live...

We all need to live...

Syed Ahmed Shah

False Alarm

I have stopped flying altogether;
every time I pass by a metal detector
The buzzer sets off a false alarm;
It takes a lot of effort on my part
To convince the security that
I have a bullet lodged in my heart
For years and the tissues around it
Have atrophied to form a rock hard shell.
Travelling is not worth the hassle;
So, I prefer to remain at home.

Amazing, how the world is scared
Of a small bullet
Even if it is buried
Deep inside a heart.

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati, the 8th of April,2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

Fat Free Diet

Weight watchers,
Read my poems;
They are fat free.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Father

Last night

I picked up a poem

From the river of blood

And let it bask in the sun for a while

As the shadow of silence felt its toes with a feather

I hurriedly picked it up and threw it back into the river

And cried like a grieving father...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Faute De Mieux

The saber swishes through
A layer of air,
Sick with chronic suspicion,
And hot-knives through my neck
Like a foregone conclusion.
The head, severed from sin,
Drops with a thud
At my feet,
Muttering a feeble excuse...

My life was not
Faute de mieux;
I had earned it by being undecipherable...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Fear

Please do not insult her by calling her courageous
Allow her the privilege of fear
She was shaking like a tree
Like any child of her age would ...

She was a mere child...

She might have loved the jungle
With all its pristine innocence
She trusted the jungle
Like she would trust her mother...

She might have loved flowers
The butterflies, her friends and the rivers
Hurling down from the mountain...

You see, she was a mere child
Allow her the privilege of fear....

Syed Ahmed Shah

Fireball

Fireball...

The misplaced metaphor
Streaked passed
The crowded confusion
Like a meteor...

A suicide
A murder
A solution...

Two names
Two homes
Only one body to burn...

© Syed Ahmed Shah, 1 st of March, 2014, Bokultol, Guwahati.

Syed Ahmed Shah

From A Song By Dr. Nirmalprabha Bordoloi

With the stream of eternal thirst quietly passing through
We were abandoned as empty shells on the silent sea shore

Syed Ahmed Shah

Frozen

Frozen to my bones
As the mercury dives
But my neurons, born hot,
Never tire of firing
Baked in the furnace of passion
And boiling with the oil of reason
My neurons merrily fire away...

Fats, I am told, are bad for health
But I burn them in my brain...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Funerals Are For The Living

If you are the social type
And enjoy meeting people,
Never miss a funeral in the graveyard;
Funerals are great occasions
To meet living people
In a peaceful surrounding...

I always had a lingering suspicion that
Funerals are actually
Meant for the living...

Graveyards provide great ambience
And throw in a surprise or two...
'A fifty year old tomb of a five year old girl '

The dead never seem to age
Only the memory does...
What about that gentleman
Who you thought died long ago
Standing right next to you during the prayer
He may even be attending the funeral next week
Yours...

Great place this graveyard
Full of uncanny surprises
And shocks...

Bokultol, 3rd of April, 2012.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Golden Harvest

I have tilled and leveled my heart
You can come and plant the words in neat lines
When the crop ripens
We'll harvest the golden songs together
Stay here...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Hamlet

Hamlet...

Brownian chaos
In a neurotic sea...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Hamne Dekhi Hain.. (Translation Of A Song Composed By Gulzar)

I have felt the floating aroma of those fragrant eyes
Do not accuse it of a relationship with your touch
It is just an emotion; gauge it with your soul
Let love remain love, spare it the burden of a name...

Love is not a word, love is not a voice
It is a silence that is heard and spoken of
Neither is it extinguished nor does it cease to flow
A drop of luminosity that runs through the ages...

I can see the hint of a smile playing somewhere in those eyes
And Sunshine bending over those eyelids
The lips do not utter a word, yet on those quivering lips
Myriad stories wait behind a wall of silence...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Harmony In Bondage

A canary, a crow and a nightingale
Trapped for years in a cage
Struggle to sing that perfect note
A harmony, in bondage

Syed Ahmed Shah

Harvest Me By Hiren Bhattacharyya (Translated From Assamese)

With your hands reaping God's bounty, please pick me up;
Branches, leaves, roots, the whole of me-
I'll be a song on your lips.

(Translated by Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati on the 15th of March,2012)

Syed Ahmed Shah

Have You Been Looking For Me?

Have you been looking for me
I so am easy to find
Just follow the river
Meandering like a vine and
Touching my backyard
Before taking a turn

Syed Ahmed Shah

Hobson Had A Better Choice

I am given a choice between
Finishing my tax returns before the deadline
And finishing my poem before it is dead
Hobson had a better choice...

24th of march,2012, Bokultol, Guwahati.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Holes

Holes are everywhere...

Holes in the heart
Black holes in space
Manholes in sidewalks
Loopholes in law
Every system has a hole...

Holes are the escape routes
An euphemism for freedom...

Bokultol, Guwahati, 29th of March, 2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

Hollow Waves

The ocean has been restive for years
At this rate, it'll use up all its steam;
And the Tsunami we have been waiting for
Shall forever remain a distant dream.

Syed Ahmed Shah

I Am...

Good Morning...

I am...

Wait ...how should I introduce myself to you?

What would you like to hear?

A truthful man?

Or an honest man?

I beg your pardon...

Both ways?

Sorry, I can't introduce myself both ways

Not possible at the same time

Technical problem, you see

Let me do something else

I have a third identity

Let me introduce myself that way

Safe for me

Safe for you as well

Then listen...

I am ...

A person without a name.

Ok?

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol,29th April,2012.

Syed Ahmed Shah

I Aspire... Translated From An Assamese Song By Dr. Nirmalprabha Bordoloi

I aspire to see in a thousand eyes
Raging flames of the blazing sun
To overcome the horrifying ordeal
Waiting at the hazardous crossroads of time

I aspire to hear on a thousand lips
Words sharp as steel
To signal the close of winter
And to herald the coming of spring

Syed Ahmed Shah

I Love Crows

The Cuckoo is relentless;
Never knew music to be so intimidating.
Melodies lose their ambrosia; like
Virginity shed of pretension.

I love crows...
The power of loyalty transcends seasons.

Crows are forever busy;
Cleaning your sins.

Bokultol, Guwahati, the 18th of March,2012.

Syed Ahmed Shah

I Salute The Jackal.

Spare a thought for the jackal;
It always had a bad press.
The world never had patience
With free spirits; they are
Despised, chased and killed.
Men...
Usurpers, pretenders, fakes...

Bokultol, Guwahati, the 18th of March,2012.

Syed Ahmed Shah

I Want My Day Back

The cuckoo is suddenly silent; the lull before the storm;
Weary notes of familiar songs drown the doomsday drums.
I want my day back, the friendly morning cup
Ready and steaming; untouched and unharmed.

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati, 12th April, 2012.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Illicit Moment (Translated From An Assamese Poem Written By Ruprekha Goswami)

I wish to indulge in a little debauchery this moment
Knowingly or unknowingly, I want to do a few things
Falling outside the lexicon of respectable behavior.

Flinging open the doors of a forbidden room
I want to finger and fiddle with
A few moments of reminiscence
Shielded even from myself.

At this moment I would like to be intoxicated
With ecstasies beyond borders of prudence;
Holding hands of unchained passions
I wish to rush on like a raging bull.
I wish to stagger along that road on which
I do not have the slightest courage to walk,
While in my senses.

I consider this moment to be quite precious
Once this moment is gone
I would be, as if instantly enshrouded
In attires of orderly disposition

Taking off every single stitch of clothing from my body
I wish to be face to face with me, totally bare
I would like to live this illicit moment
To my hearts content...

Syed Ahmed Shah

In The Sea Of Yo-Yo Swans (Translated From Assamese)

A shrill cry shatters
The concrete wall

Shielding the weeping hollow
Under remorseless ribs

Rubber teeth dig into the
Heartbeat of Asphalt

The clock takes
An unscheduled break

At the crossroad...

His neck competes
In a sea of Yo Yo swans

A sip from the smoking river
A tiny harmless sip

But the red river
Is nowhere to be seen

And there he sits

On the sidewalk
Wiping his brow

With a soiled hankie

The useless piece of shit!

A collective sigh
Escapes like undigested wind

Mingles with other poisons

What a waste!

The swan mumbles a curse
Under its breath

And walks away in disgust...

(Translated from Assamese)

Syed Ahmed Shah

It Is Fundamental, Honey

Why write about something
That exists by default
Absolute Time
Absolute Space
Absolute Love
It is fundamental, honey...

Here
Let me write about
Loveless space
Loveless time...

About a universe that does not exist...

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Knock

I knock at my door
No answer
Perhaps, I am not home ...

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Syed Ahmed Shah

Knock II

I knock at my door

No answer

Perhaps, I am knocking from inside...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Knock Iii

I knock at my door
No answer
Perhaps, I am dead

© Syed Ahmed Shah

Syed Ahmed Shah

Knock Iv

I knock at my door
No answer
Perhaps, it is not my home...

(c) Syed Ahmed Shah

Syed Ahmed Shah

Knock V

I knock at my door
No answer
Perhaps, I live alone...

(c) Syed Ahmed Shah

Syed Ahmed Shah

Knock Vi

I knock at my door
No answer
Perhaps, she is sill angry...

Syed Ahmed Shah

L'Enfant Terrible

That urchin from the gutters
Throws stones at your house
He may not look so pretty
But certainly not a mouse
The quintessential devil
Drowns your letter box
After a ruckus in the street
He darts like a grinning fox
Hate him if you want to
Call him by any name
But one thing is for certain
That he'll bust your double game
He'll not make it to twenty
And perhaps even less
But he hardly gives a damn
A couple is all that he needs
But once he is in the garden
One thing is for sure
With fire in his tail
No one is secure
Save your precious dhoti
From the naughty kid
For this terrible young 'un
Is the last thing you'd need..
For us all in the streets
He is a load of fun
With the Baccha and the Baniya
It is him in there we want
A slingshot on his shoulders
And a whistle in his mouth
It is going to be wholesome
The next parliament...

© Syed Ahmed Shah.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Leopard Man

Leopard Man

'If you eat this you will be brave and strong like a leopard'
Said the superstitious villager offering his son a portion
Of the leopard flesh enthusiastically cooked by his wife.

'But father, I don't want to become a leopard' -said the son,
'If I become one, I will have nothing to eat and
Nowhere to go; people will chase me and kill me'.

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati, the 7th of April,2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

Lipstick

The rag picker dipped
into the trash can
and picked up a blood red lipstick;
The taste of the rich
killed the innocence
of her dark lips.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Little Boys Playing In The Graveyard

Little boys playing hide 'n seek in the graveyard

Old graves are cool, they think

You jump in and stay put

Come out whenever you like

Little boys

Little man

Man

Old man

Dead man

Ghosts

Memories

Whenever you likeâ€¦

Syed Ahmed Shah

Love In Emi

Let us love...
In easy monthly installments
To keep ourselves solvent...

Let us love....
In discrete emotional quanta
In measurable
Scientific scales...

Let us love
With a reason...

Let us be mad
With a method...

Let us leave
The company of poets
For a day...

Let us...
Not live;
Just exist...

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, 13th of May, 2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

Love... Hiren Bhattacharyya (Translated From Assamese)

This poet is penniless;
Surely, you know that.
He has but one shirt;
That too, threatening at the seams.
Perhaps love too is like this;
Stripping bare to cool the heart.

- Hiren Bhattacharyya

Syed Ahmed Shah

Love...Like This By Kowstooovmoni Saikia Dutta (Translated From Assamese)

Do you remember the day..
You opened up your big heart
Like the ocean...
Like the sky...

Before we had time to reflect...
We were washed away by the frothy sea
And drowned by the cloudy sky...

Now,
There is nothing but
A mysterious silence
Haunting the heart

Thus disappears
The narcissistic memories of a cynical love
In the depth of silence...

By Kowstooovmoni Saikiadutta (Translated by)

Syed Ahmed Shah

Lust For Life By Smritirekha Bhuyan (Translated From Assamese)

Lust for life
The dark nights
Whine on beds of sorrow
The aged soul
Immersed in the afternoon sonata
Yet, dreams still breathe.
Holding hands with a singing flute
A little seedling of hope
Grows in my breast.
Life, you know already
How your ambrosial melody
Mesmerizes me
A blind devotee of your untainted love

Syed Ahmed Shah

Magical Moon (Translated From A Song Written By Nirmalprabha Bordoloi)

The silvery shroud of the magical moon
The mysterious shadows of the pine leaves
The soft murmuring of the little stream
Is it where we shall meet?

On the banks of the Kaveri
And the Gangetic plains
Through life's lonesome journey
Through cold and rain
This wandering is a quest
An odyssey in your trail...

My unknown destiny
Of fathomless charm and beauty
Showering tranquility
Stirring the tired spirit
I am the Age, weary of thirst
A terrified howl from the desert ...

(From a song written by Dr. Nirmalprabha Bordoloi)

Syed Ahmed Shah

Map

The proud tree stands erect
Respecting the sanctity of the wall
But roots have no such obligation...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Map (Translation Of A Poem By Smritirekha Bhuyan)

No map is eternal
All maps are temporary
Like the extended bamboo fencing
Built to accommodate the expanding
Kingdom of creepers inside my garden
No matter how wide or narrow your spread your tent
The shadows may appear as claimants any moment
Any second the war may return
In the future victory may be your ultimate goal
The map drawn by the constraints of the time
And a mixture of good and bad ideas
Will remain secure
Till the moment you stay there
And I remain here
They too will find their lebensraum
The borders of passions will be restrained ...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Mayhem In May

Let the sun go insane
Let the glaciers melt free
I would love to see
What secrets of the ocean
The mountain has been hiding
In its breast

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, 16th of May, 2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

Meet Me Before All These...

Meet me
Before He
Snuffs out the Sun
Dries up the sea
And rolls up the sky...

Meet me
Before He
Wipes out the smiles
Freezes the hearts
And rearranges the bones...

Meet me
Before He
Makes me your enemy
Or makes you a stranger...

Meet me before all that...

Meet me in silence
Under the Bokul tree
With a bunch of innocent white lily...

Meet me with a pearl
Snatched from thine eyes
That never met mine
When I was alive...

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Syed Ahmed Shah

Memories Between Two Mirrors

'No pain is permanent, only their memory is....' (Song of Mon Fokeer)

When I was young and uneasy
I used to play this irritating game...
I used put my face between two mirrors
And tried to count the images
Till my eyes ached and
I could not hold the mirrors steady anymore...
It was a plain stupid experiment
As I learnt from my physics teacher years later...
'One cannot count infinity, you dummy! '
Now I am trying to remember
My memories of you
Placed between two mirrors....

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Monsoon Still Far Down South...

The dismembered day lay soaked in its own blood
The jungle knows only one truth; silence
For heaven's sake, please shut up
Your incoherent ramblings only hurt my ears ...

The women in fatigues
Disappeared behind the bushes
Their empty water cans
Made sweet music
Rubbing against the warm barrels...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Mosquito Bite

For a moment I thought
It was a mosquito sucking my blood
Then I realized I was the earth
And they were drilling my heart

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, 17th of May, 2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

Mother

The bamboo fencing marking
The boundaries of my sanity
Has to be renewed every year
Before the onset of the Holy Moon
The grass and the creepers
Nourished with love
Bewail the intrusion and beg for mercy
But I, born in the womb of compassion
Betray my blood...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Mouth Full Of Diamonds

You fellows keep looking at my mouth
as if it is a minefield of diamonds.
Why do I have to say something smart
everytime I open my mouth?
Why cannot I just
swear,
cry,
crack stale jokes or
just yawn?
Why cannot I just laugh on
hearing something absurd
like 'Truthful Lover'
or 'Chicken Dosa'?
Why cannot I just open my mouth
and say nothing?
Why am I not allowed the privilege of
being a bombastic bore?

Syed Ahmed Shah

Mujhse Pahli Si Mahabbat Meri Mahboob Na Mang By Faiz Ahmed Faiz

Do not expect of me, my beloved, the same old love
Life once appeared beautiful because, I thought, you were there
The sweet longing for you made me forget other worldly pains
The spring seemed eternal because of your splendid beauty
What else remained in this world besides your lovely glance?
Fate would have been conquered If I had won you
It was not exactly like this, though I thought it was true...

There are other sufferings in this world, my beloved, besides love
There are other pleasures besides the pleasure of lovers' embrace
Evil spells of savagery spread over countless ages...

Woven in silk, satin and gold lace
Bodies put up for sale in the markets and byelanes
Smeared with soil, bathed in blood
Bodies emerging from cauldrons of virus
Putrid pus oozing from rotting wounds
I keep looking that way too, what can I do
You still look enchanting but what can I do...

There are other sufferings in this world, my beloved, besides love
There are other pleasures besides the pleasure of lovers embrace
Do not expect of me, my beloved, the same old love...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Multi-Man

Multi-man

One soul per man

I was told

It is always me, not us

But when I try singing solo

It sounds like a chorus

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, 4th of April, 2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

My Dress Hangs There... Translation Of An Original Assamese Poem By Rousanara Begum

My Dress Hangs There

My house was by the sea,
I love the sea.
It taught me how to nurture dreams
Within the heart;
And the constant roar of the waves
Filled my heart with longing.

Even now,
You can clearly see my ruddy reflection
On the balcony of the multistoried palatial house;
And the spectacular view of the sea
With ships passing
To and fro.

On either shore,
The statue of liberty
Announces its presence
By raising its hand.

The mighty echo
Of my muted weeping
Rings across air and sky.

My red-green dress still hangs
In the prison of your vigilant eyes!

I still long for that run-away heart of mine
That loved to gather flowers?

My severed hand, writhes in pain
Among the left-over food
Rotting in the dust bin
What does it want to say?
To whom?

The chorus of pain of those gathering
In the middle of the ruins
To save the damned earth
Or to bury it in the filth of the commode.

I understand and get ready!
Many such tender buds
Get crushed under feet and wilt
Many songs forget their beats.

Even today,
Time stands still.
The parched epochal bird
Has not flown away till now
Plainness still hangs on
The drying lines of
The mechanical world,
Just like my dress.

Ah, my hanging red-green dress!

Syed Ahmed Shah

My Funeral

City square

Midday

Someone stabs me on my back
And loses himself in the crowd...

The lanes clog with mourners
A weeping city bids me farewell...

The Imam leads the prayer and
Raises his gloved hands to the sky...

The Hand that destroyed me
Now raised to bless my soul...

Syed Ahmed Shah

My Left Arm

My Ram-rod straight Aide De Camp
My left limb used to be a nice little slave
Beautifully servile,
Ready to carry out my commands
Mostly springing from flashes of momentary impulse
Provoked by anger, hate, lust, greed and uncompromising pride
A proverbial Comrade- in-Sin
One of the suicidal fools of the Light Brigade
Charging to their doom in Balaclava...

And some essential tasks of cleaning ...

But it was a docile, taciturn, nice, obedient,
Never say no
Gent in waiting...

No questions asked, just follow orders....

Now, after paying servile obeisance for an entire life time
My left arm, would you believe it,
Has finally decided to raise the banner of rebellion
A rebel without a cause...

The old fool!
What does it think it is?
Fidel Castro? Lenin? Mao Zhe Dong? Gandhi?
What a brazen exhibition of senile desperation!
But it has stubbornly stuck to its wayward ways...

No amount of cajoling, coercion, threat or greed can make it work for me again...

Who could have ruined such a flourishing career in slavery?
I think I know,
Even as my friend Dr. Navanil Barua won't accept it in public,
It is that bloody drop of dopamine!
Mine-Regular-Dose-of Dop! !
The supply lines have finally dried off! ! !

Supply lines, as we all know,

Has this strange habit of drying off
When you need them the most....

Now I am on a constant diet of sedative
Perhaps, to forget this act of betrayal
By one so close....

Psst.....don't ever
Never, never, never
Trust your left Arm...! ! !

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati.

Syed Ahmed Shah

My Nationality

?????? ????????????

O mankind! revere your Guardian-Lord Who created you from a single person
created of like nature his mate and from them twain scattered (like seeds)
countless men and women (Holy Quran)

.....
They have this funny little game
'Discover your subconscious nationality'
I answered all the questions
And crossed all the options...
Now they cannot find my nationality
Who wants to be a member of a glorified tribe anyway
And go back to a late second millennium absurdity
Tigers do not like cages
Neither do air
Nor lovers
Nor poets
Entire humanity is my nationality
And don't look for my name
In your pathetic little Register
I do not care if it is not there...
I love you with all my heart
Even if you do not love me

Hate, is your problem, not mine...

.

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati.

Syed Ahmed Shah

My Poems Are Shorter Than Your Breath

My poems are shorter than your breath.
I shed tears like extra sugar;
My blood coagulates faster.

Syed Ahmed Shah

My Right Foot Does Not Know By Hiren Bhattacharyya (Translated From Assamese)

My right foot does not know where the left foot is going
Continuing like this I come back to you once again;
You are the undulating song in my rootless existence...

(Translated by Syed Ahmed Shah)

Syed Ahmed Shah

My Song Can Wait

You have punctured my drum,
You have muffled my pipe.
I'll pick up my song
When the time is right...

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati, 13th April, 2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

Nasal Vision

When you can see only the tip of your nose
You know that you are lying in your grave...

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, 23rd of June, 2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

Nothing

Nothing...

Today, we have crossed the barrier of Six
Tomorrow it will be Seven
Then Eight
We can cross the mountains and the oceans
And someday...someday...
We'll leap across the sky
And look at ourselves from Andromeda
To see that we are
Actually nothing...

We still cannot cross the street
To reach out to the crying child
The burning woman
The hungry farmer
At the bottom of the well...

We are nothing...

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati, 20th of April, 2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

Notice To Vacate Earth

Mr. Man

Address: Earth

Sub: Notice to Vacate Premises

Sir,

As you have overstayed your tenure and repeatedly violated the provisions of the contract of tenancy, you are hereby directed to vacate PLANET EARTH immediately on receipt of this notice, failing which we shall be constrained to commence legal proceedings against you to recover possession of the premises, to declare the lease agreement forfeited and to recover all damages, costs and fees allowed by the law.

Issued on behalf of AALFPE
(Association of All Life Forms on Planet Earth)

M/S Ebola & Co
Legal Consultants

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati

Syed Ahmed Shah

Numbness

The roots watch in silence as
Numbness nibbles through the barren tree
Starting with the leaves;
Too numb to weep...

Bokultol, Guwahati, The 18th of March,2012.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Oh, For A Dropp Of Rain

Oh, for a dropp of rain...

Buckets return empty from the depths of despair,
On our bodies, the desert lays its claim;
How fragile is men...

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati.

Syed Ahmed Shah

On The Death Of A Young Girl

(On the death of a young girl...)

Death came packaged
In a bottle of perfume; masking
The baby-breath
Of a mountain stream...
She was a mere child
Playing life,
Unaware of the rules of the game; but death...
Has no other name.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Onion

A Secret...

Peel off my soul like an onion and
Take whatever you find;
Take all...

Void...

Void is all that I have;
Worth more than its weight in gold...

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati, 15th of April, 2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

Paralysis

Paralysis

Where will it strike first, when it does?

The toes?

The fingers?

The nails?

The other extremities?

The skin?

The eyes?

The ears?

The tongue?

The other sense organs?

The esophagus?

The stomach?

The innards?

The heart?

The liver?

The kidney?

The vitals?

The genitals?

The appendix?

The gall bladder?

The other expendables?

I can hazard a guess in my case

It has to be my soul

Or nothing at all

Syed Ahmed Shah

Past In Layers

Look at the sky
Look at the stars
Look at the past
In lazy layers...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Pea Shooters Bore Me To Death

Hiding in the shadow of my unconditional love
You spew venom like a toothless cobra
(Come out in the open with all guns blazing...
Make me proud of your hostility)

While you count brownie points
Watching TV in your drawing room
I am in your kitchen
Sipping tea and gossiping with your adorable wife
She wants me to do some errands for her
I will...
I will fix the leaking pipe
The bulb in the corridor blinks a lot; have to check the fuse.
I will find her a new maid, ASAP (The old one eloped with the neighbors driver)
Do I know a good mathematics tutor for the kids?

Your kids...
What lovely kids you have
We play games
Share jokes
Talk sports
The elder one shows me his school trophies
The younger, his new stamp collection
I try their new guitar and make a fool of myself
While they roll out laughing...

And your aged parents...
I soil their feet with my unclean hands
And they shower their love on me
As if I am their blood
(‘Don’t I have a decent shirt. Get rid of that shocking yellow’)

And you...
My pseudo rabid friend
You are not even sure of your poison
Look at your face
What a silly clown you are turning out to be...

Poem By Dr. Nirmalprabha Bordoloi

Does Morning break at the Sound of Gunfire?
No, It breaks with the Chirping of the Bird
That Gnaws through the Darkness of the Night
In leisurely bites...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Poem By Smritirekha Bhuyan (Translated From Assamese)

On the blue canvas of memories
Lingered the soft image of the sun
Scattered dialogues in verse
Responding to the invitation of time

Syed Ahmed Shah

Poetry Under Blinking Lights

Spurts of emotion in discrete units;
River rolling over rumble strips;
I salute you, my fellow poets
For your Quantum Mechanical Poetry.

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, 13th of May, 2012.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Poets

No cannon has ever roared
On hearing a bird's song;
Poets are mere mileposts
On a dusty road;
Telling you of the miles crossed.

Bokultol, Guwahati, the 15th of March,2012.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Private Island

Please don't begrudge my little island of inconsequence;
Your hate is too important for the world to ignore.
After all, nothing else really mattered in history...

If I reek of insularity, it is my private island;
Since you have already come uninvited;
Stay here like a guest; enjoy the garden by all means;
But please do not try to change the colour of the flowers.

Bokultol, Guwahati, 18th of March, 2012.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Quarrelsome Man

Quarrelsome Man

"Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow." (Keats)

Wild Ascetic of
Twenty-first century
A jungle dweller
In your city...

Quarrelsome Stubborn spider
Looking for an uncertain shelter
In the ruins of civilization...

The other day
One sprightly young child
Came skipping over the carpet
Of fresh Bokul flower
Near the entrance of my house
But she immediately took to her heels
Frightened by the shaggy appearance of the
Dry and rude ascetic

Sometimes
In the light and shade of Sunset
I too come out with the sinful bats
In nameless bye lanes of the city
I sniff the air and try to catch the clinging remains
Of the intoxicating aroma of the sensuous afternoon
Vision of a young woman in her teens...

I do not drink...
In my bookshelf
Half a dozen inebriated poets
Create a riot of competitive poetry...

But I hate alcohol...

Haven't I told you before?

I am the quintessential quarrelsome man
Fighting and squabbling with myself
All my life..

Only with myself...

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati,13th of July,2014..

Syed Ahmed Shah

Rebel

You wanted to be free
So that you can lie prostrate
Before the idol
Of freedom...

Slave of an undeserving Lord,
The fetters of freedom are made of fire...

Look at me
I let the fluttering wings of the White Swan
Cool my sky...

Call me a slave
Call me whatever you like
But I submit wholeheartedly to the Rules of flying...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Reflection

A glance is returned
Only when
One looks at the mirror
Of sparkling eyes
Dull surfaces
Are not made for reflections
Hence rejoice my friend
At this rejection...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Ripples In April 9,2012

`April is the cruellest month, breeding

Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing

Memory and desire, stirring

Dull roots with spring rain` -(Waste Land)

...

Prosaic spring night; droplets of carbon monoxide

Paint brazen leaves with dark shades of truth.

Rumbling doomsday drums stun to silence

The monotony of treachery.

Fires, fangs rule our reasons as spring gasp for breath.

Welcome change from the hypocrisy of sunshine

Peddled by the wizards of fertility; hoax and lies mixed with vomit.

I drink my night under the corrugated iron shade; and sleep

Comfortably dead.

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati, the 9th of April,2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

River In Sky

Can you swim in the rain
Before it touches the earth
I do...

Eagles always do...

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, 23rd of June, 2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

Roll Up The Carpet

Roll up the carpet

With all its suns, moons, stars, planets,

Comets, galaxies, nebulae, black holes, white dwarfs

Riddles, mysteries, wonders, happiness, sorrows

Fulfillments, emptiness, voids, logics, paradoxes...Whatever;

Roll it up.

Every wave ends in the narrow Ionian Sea

Every mountain dwarfs before the crumbling Olympus

I am the Nth Me

Existing beyond existence

Life within without

Breathlessly breathing ...

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, 6th of April, 2012.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Roof By Kangan Talukdar (Translated From Assamese)

Whenever the space between us increases
I look up at the sky; and say-
'We still live under the same roof;
You and I.'

(Translated from Kangan Talukdar's Assamese poem)

Syed Ahmed Shah

Sadness

Whenever I weep
The sadness of the sea
Overwhelms me

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, 15th of May, 2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

Samuel In Book Fair (Or Outside It)

Every year
When the trees turn yellow
I walk to the ground
Where they hold the annual book fair
I meet my old friend Samuel near the gate
Don't you know Samuel?
Samuel from Dublin!
Of course you met him! !
We exchange smiles
But say nothing
His gaze returns to the crowd
I leave him right there at the entrance
Where he permanently seems to station himself
I enter the stalls one by one
I scan the books arranged in neat rows on the shelves
The same tiresome titles in colorful jackets
Or they appear the same to me
Pretty children dragging bored parents
Poetic assaults through the PAS
Faceless singers
Shady speakers
I keep on searching
Every nook and corner of the stalls
Under the lights
In the shades
No it is not there
I return empty handed
I meet Samuel again
'Better luck next year, friend'
I take his leave
And sadly walk back home...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Samurai Words..

Poetry, like love
Comes in violent bursts
It is all about spilling blood
Sometimes hers
Sometimes yours
At other times
The words
Roam about the countryside
Like unemployed Samurais...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Schizophrenia By Deepa Thakuria (Translated From Assamese)

When the diseased mind
Talks to the wind
Torn leaves
Turn into swinging shadows.
The body sways
Along with the
Whispered tunes.
Glistening like gems
Dew drops cling
To the soft grass
And swim
In the morning sunshine.
The howling faces startle the heart.
Birds take off with a start from the giant tree.
As condition worsens
Siva performs
The Ballet of death
Nerves jump
Eyes set ablaze.
Seven tuskers rush into my arms.
I cleave asunder
The drama of light and darkness.
Electric impulses
Bring to a standstill
My bizarre orchestra.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Semi Colon;

; you put the tip of your tail in your mouth; drink your own dropp of urine; plant seeds in the womb and harvest your own killer; father your father; mother your mother; father your mother; mother your father; demolish your house in order to get bricks for your tomb; you do not end a year; a moment; a blink; a heartbeat; a sneeze; a sigh; a thought; an event without beginning another; the full stop is superfluous in life; all one needs is the semi colon; a semi colon is all that you need; it is the only punctuation mark necessary apart from the comma; jettison the period; the interrogation; the paragraph; the rest; like this...;

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati, the 7th of April,2012;

Syed Ahmed Shah

Sharmila, You Have Not Slept For Eons

Burning eyes in pitch darkness...

In the hearth of the heart
You have nurtured
A piece of the blazing sun
Tears go up as vapor and steam
As the Loktak gurgles and burns

Sharmila, you have not slept for eons..

Syed Ahmed Shah

Shooting From The Hip

Though a poet
I fancy being a gunslinger
Quick on the draw
Rough and raw
Shooting with lightening fingers

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, 4th of April, 2012.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Slayer Of Flies

O you
Unrepenting slayer of flies
A dreary day lies ahead
Awaiting your whining and cries

Syed Ahmed Shah

Sleep...

Sleep did not come tonight
On the way, it must have
Fallen asleep...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Snail...

We start dying
From the age of thirty
The rest is all about
Drawing the curtains
Shutting the windows
And putting that lock
On the main door

Syed Ahmed Shah

Sorry Professor Makhanlal, Just Had One Of Those...

Sorry Professor Makhanlal, just had one of those...

The conceited crackle
Between my gentle teeth
The hot melting syrup
Of sweet lava
Hesitatingly rolling
Over my shameless tongue...

The venomous kiss of death delayed...

What juicy dream
Woven with a magic wand
In sumptuously tantalizing circles of sin...

A spellbinding show
Of street corner wizardry
An unconventional lesson
In geometry

What blessed hands
Had fashioned thee
O brown hot and crisp Jilapi...

God's mysterious gift to humanity...

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati

Syed Ahmed Shah

Space

You may...

Share my bed
But not my breath
Share my heart
But not my head
Share my home
But not my tomb
Share my life
But not my death

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati, 13th April, 2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

Stanza On Spring By Hiren Bhattacharyya

'It is spring now
Even Thorns are better than Blossoms', said
The pair of blood-red Nightingales
Landing on my lap!

The leaning branch of thorny roses
Threatening to tear away
A part of my heart.

It is spring now
Even Thorns are better than Blossoms...

-

(Translated by Syed Ahmed Shah)

Syed Ahmed Shah

Stark Naked

My poetry wears nothing
No cloths, no ornaments, no perfumes;
I won't be surprised if someday
It is banned for nudity.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Sun

I lighted a candle in the dark room
You mistook it for the Sun...

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, 23rd of June, 2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

Sun Baked Men

For centuries...

We were walking on air
Floating on water
And blown away with the sand...

No boys among us
Only men
Sun baked hard men...

Long ago
We had subdued the elements
They never really had any chance
Against the soul consuming fury
Of the ancient fire
That taught us
The secret of the weeds...

Trees cannot walk
Let alone run...

That is why we never grew roots...

We can walk on air
Float on water
And fly with the sand...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Taj Mahal

The marble floor hurts your feet;
Could not they find snowflakes instead...

Love I thought was a secret
Between two souls...

Mausoleum in marble
Cold arrogance in hard stone...

Beauty need not be beautiful...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Termites

Termites

Gnawing through me

Like the advancing night

Syed Ahmed Shah

That Bomb In My Balcony

From my bed I could hear it swish through the air like a missile and
Drop in my balcony with a dull thud; I knew it was coming and
Eagerly awaited its arrival.

The little devil.

It rarely failed to explode; Its success rate is
Close to a hundred percent.

It is only a matter of time; A few seconds or
May be a few minutes when its
Deadly force would shatter my (peaceful?) world.

No, it will not kill me;

It is not intended to.

It is only programmed to inflict grievous injury;
Intangible, invisible.

It will only shatter my entrails to ruin my appetite
For the rest of the day.

It will erase that smile (stupid?) off my face;
More like a daily dose of poison one injects oneself with
For no apparent reason other than self annihilation;
Self inflicted, suicidal.

But, was I ever a masochist?

I suspect I am now.

So are my neighbors.

So is the little world we inhabit.

Otherwise, why do we pay for and
Await the arrival of this little bomb,
Thrown in by that fellow in the Bicycle,
Every morning.

(11.28 am,20th Jan 2012, Bokultol, Guwahati-21)

Syed Ahmed Shah

The All-Ordinary Man

The All-Ordinary Man

(There's) no point in googling me
No spider track my trails
I'm that ordinary man
Living down the lane
Serene and safely obscure
But at times happily insane

Bokultol, Guwahati, 14th of March, 2012.

Syed Ahmed Shah

The Ark

It carried everything in pairs save one...

Syed Ahmed Shah

The Awakening By Hiren Bhattacharyya

It was still dark when I woke up.

Petals of a fanciful vision left me one by one
Like flowers falling off from the coiffure of a fleeting fairy.

The din of the earth
Trapped now
In my body of thorns;

And, the subtle curiosity of the vision retreating,
Like a transient shadow.

Syed Ahmed Shah

The Beauty Of Shamelessness

Beauty of Shamelessness

I am not in good terms
With my neighbor ...

We quarrel on and off
On host of issues...

But last evening
A blood curdling scream
Made me run to his house...

I had to dispose off a small snake with a stick...

'Why do you have to shout like this for such a minor thing? ' I demanded
'Who asked you to come? ' He said
'To hell I will, next time' I came back breathing fire

But I know
Every time he sees a snake
He would still scream for my help
And I would still go rushing with a stick...

We are so hopelessly shameless...

Syed Ahmed Shah

The Bedside Table

When I see someone long suffering
Sinking in front of my eyes
I weep not for the dying
Nor for the ones to be left behind
But I look at...
The bottles, the capsules, the vials
Standing there on the bedside table
With their remorseful silence ...

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati.

Syed Ahmed Shah

The Circus Has Vacancies

I saw an ad in the local paper;
The Circus has vacancies for
Contortionists,
Conjurers,
Jugglers and
Acrobats;
Poets can apply.

Syed Ahmed Shah

The Day Of The Vulture

They started arriving at the venue from early morning,
alone or in small groups.
Gliding noiselessly like retreating soldiers of a once great army
... reaching their base camp.
Shadowy ghosts on cushioned toes, timidly settling on the few trees
that are still allowed to stand like miniature mementos.
They folded their six feet or more of
magnificent arrogance only to reveal
skeletal memories of a lost empire, spread over
sensuous mountains, bashful forests and pregnant paddy fields.
The Old One regarded them with sad eyes and started the roll call;
A scarcely audible squeak.
Long periods of silence sandwiched between lazy responses.
The gaps outnumbered the check marks.
Roll call over, the Old One started to speak.
The voice rattled the branches of the ancient banyan tree.
My children, I have good news; Nay, great news,
from the great mountains; Your days of misfortune
are finally coming to an end!
The barbarians have atlast vindicated my belief;
They are foolish as they are arrogant.
Can you imagine what these fools are planning?
They are stopping the great river.
Now, now....please do not laugh; I know it sounds ridiculous.
But this Old Bird never lies.
I have verified this report from multiple sources.
It is correct; The fools are indeed building this contraption.
They believe that their molehill would last for half a millennia;
Himalayan insanity, matched only by the height of their stupidity.
Soon the great valley will be cleaned of these abominable vermins.
Just imagine, thirty million bodies trapped in the mud!
Oh, what fabulous feast it promises to be.
A feast to celebrate the reclaiming of the great land
that originally belonged to the rest of us.
So my children, prepare for the grand feast.
Thirty million nice, juicy, rotting bodies trapped in the mud... Wow! !

(26th Jan 2012, Bokultol, Guwahati)

The Early Bird

It is not spring yet
The cuckoo is a month too early
No wonder it is a bird
Born in the womb of treachery

Syed Ahmed Shah

The Elusive Swan

You have scorched
Half the sky
Pursuing the white swan
Like a mad man...

I know, I know,
Thirst never tires; but...

Lucifer
Caught in the eternal morass
Of unadulterated sin
Is a matchless work of art
Drawn by Invisible Hands;
A perfect picture of imperfection...

So, give up, you fool
Fold up your easel...

Art is the preserve of God
Not of Man...

© Syed Ahmed Shah, 13th of July, 2012, Boluktol, Guwahati

Syed Ahmed Shah

The Fall (The Early Steps) ... Ruprekha Goswami

A dreamlike fragrance filled
The quiet afternoon
You and I and
The Sun dipping
Like a fallen angel

Was it you or was it I
Planting in our hearts
Seedlings of the primeval
Human transgression
The first steps of the fall

Nature mesmerized by
The bodily idiom of conversation
Innocently conceives the seed
Of an unfamiliar news

In the depth of solitude
Our deepest cravings
Grew without our knowledge

In the fibers of tenderness
I still look for an answer

Why did you have to come out
On the very first call
Keeping your doors ajar

Why was there a shower of stars
On top of the Neelachal

Why did we recline on the
Knotted roots from where
Spilled over our cupped fingers,
The ethereal taste of the forbidden fruit...

(Ruprekha Goswami)

Note: Neelachal, a sacred hill, situated on the southern bank of Brahmaputra in the outskirts of Guwahati, houses the famed Kamakhya Temple. According to Hindu Mythology, the female organ of Shiva's consort fell on that spot and became a major pilgrimage center visited by millions every year to offer Puja to the Goddess of fertility Kamakhya.

Syed Ahmed Shah

The Flat Moon

The moon is actually flat
I always see it like that
A yellow round sticker on a blue wall...

The moon is flat...
Like a button
Like a bindiya
Like my mother's face...

Simply beautiful...

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, 25th June, 2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

The Hole In The Sky

Don't waste your time
Looking for that hole in the sky;
it never existed;
But ceilings can always be shattered;

Generations before you have done it
with style....
What you see on the ground are
Pieces of the ceiling...

Now, all you need is a broom...

© Syed Ahmed Shah, 16th of Aug, 2014.

Syed Ahmed Shah

The Legend Of Liengmakaw

The Legend of Liengmakaw...

In the chronicles of my solitude you shall
Forever remain a mysterious alphabet etched
In the heart of darkness; a saga of
Tantalizing deception. Some say, you are
Merely a forgotten melody played by
A lonesome shepherd boy in the misty meadows;
But the whispering bamboo groves swaying
In a sea of moonbeam Lend credence
To magic of the legend that refuses to die and
Each night you share my breath with
The fragrance of the jasmine...

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati, 25th March, 2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

The Man The River

For a long time
They seemed like twins...
But soon I realized...
He was the River
The River was Him...

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, 7th of Sept, 2014

Syed Ahmed Shah

The Philosopher Thief

The thief, I am sure,
Has read philosophy
Instead of the car
He took away the key

Syed Ahmed Shah

The Poem

Mother
Home

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, 14th of May, 2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

The Return

Let me return
To my quiet corner of invisibility
Where my idiosyncrasy
Has a sky to breathe...

Where there is none to question
The logic of my madness
The amphora of poisoned verse
In old fashioned rhyme
And yesterdays stale bread...

Let me breathe again...

Amidst the lengthening witches
The eyes scan the chameleonic grass
For remnants of life...

A piece of madness that come with a price...
Piece or pieces for a price
There is always a price
Mountain of fuzzy candy floss
To bury my nose in
Sugary color that sticks to the nose
I would never know
Father would never allow one of those
Too sweet, too flashy, too...
It had a price...

Let me for once
Chop off a tree
The nice feel of the hard and heavy axe
Driving through the soft tissue of guilt
Chop chop chop
TIMBER...! ! !

Why should I take your permission
Or tell you about it
It is all there to be struck
Sharp edge of hard metal against the soft flesh of life...

Who is talking of love
I just wanted to talk to myself about me
And wanted someone to listen...
Chop chop chop
My take on love
Give me a piece of the Arabian sea...

(c) Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, 14th Oct, 2014.

Syed Ahmed Shah

The River And The Paddy Field By Hiren Bhattacharyya (Translated From Assamese)

The river on one side, the paddy field on the other
The river and the paddy field equally restive on both sides of the grief stricken
heart -
Who will reach the post first....

(Translated by Syed Ahmed Shah)

Syed Ahmed Shah

The Smell From The Kitchen

Last night
He woke up to the
Smell of burning flesh
Emanating
from the kitchen
Only to remember
He was still a
Bachelor...

Today
He is filling
An application form
For a Passport...

Syed Ahmed Shah

The Sun Disgraced By Hiren Bhattacharya (Translated From Assamese)

The Sun goes down, using up Sunshine,
The inevitable sword of the Kalpurush
Glow in the darkness of
The fear stricken night sky...

I am a poet, limited is my skill

The treacherous brass whistle
Of the spectre haunted sentry at
The street junction,
Upset my poetry's meaning...

Using up sunshine,
There goes down
The Golden Sun...

Syed Ahmed Shah

The Waves In The Human Heart By Hiren Bhattacharyya (Translated From Assamese)

The Waves in the Human Heart by Hiren Bhattacharyya (Translated from Assamese)

I wish to narrate these feelings very intimately. As intimately as the tears cascading over my cheeks. Alien words from various locations creep all over the darkness of the heart bejewelled with stars; I collect the pen and the paper in the hope of picking up an expression or two; so universal is the human heart, so many waves within. I stood there humbled looking at the rich paddy field.

(Translated by Syed Ahmed Shah)

Syed Ahmed Shah

There Won'T Be A Second Night

The farce is all but over;
The jokers and the fools depart.
Enter now; don't blow your lines;
There won't be a second night.

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati, the 10th of April,2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

They Would Spit On Your Graves

Here,
Take this knife
Sever my arms
Gorge out my eyes
Cut out my tongue...

Just don't touch my heart...

Someday when this body becomes a fable ...
Your grandchildren would come to the museum
To see my still beating heart in a jar...

From there...
They will go straightway to the cemetery
And spit on your obscene graves...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Things Would Have Been Different By Kowstooovmoni Saikiadutta (Translation)

Had my life touched your world of knowledge and perception
Things would have been different
Or had you knocked at the door of imagination through my eyes
Things would have been different
Now our days sing inharmonious lullabies
With my musical notes and your abstract ideas
Following different melodic plans....

Syed Ahmed Shah

Three Short Poems About Living

You say it was him
He says it was you
If you do not restrain your fingers
There will be no him
And no you...

.....

Why grovel now
Why so fast
You will have time till doomsday
To lie in the dust...

.....

You never say the words
Nor do I
Why do we need the words
Except to lie...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Three Short Poems About Sadness

Mother would never let me out of sight
If I tried to run away
She would pull back the umbilical cord with a jerk

Now that she is gone
I am at a loss with my legs
She never taught me to run

I go back again and again
To remind her
She forgot to take with her
The other end of the umbilical cord...

.....

They got it all wrong
The building block of the Universe is
Not the Higgs Boson
It is sadness...

.....

Here, Doctor
Your hands please
Let me examine the fingers
That stroked the brow
And felled her with a blow...

Syed Ahmed Shah

To A Neighbour Who Returned (God Knows Why)

So, you have come back.
How nice to have you back; I was
starting to feel a little lonely.
Most of my neighbors had moved out; They left for hospitals,
asylums, cemeteries, various addresses.
New people have moved in.
They have changed the curtains (I hated the old ones) .
They have kids (I can hear them) and they have raised the walls.
But my troubling back comes in the way.
Swanky cars, no dogs, though (I don't hear any) .
They come back late. But I do not see or hear them going out.
No, I have not spoken with them, yet. Rather,
they have not spoken to me; It is boring.
The winter is here a little early.
It always seems to come earlier than the previous year.
The talk of global warming is all crap.
It is so depressing really. But you have come.
Good, you came.
Now I will have someone to talk to.
Someone to quarrel with over
mundane things. Mundane?
Where is your dog? I have not seen him.
Is he dead? Poor fellow.
Sorry, he is dead. He was old.
But he should not have died just like that; I would have shot him
with my rifle.
Welcome back, my beloved foe.
Life without you was really not worth living.

(Syed Ahmed Shah: 9th Jan 2012: Guwahati)

Syed Ahmed Shah

To An Impatient Young Friend

Spring oozed from ever branch
Leaves quivered to the jingle of the wind

The straight stalk made it an animal
Dwarfing all others despite its youth

Its pride held till the night of the storm

Life rained from the heart of the morning
On veins of dignity rooted to the earth

But wept on the body of the uprooted pride
That lay on the grass humbled, sans life

The tender roots broken free now talked
Among themselves with anger and spite

We needed time to grow further in
But it would not listen to our pleas

It only wanted to grow tall,
Because it thought 'height is all'

It grew and grew before its time
So before its time, it had to fall...

.....Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati.

Syed Ahmed Shah

To The Critic Who Analyses My Poems

I was smug with my poetry
It smelt good at the core
Then, you lay your trap
With post modern crap
And I am not sure anymore...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Translated From Faiz Ahmed Faiz

Flesh of the menial hand is up in the market for sale
Streets dyed crimson with blood from the poor veins
The fire hidden so long, bursts aflame with sudden rage
This heart listens no more to the sober call for restraint...

(Translated by SAS)

Syed Ahmed Shah

Translation Of An Assamese Poem By Nalinidhar Bhattacharyya

Who art thou O Angel of Spring, spreading thy fiery wings
Carrying the nectar of life over a razor thin bridge
You have shown how a divine gust of wind can flatten and shape the green
We understand the language of your sacred text of love
Recognize your cavalier steps, songs of an unblemished rose...

Our nights hunger for light
No footholds on the slippery road; haven't seen a crop sprouting
Lives yet to kiss vitality; the streets still shiver under a wintery chill...

Would you be a shower of stars on the dark sands of the desert?
A spoonful of freshness on the hands of the hideous night
O blessing resplendent
I eagerly await a pearly smile on my mother's sickly lips....

Syed Ahmed Shah

Tree By Smritirekha Bhuyan (Translated From Assamese)

Tree by Smritirekha Bhuyan (Translated from Assamese)

I had tried to become a tree.
When I was young my parents had told me
It is absolutely necessary to become a tree,
They still hope that I should be
As patient, as innocent, and as submissive as a tree.
Trees change their raiment in Winters and Summers;
They turn Yellow from Green
As per the the season's taste.
But unlike humans their souls do not change;
Even in their old age the leaves are humble, polite, and energetic.
Matching beats with the breeze
They sway and paint the world red.
(Although) there is no lack of effort on my part
It is very difficult to become a tree
Perhaps I can never be...

(Translated with permission)

Syed Ahmed Shah

Tumi Nubujiuba Xokhi By Debakanta Barooah

The sea, have you ever seen it? not even once? neither have I,
but heard about it, nevertheless.

The expanse of blue water, the unchained cycle of waves, touching the sky far
far away...

Haven't you seen this heart of mine, filled to the brim with
blue sadness of the sea?

Where endless waves of passion, constantly rise and fall, kissing the limits of your
sweet recall..

You haven't heard the clamorous music of raging storm
in my sea?

Not understood or felt the gentle footsteps of spring in the gardens?

...

You must have seen a rainbow, captivating splendor of light
on the monsoon clouds;

Have you seen the carnival of light on the sky of my heart, brilliantly glowing
with resplendent love;

Have you ever woken up to the heart wrenching cry of the Nightingale
in the dead of night..?

Or for a moment could hear the painful strain of the human heart in the mournful
note of the singing bird?

I know what little you know. O my heartless love!

You only know that you are you and I am I... alas, you know not
why do we weave garlands of victory from withered petals of Maloti; the golden
palace of union we build

with clay from the sorrows of the earth!

why do we wash the feet of Icons with red blood poured from our hearts; you will
not understand, sweet heart!

With what gloom we immerse the Goddess, consecrated on the Sixth,
in the fruitless Sunset of the Tenth...

...

The evening descends? relax, there is no need
to light the lamp

with simple gleam from the two eyes you will remove
the darkness of my world....

(C) Syed Ahmed Shah (Translator) ,7th of Dec,2014, Guwahati.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Two Dimensional Cats

They have the Length
They have the Breadth
They do not have the Depth
The roads are always full
Of two dimensional cats

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati, the 10th of April,2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

Two Suns

With two Suns in my sky,
I am condemned to remain
A man with two shadows...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Undere A Trance

You've finally managed to put me under a trance;
Like the anesthetist before an operation.
What do you plan to take out of me now?
My convictions or my contradictions
Either way, I shall remain
A lump of putty in your hands; utterly helpless.
This is what you would want;
This is what you had always wanted.
To hold all the aces in your hands,
To have your finger on the trigger,
My soul; a billiard ball on your palm.

Clever
Very clever...

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati, 14th April, 2012.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Vangogh In My Front Yard

Spring at the gates
The errant sweeper not seen for days
Dry leaves pile up under the trees
Before I could feast my eyes
A priceless Vangogh blown away
By the thoughtless breeze...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Wasp

Angry fairy with a toxic tail
Lightning in strike, swifter in flight
A socialist in display...

Unmatched in your motherly wrath
You leave perplexing patterns in space...
Hopping happy from flower to flower
You gleam nourishment for your young...
You sometimes hover for hours
Surveying sights of a potential home
Only to suddenly leave in haste
Carrying feed back to the rest...

Fiery beauty with a lovely hip
You often give me this golden tip...

Together one fights
Together one lives...

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, 13th of Oct, 2013

Syed Ahmed Shah

We Haven'T Said It All

No, we haven't said it all
There is still so much silence to talk about

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol,16th of May,2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

What Is There To Waste

What is there to waste...!

Time

It never was ours

It is we who belong to time...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Who Says Death Means A Day Off

Imagine
I died today
No work for me from now on
But you, my friend, is not so lucky...

Visit the grave yard
Select a spot
Arrange for the digging
Bath me
Clothe me in that white shroud
Carry me to the burial ground
Namaaz-e-Janaaza
Put me down
Fill it up
Three handfulls
'From the (earth) did We
Create you, and into it
Shall We return you,
And from it shall We
Bring you out once again' (Quran)
...

Get my name entered in the register
Get the certificate...

Console my wife and daughter...

Sorry to put you in so much inconvenience...! ! !

(c) Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Why I Write Poems With A Pencil

I pour my sanity on paper
With letters
Curved with Lead
As it explodes,
Something shatters
And
Somewhere
Someone
Bleeds.
They tell me
Nowadays
One needs a license
To write poetry
As
One would need
To keep a gun.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Widowhood By Kangan Talukdar (Translated From Assamese)

The wild waves of the sea
Swept away the sun
Leaving the sky barren.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Windows

You left me alone in my room
Staring at five open windows

Windows that let in life...

Each one opened to a different view
One entirely separate from the other

But now you say they are going to shut down the windows
One by one..

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Syed Ahmed Shah

Wisdom

Dogs do not look at mirrors
But they recognize their own
They love dearly their friends and
Hate fiercely their foes
So does the snake, the spider,
The virus and the rose
They know whom to shun and
Who to hold close
This is the divine wisdom
The programmed nature of all
But man the confused soul
While judging his own kind
Is as sure as the one
Stumbling out of the tavern
Finding his way home
With all the street lights gone...

© Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, 14th of May, 2012

Syed Ahmed Shah

Words

Words are seeds that
Live and breathe
Mighty trees
Not useless weeds

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Syed Ahmed Shah

Written In Honour Of 'Laylat Al-Qadr'

Welcome,
O Night of Nights
The Night of Power.
A thousand moon pales
Before thy
Solemn grandeur.

The sun has
Long since
Disappeared o'er the horizon.
But thy light
Shines bright
In the hearts
Of the faithful,
Deep in prayer.

This is The Night
Of the Guiding Light
From a tablet, secure
In its heavenly heights.

The Angels, the Spirit say
'Peace' for all
Till the hour of
The Muezzin's call,
And peace,
How it showers.

I salute thee
O Night of Power
Towering o'er all other nights
In thy solemn grandeur.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Yeh Duniya Agar Mil Bhi Jaye To Kya Hai

YEH DUNIYA AGAR MIL BHI JAYE TO KYA HAI...(SAHIR LUDHIANVI)

This world of palaces, thrones and crowns
This world of societies inimical to man
A tradition bound world, hungry for wealth
Even if I get it what is so great about it!

Bodies wounded, souls thirsty
Eyes perplexed, hearts empty
A world polluted with air perverted
Even if I get it what is so great about it!

Here, every individual is a mere plaything
A habitation of worshippers of persons dead
Here, compared to life death comes cheap
Even if I get it what is so great about it!

Youth wanders about in sinful existence
Young bodies adorned like flashy markets
Here, love is nothing but affairs of business
Even if I get it what is so great about it!

This is the world where man is worth nothing
Neither of faith nor of friendship
Here, love has no taker no value no merit
Even if I get it what is so great about it!

Burn down this world, just snuff it out
Take this world away from my sight
It is your world, keep it for yourself
Even if I get it what is so great about it!

- - - Translated by Syed Ahmed Shah

Syed Ahmed Shah

Yeh Kooche Ye Nilaam Ghar Dil-Kashee Ke (Translation)

Translation of an ageless song written by Sahir Ludhianvi (Film Pyaasa)

These sickly lanes, these houses of flesh
These pillaged ill-fated caravans of life
The vanguards of hollow pride
Those who are proud of Hind
Where are they
Where are they

These labyrinthine lanes, this bazaar of shame
This nameless walker, this jingling of coins
These covenants of honor, these hard bargain
These brazen streets crouching for centuries
These immature buds trampled and crushed
These cheap amusements in the market for sale
Those who are proud of Hind
Where are they
Where are they

Chiming anklets through lighted windows
Thumping beats and tired breath
Frenzied cough in tomblake rooms
Those who are proud of Hind
Where are they
Where are they

These garlands of flower, these spit stains
These shameless looks, these profanities
These aging bodies and the pale faces
Those who are proud of Hind
Where are they
Where are they

The old ones come here so does the young
The decadent father, the wayward son

They are wives, they are sisters, even mothers

Those who are proud of Hind
Where are they
Where are they

This daughter of eve cries out for help
The twin of Yashoda, the daughter of Radha
Follower of the Prophet, the daughter of Zulaikha
Those who are proud of Hind
Where are they
Where are they

The leaders of the nation, call them please
Just show them these lanes, these streets, these scenes
Those who are proud of Hind
Where are they
Where are they

(Translated by Syed Ahmed Shah, Bokultol, Guwahati, 5th Dec, 2013)

yeh kooche ye nilaam ghar dil-kashee ke,
yeh luT-te huwe karvaan zindagee ke,
kahan hain, kahan hain muhaafiz Khudee ke
jinhen naaz hai hind par woh kahaan hain,
yeh pur-paich galiyaan yeh badnaam baazaar,
yeh gumnaam raahee, yeh sikkon kee jhankaar,
yeh ismat ke sauday yeh saudon pe takraar,
yeh sadiyon se be-khauf, sehme see galiyaan,
yeh maslee huwee adh-khilee zard kaliyaan,
yeh biktee huwee khoklee, rang-raliyaan,
jinhen naaz hai hind par woh kahaan hain,
woh ujle darichon men paayal kee chann chann,
thakee haaree saanson pe tablay kee dhann dhann,
yeh be-rooh kamron men khaansee kee Thann Thann,
yeh phoolon ke gajre, yeh peekon ke chheenTay
yeh be-baak nazren yeh gustaaKh fiqaren,
yeh Dhalke, badan aur yeh beemar chehre,
jinhe.n naaz hai hind par woh, kahaan hain,
Yahaan peer bhee aa chuke hain, jawaan bhee
tano-mand beTe bhee, abba miyaan bhee,
yeh beewee bhee hain aur bahen bhee, hain maa bhee,
jinhen naaz hai hind par woh, kahaan hain,

madad chaahtee hai yeh hawwa kee beTee,
yashoda kee hamm-jins radha kee beTee,
payambar kee ummat, zulekha kee betee
jinhen naaz hai hind par woh, kahaan hain,

zaraa mulk ke, rah-baro.n ko bulaaoo,
yeh kooche yeh galiyaan yeh manzar dikhaao
jinhen naaz hai hind par woh, kahaan hain,

(Sahir Ludhianvi)

Syed Ahmed Shah

Yusuf

Yusuf

The honor of Egypt lay vanquished
Before the splendor of the moon
It mattered but little whether
The shirt was torn from the rear
Or from the front
Yusuf would still be sent to the prisons
Perhaps the deathly darkness of the dungeons
Deserved the blinding luminosity of a Prophet
More than anything else...

It is said,
In the slave market of Egypt
A poor woman was found
Bidding for the beautiful youth
She only wanted her name to be included
In the list of people
Who wanted to bid for Yusuf ...

Syed Ahmed Shah

Zikir Of Hazrat Azan Peer - V

These trembling lips are
Scribbling quills.
This chanting tongue, a
Parchment clean.
These grinding teeth,
Squeezing ink,
Inscribing names with
Lovers zeal.
Saintly souls and
Holy men
Labour hard
On the hallowed name.
Iti½s the name
When the faithful one
Toil upon
Night till morn,
Pearly Gates
Open wide
For generations
On either side.



Name lies prostrate before Name,
Behold,
It is God bowing to God.
On these roads
Unknown, unloved,
One's creed drifts about.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Zikir Of Hazrat Azan Peer - Vii

It is Allah's name that my heart repeats,
I contemplate at my teacher's feet.

Water may die of a blazing thirst
And fire may die of a freezing cold.
Nothing can act by its own sweet will
Every thing is under His control.

Allah and His Apostle lie concealed
In the hearts of the believers, fathoms deep.
They do not reflect, on this profound fact.
Yet, arrogantly knock at Mecca's Gates.

Like a small fish, playing with one that is big,
The servants pray at the hallowed precincts.
Mecca's Gates are the sacred banks
At the confluence of the three streams;
At these Gates one can't transact
When blinded by one's worldly dreams.

Reach for the stars O Adams son,
Your stature, know, is a lofty one.
The Maina cries in its gilded cage,
Once freed of chains, it is gone.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Zikir Of Hazrat Azan Peer - Viii

Allah, There is no other Deity
Except the One Supreme.
Mohammad is the Prophet,
Of Allah, the Purest Being.

Affirm it at the beginning
O ye, who believe.
Not a task so daunting,
Only a kindly light to lead.

The essence of all the wisdom
Kalma is a boon.
Sans this priceless kalma
There is darkness at noon.

Forget ye not these Kalma
O ye heedless beings,
Lest thee come to grieving
On the day of reckoning.

Kalma is the bounty
Know it well, O faithful one.
The sign of the garden,
When your fateful journey is done.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Zikir Of Hazrat Azan Peer-I

You take it once, you take it twice, you take it all the time
You take his name both day and night; engrave it in your mind.
At first you take his holy name, unblemished and sublime
Whole thirty sections make the book, the guidance for mankind.
He is the Power, He is the Lord, He is the pure one
Taking lump of clay he made the body of Adam.
No mother was he borne of, no father and siblings
In six momentous days he made this world and everything.
He kept the heavens hanging there, devoid of ropes and poles
Over the realm of water kept this land as a whole.
Day and night, he kept apart, the sun and moon so glides
Creating man in countless shapes with skins dark and light.
Every season has its fruit for humankind to eat
Enjoying every blessing thus, see how could they forget.
The servants rarely listen to the voice of their Lord
But HE is the Kind Forgiving Lord, forgiving every fault.
No hands, no legs, no form, no face, and he has no image
In Sure Ikhlas you will find his pristine single self.
I dont lie and speak the truth, but do I have the proof
It is flowing from the fountain of the Prophets words of truth.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Zikir Of Hazrat Azan Peer-Iii

Truth is thy name O Allah
There is none but only Thou
The Truth that encompasseth
The earth and the sky above.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Zikir Of Hazrat Azan Peer-Iv

I am only thy humble servant (O Allah) ,
An ordinary being,
(I cannot) comprehend thy mystery,
Thy real scheme of things.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Zikir Of Hazrat Azan Peer-Ix

Call unto Him, every day and night,
The loving friend, and the trusted guide.
Revere the teacher who is wise and true.
Know thyself and your faith in full.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Zikir Of Hazrat Azan Peer-Vi

This world is but for a day or two,
A fleeting dream, like a garden in bloom.
This beautiful life is a honey trap,
One careless step and you are doomed.
Life offers you an empty plate
Death lies in wait with a fishing net.
With twenty dozen weights and countless parts,
This fishing net, you cannot take apart.
Each fish shall, by its whiskers, be caught
When herded around, all, in a lot.
For whom did I build such a magnificent house
And save pots of silver and gold?
My clothes would rot, in their rusted chests and
Grass'd grow on my bones.
If my dwelling caves in, I build again
A house that is finer than the one before.
But none can hold, when the bones grow old,
This body would'nt last forevermore.
The walls would crack, the beams would break,
The worms would chew up the pillars.
Who'd keep back The prince of Death,
When cometh He, The Great Leveler. □

Syed Ahmed Shah

Zikir Of Hazrat Azan Peer-X

My Limbs went Limp
As I Learnt of the
Torment of Afterlife.
My Feet wouldn't Move, and
You could've Sliced
The Moment with a Kitchen Knife.

Time would Snatch you
Off the Road, and
Throw you in the Dungeon of Hell.
Your Tears would Swell
Into a Fathomless Sea
Where Wailing would be of no Avail.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Zikir Of Hazrat Azan Peer-Xi

It's Poison, poison, lethal bite
To whom I leave this fatal freight?
This deadly weight,
Tied to my neck,
I'm sinking, sinking down straight.

Syed Ahmed Shah

Zikir Of Hazrat Azan Peer-Xii

Others death they mourn
But they do not see their own.
The honoured scribes
Promptly ascribe
Every sin by the moment
In a tome.

Syed Ahmed Shah

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Syed Ahmed Shah

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Syed Ahmed Shah

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Syed Ahmed Shah