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FROM THE DESK OF GROUP EDITOR

“The Strong, Silent, Protective, Watchful,
Hidden Provider” is the caption I would
inset below the picture of a father - every
father existing on earth.

Like the backbone in the body, he stands
sturdy through the many challenges that
his family faces and quietly provides
each member with their requirements
without complaining or expecting any
returns.

As a matter of fact, I think he purposely
takes the back seat and allows his
spouse to enjoy the satisfaction of
being the driving force so that, like
SUPERMAN, he may normally stay
simple and quiet but be always in action
to protect by preventing disasters.

We dedicate this ‘Father’s Day’ issue
not only to biological fathers but to also
all those great souls who through their
love and care mentor the society as
Father-figures.

Let us join our contributors to salute
the role of ‘FATHER’ in our existence
and express our heartfelt gratitude to
him.

Ayesvi
Affan Yesvi



RHYVERS BEAT

Inviting contributions for the next edition of our magazine,
slated to be published in July 2024

Theme

When It Rains

Send your original contributions in the form of

Short Story (550 words max)

Essay (750 words max)

Poems (20 lines max)

Flash fiction, Artwork, Photo Essays

Book / Movie Reviews

Graffiti etc

Last date to send entries

25 June, 2024

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My Guiding Star

You are more than just a dad
The only hero, I always had.
In your worthy smile, I still find my light
In your selfless love, my world is bright.

So, here's to my hero dad, my guiding star
The one who's always near though very far.
In everyday challenges, you stand tall,
My dad, my hero, you are with me through it all.

With courage fierce and spirit bright,
You show me how to win the fight.
In every stumble, you are my guide,
Teaching me how to rise with pride.

With laughter, love, and boundless cheer,
You still wipe away each doubt and fear.
Through stormy seas and skies so blue,
My dad, my hero, you always see me through.

So, here's to my dad, both strong and true,
Your love and wisdom are still shining through.
With your support have reached the height,
My dad, my hero, you will always be my guiding light.



Nishant Kumar Shrivastava is a retired Engineer settled in Chandigarh and dabbles in poetry, prose, sketching and much more.

A flock of birds is flying across a sunset sky. The birds are silhouetted against the warm, orange and pink hues of the setting sun. The sky is filled with soft, wispy clouds. The birds are scattered throughout the frame, some in the foreground and some in the background, creating a sense of movement and freedom.

The **ETERNAL** Optimist

If ever there was an award for any kind of hero in my life, my Dad would win hands down, without a second thought!

Memories of dad always bring about moments of unspeakable joy, and a tear in the eye.

Now, in the fourth decade of my life, nearly entering the fifth, it may be slightly awkward to speak of my dad in these terms, but one thing which he always had, till his last breath, was that he never let the child inside him die.

My mind is transported back to the days of innocence, of childhood, of black and white TV, when life was much less complicated, when choices were few, yet there was happiness all-round. Where the entire neighbourhood used to watch “Ramayan” and “Mahabharat” in one particular household, and yet none felt offended. Phones used to be proudly given as PP number to a host of neighbours.

It was then, that the three of us- my elder brother, Dad and I, we used to recite the Vishnu Sahasranama together, actually proving the saying “The family that prays together, stays together.”

We had an audio cassette of the same bhajansung by the famous MS Subbulakshmi, which played on both sides of the cassette and another version recorded by our Periappa (Tauji, or Father’s elder brother), which was faster. Depending upon the time at hand, we would play whichever one suited us. Of course, in case of paucity of time, we all three used to recite together, verbatim.

Alas! Those days are fondly remembered now, as we reach a decade of his passing away.

A wonderful mimic, a raconteur, the soul of all get-togethers, he was an eternal optimist and our living (jeeta-jaagta) toy. With children, he would become child-like and similarly, adjust with elders.

The certificate was given by none other than our neighbourhood aunty, staying upstairs on the first floor of the same building. She said, "Mr Raman, we know exactly when you come back from office. The laughter in your household suddenly goes up by many decibels!"

Family meetings were incomplete without him. Perhaps his biggest strength was he could take a joke on himself, a quality very rare nowadays. The secret to his happiness was- no comparison with others, to the extent we brothers, on becoming slightly older, had to motivate him to switch jobs, to aim better. "If everyone sits in the chariot, who will be the charioteer?" he would reason.

A body builder in his younger days, he had a favourite quote: If my own body does not listen to me, who else will?

With that as a backdrop, he rarely fell sick. Even when sick, he would never show it, going back to the earlier proverb.

Days passed and he retired. Still, the aspect of playing the fool, asking for unendingcuppas, reading the newspaper end-to-end, would continue. I knew he'd passed on his genes to me when one day, he casually asked, "I don't see you studying. What do you want to be when you grow up?"

"Just like you Dad, retired!" I replied, and we had a good laugh.

It is only fitting therefore, that his birthday falls on 17th of June, a Gemini, when we decide to celebrate the Fathers.



Ravi Shankar
a writer from
Kolkata.

Mister Dependable

Discipline and hard work are his mantra
Work ethics his priority
A fearless, intelligent and responsible soldier
To his profession, he gave his all
An Armyman, standing tall.

He strives to hide his emotions
Tough on the outside yet soft inside
Not telling but showing his love
Never seen him in tears as I recall
A loving family man-most of all.

My dad is a role model for work-life balance
Who sets the standards very high
One who never complains but gives selflessly
Open and receptive away at just a call
Thinking about his needs least of all.

Diligent, wise, calm and poised
A pillar of strength for me
A caring husband as the years advance
Called "Mister Dependable" by all
Dad, with you beside, I am sure I will never fall.



Dr Suruchi Aditya works as a senior lecturer at Dr HSJ Institute of Dental Sciences, Panjab University, Chandigarh. She is the co-author of the book *Install Antivirus in your Heartware*.



My Feminist Father

Steering clear of the psychoanalytical jargon of Carl Jung/Sigmund Freud vis-à-vis Oedipus/ Electra complex, even the ancient Indian scriptures corroborate that a daughter is more attached to her father. As I look back to the strong unparalleled bond of love, respect, and understanding this Father's Day, I recall umpteen little significant habits instilled in my upbringing which fostered a strong sense of empowerment and prepared me to meet the challenges of life head-on. A bond forged by birth, nurtured over the years, evolving each day as we traverse the complex journey of life.

During my formative years, my father always found time for me despite his hectic work schedule. An early riser he would wake me up, make me a hot cup of milk and we would sit together reading newspaper or finishing an

assignment. To this day whenever I go home, I relish the déjà vu when he brings me a hot cup as we scan the papers. My biological clock is attuned now and I savour the early morning 'me' time. It not only provides extra leverage but facilitates me in dispensing my household responsibilities.

A strict disciplinarian and a stickler for chores he taught me pagination i.e., writing odd numbers in the right corner of each notebook and circling it on the last page. Tearing papers thus was prohibited. Scrap papers, unused papers of old notebooks, were to be used judiciously. Eraser was to be used very, very sparingly. Cutting and overwriting were akin to sacrilege. Ever so particular of p's and q's he made me hone my cursive writing and numerals. So today when I receive compliments at the work front, I ring him up to thank him.

I have inherited his intolerance to sloppiness, lethargy and shabbiness. Rain or sunshine, holiday or work day he takes a bath in the morning and puts on his shoes. I am no fashionista but I rarely laze around in unrepresentable attire. Sowing the seeds of dignity of labour he has always encouraged us sisters to do our chores. He has taught us the rudiments and made sure we familiarize ourselves with our gadgets. I know how to change a bulb/gas cylinder, fix a fuse, elementary first aid and the like. His unflinching faith in the Almighty percolated in me being a God-fearing person, well versed with scriptures steering clear of dogmatic practices.

Man of few words we have enjoyed effective communication over the years. With his supportive empathy, he always nudged me towards independence. He would fill out the vouchers, ask me to deposit the money in the savings account and bring blank vouchers for next time. After a couple of times, he let me do it on my own. This was his way of teaching me the intricacies of deposits and bookings. At a very young

age, I had an independent account where I put in my pocket money and gifts. The transition to filing income tax returns, and e-banking seemed a natural corollary.

I would credit him for boosting my self-esteem and a profound sense of confidence in me. I have dabbled in all sorts of co-curricular activities: elocution, games, Scouts and Guides, orchestra, dance and whatnot. The rule was simple and basic: academics should not take a back seat. His invaluable wisdom and experience helped me develop a balanced perspective of life. I dabble in diverse pursuits, vocational as well as avocational, and pursue my passion.

Basking in the legacy of confidence, positivity, warmth ... I could go on and on and on, such is my bond with my father.



Suruchi Kalra Chaudhary is Associate Professor and Head, Department of English, Hindu Girls College, Jagadhri (Haryana)



An Ode to My Father

Brown as cedar bark, tall as a papaya tree, was my father;
A common clerk with a colonial education, he served in the Railways;
Those days he lived by three virtues— discipline, honesty, and simplicity
Sustained the family of eight with his meagre salary; aspired nothing,
Possessed not even a square foot of land on the day of retirement;
Yet was admired and loved for his impeccable character.

He was no hero, but a role model for officegoers,
He loved me most for I was not a spoiled son;
I internalised the values though I never fulfilled his middle-class ambitions.

When I shared my desire at eighteen, to be away from home like Ulysses
He graciously granted it despite six children around him;
When poetry sprang in me from the turmoil
And flowed like copious rainwater in a gutter
He accepted though he knew it gave me nothing except baby comfort.

Only two things I inherited-
The trunk box he loved most, jammed with memories
And a fine Hercules cycle he pedalled for eight summers,
A transferred gift in 1982, I treasured for sixteen summers,
Greased, oiled, washed, and repaired like a physician
Before I sold it to a mechanic for a fabulous price
To trim my life faster to the spattered roads,
Still, its wheels sing in my memory like hummingbirds.

The trunk box so dear to my heart, the only object
For I hardly said 'yes' to the scrap dealer,
Stayed with me as a centre-stage in life.



K.V. Raghupathi, a former academic, poet, novelist, short story writer, book reviewer, and critic, lives in Tirupati. He has written more than two dozen books.

Child is the Father of Man

—William Wordsworth



Dr Subroto Ghoshal is a PhD in management and is working as a senior HR professional in Kolkata. He has authored two books on cartoons.

Unwavering STRENGTH

When I think of heroes, my father immediately comes to mind. He was the epitome of strength, wisdom, and kindness all rolled into one. From as far back as I can remember, he was my rock, my guiding light, and my biggest supporter.

My father was a man of few words, but his actions spoke volumes. He worked tirelessly to provide for our family, never once complaining about the long hours or the challenges he faced. He was always there to lend a helping hand, whether it was fixing a leaky faucet, giving advice on life's tough decisions, or simply offering a sympathetic ear.

One of my fondest memories is of a camping trip we took when I was a child. It was pouring rain, and I was terrified of the thunder and lightning. My father held me close, shielding me from the storm with nothing but a tarp and his unwavering presence. At that moment, I felt safe and secure, knowing that as long as he was by my side, nothing could harm me.

As I grew older, I began to understand the sacrifices my father made for the family. He put aside his dreams and ambitions to ensure that my siblings and I had every opportunity to succeed. His selflessness and unwavering dedication inspire me every day to be the best version of myself.

My father might not wear a cape or possess superhuman powers, but to me, he was a true hero in every sense of the word. Today, he is not with us but his love, strength, and unwavering support have shaped me into the person I am, and for that, I will be forever grateful.



Rashmi Kaushik is a freelance content writer, teacher and editor. Her books include- *Life Experiences and Kaleidoscope*.

Uncharted Depths
EXPLORING
Father's Heart

In the theatre of life, where absurdity reigns,
A father's love, an unassuming refrain.
Like an actor on stage, his role unseen,
Yet his love, a script, unwritten, keen.

In the chaos of the world's grand show,
His sacrifices, an unnoticed flow.
While the spotlight shines on the mother's grace,
Father's love, a quiet space.

In the comedy of errors, where laughter fades,
A daughter seeks solace in his silent shades.
His presence, a paradox in the absurdity,
A steadfast anchor in life's uncertainty.

Through the twists and turns of fate's cruel game,
Father's love, a constant flame.
In the midst of life's bewildering absurdity,
Their bond is a beacon of serenity.



For in the absurdity of life's wild ride,
Father and daughter, side by side.
In every scene, in every verse,
Their love is a silent universe.

But behind the scenes, a silent struggle may lie,
A father's love, unspoken, but never denied.
For he may not express it in words or deeds,
Yet his love for his family, silently he feeds.

In the daily grind, he toils away,
Working hard to ensure they never stray.
His love, a silent force, steady and true,
Guiding them through life's tumultuous brew.

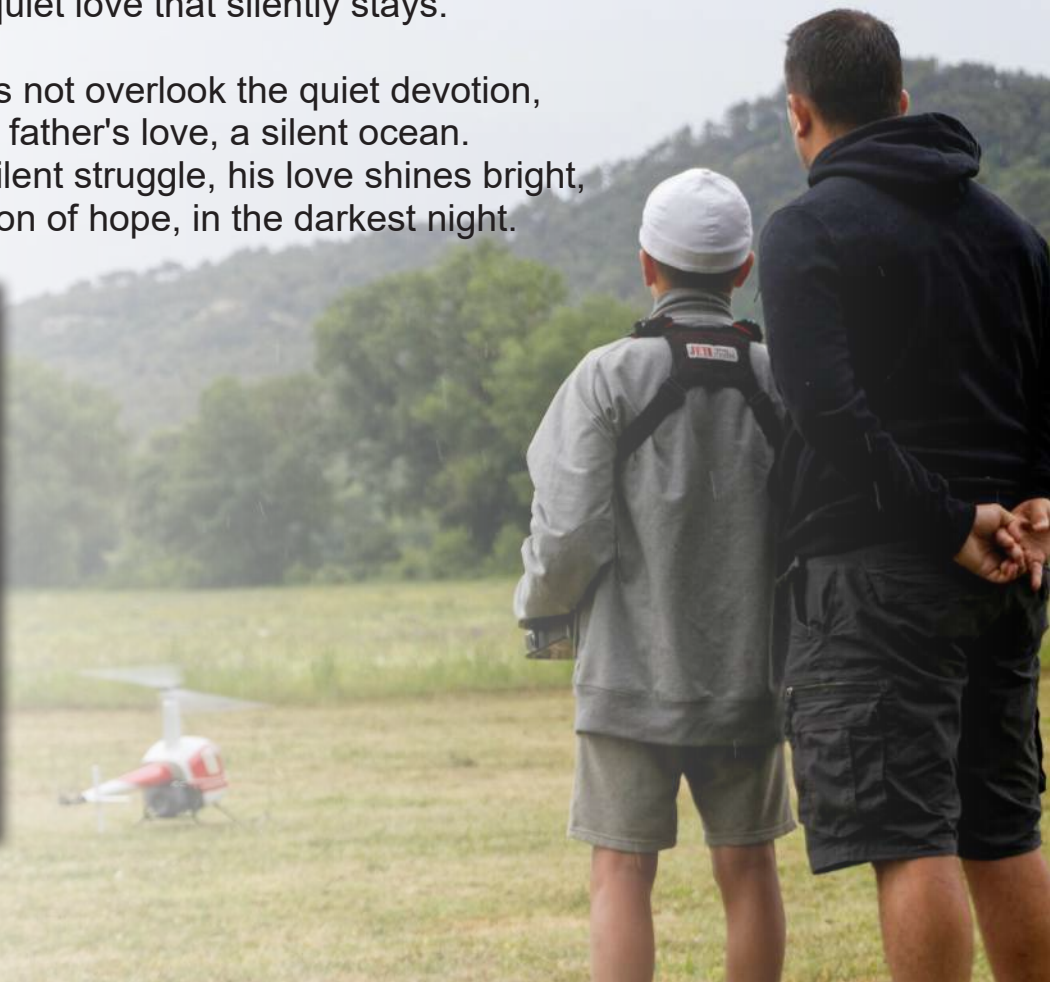
Though he may not say it, they feel it still,
In the warmth of his embrace, the strength of his will.
His sacrifices speak volumes, louder than words,
His love, a silent symphony, never unheard.

Through hardships and trials, he remains strong,
A silent protector, all along.
His care woven into the fabric of their days,
A quiet love that silently stays.

So, let us not overlook the quiet devotion,
Of a father's love, a silent ocean.
For in his silent struggle, his love shines bright,
A beacon of hope, in the darkest night.



Dr. Rohitashwani
is an author and artist
from Hisar, Haryana.



The Day I Slipped out of School

In our society, the father carries the aura of authority and decisiveness in the family, a norm that remains unquestioned and is taken as a part of the natural order.

As a daughter, I was in awe of my father's harsh ways towards my mother, a secret almost every family of the border state nurtured as a force that is smothered by the ideals of how it ought to be. I was scared of his loud singing of hymns early in the morning to rouse us from sleep even during holidays when children love to linger in bed for a few extra hours. Mother was loving and never objected or scolded us for such misdemeanours, perhaps as a kind of protective shield she couldn't afford that she wanted to wield for her children.

Father is a Hero for the kids, for daughters—a protection against the hoodlums on the streets as they grow up. A sad fact of our society that must prove to be an extra burden on the males of the family though!

What I want to narrate is a small incident of my childhood that had the unfortunate possibility of taking a wrong turn. The day I slipped out of school as a four-year-old. After my father's transfer to a border city of Punjab, my family started living in one of the houses, the local officers might have abandoned after Independence. This city used to be a cantonment of the British Indian Army in the years gone by and had been a major

area of action during the 1857 Rebellion.

As a little child, on that day, I was too sure of the location of my house. I still recall the predicament of the little mind who felt deserted and wished to find a way back home from school. Somehow, I made the wrong turn and found myself amidst a set of houses I was not familiar with.

Seeing me crying, a gentleman made me sit on his bicycle seat and went from school to school to help me join my family. Finally, at the portico of a local school building, I met my elder sister accompanied by our orderly on another bicycle who had come looking for me. The postscript after my venture is a mystery to me to date as I never cared to ask for the details out of embarrassment during the days of my infancy and later perhaps as it was too distant then.

The incident never left a safe corner of my mind as I grew older. What would have been my fate had I met the wrong person? As we began feeding ourselves on Bollywood in our young days, the thought that I could have been the girl who ended her life as a slave, made me feel grateful for the chance meeting with that stranger. That stranger was my saviour, my hero, a father figure whose benevolence I cherish in my memory till now. An unrecognisable intense fragrance that touches the senses as one drives past the long winding lane of life.



Dr. Manjit Kaur is a former Professor of English from Chandigarh and is the author of two collections of poems.

Legacy of a Dreamweaver **Ode to a Father's Love**

In steadfast toil beneath the sun's bright gleam,
Thy hands have laboured, crafting dreams anew,
With every dawn, thy heart a hopeful beam,
To forge a path where the skies are always blue.

Through trials faced, thy courage stood unbowed,
A sentinel of love, both firm and true,
Thy silent strength a gift, of which we're proud,
In shadows deep, thy light would see us through.

Thy days of sweat and nights of weary eyes,
Have built a world with promise shining bright,
With whispered prayers and unrelenting tries,
Thy life's work blooms in morning's golden light.
Oh, father dear, thy legacy we hold,
In hearts and dreams, thy story will be told.



Parminder Singh is an Assistant Professor of English at Dev Samaj College for Women, Chandigarh. He is a multilingual poet, translator, and short-story writer.

The Steadfast Anchor

When things didn't turn the way, I expected them to,
When the world was cheering
Still, I felt blue,
When I stepped back from trying challenges and risks,
You were right there behind me with encouraging tips,
In such times of anxiety and restless thoughts,
You said, "I am there" and that's probably all I sought.

The unconditional love rests in always being there
It keeps one going through life's skirmishes and cares.

Though the journey so far
Saw many bends and bores,
With your anchor dear dad
My ship always sailed ashore.
With your presence around
My joy and solace accelerate,
I feel blessed to be your daughter
And thank God for His Grace!



Harpreet Kaur is an Associate Professor in the Department of English at Govt. P.G. College, Sec-1, Panchkula.



Letter to My Father

Dear Baba,

Three years have slipped by since you left us, yet the ache in my heart throbs as intensely as it did on the day we said goodbye. Today, this poignant anniversary floods my senses with memories, each one a sharp reminder of your absence. As tears trace familiar paths down my cheeks, I find myself longing for just one more moment with you.

Being your son was a profound privilege that shaped the core of who I am. Your laughter still echoes in my ears, and your tales of valour and camaraderie, while you were serving the Indian Forces, light my way even in the darkest times. I remember those quiet evenings when your stories of distant lands taught me the meaning of courage and loyalty. Each tale was a lesson in the strength of unity and the virtue of standing together.

The void you left behind is vast and echoing, and there are moments when the weight of it seems unbearable. Life's challenges have grown steeper without your wisdom to guide me. How often I find myself wishing for your advice, needing the reassurance of your

voice to tell me, as you so often did, that everything will turn out right in the end.

Life without you, Baba, is like navigating a stormy sea without a compass. Your guidance was my North Star, always there to light my way through the darkest of nights. In your absence, I feel adrift, lost in a sea of uncertainty and doubt.

But amidst the pain and the longing, there are moments of solace, fleeting though they may be. In the small, everyday moments, I feel your presence with a clarity that is both comforting and heartbreaking. Your love, Baba, surrounds me like a warm embrace, reminding me that even in death, you are still with me, guiding me, and loving me.

Baba, your absence is a perpetual ache. Mornings are quieter, evenings emptier. Your wisdom is missed in decisions big and small. The family feels incomplete; conversations echo in silence. Navigating adulthood without you is daunting; doubts linger. Yet, your presence remains in memories, old books, and cherished moments. Though the loss is profound, your

love lights my path, comforting me amidst life's storms.

I want to share with you not just my triumphs but the small moments where I feel your influence most. Recently, I received the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Motivation Award for my book reviews. As I accepted the award, I felt a surge of gratitude for the passion for reading you instilled in me.

Your granddaughter, Vira, is blossoming into a determined young woman. She turns 10 next month. Though she faced setbacks in school elections, her resilience reminds me so much of you. She's learning, as I did from you, that true strength is in rising every time we fall.

I am mentoring young writers, sharing lessons that you taught me about the power of words and the courage to express oneself. It's a role that brings me as close as I can get to those evenings listening to your stories, now as I tell my

own.

Representing our Maharashtra State in Basketball once again has been a thrill. Wearing the state jersey, I felt a connection to you, almost as if you were there, cheering from the stands. Though we didn't claim the championship, the pride in striving and excelling was a victory in itself.

These milestones, each in its way, are tributes to you. They are not just achievements but continuations of the legacy you left behind. In moments of success and challenges, I feel your guiding hand still steering me. The bond we shared remains unbroken by time or distance. Until we meet again, I will keep your memory alive, cherishing every lesson and every laugh.

With all my love,
Sameer



Sameer Gudhate is a writer and a book reviewer from Maharashtra.



My PATERNAL Sage

In realms where shadows softly glide,
A stalwart figure stands with grace,
A beacon in life's tempest tides,
He guides and holds in terse embrace.

His voice, a balm to weary hearts,
Dispels the gloom of doubt's encroach,
With wisdom forged in life's fine arts,
He steadies us with his calm reproach.

Eyes that mirror the skies serene,
In depths where his quiet strength resides,
A compass true in the vast demesne,
Through labyrinthine tides he gently guides.

Beneath the weight of countless days,
His hands, though weathered, hold the light,
In deeds unspoken, such humble praise,
He crafts the dawn from the deepest night.

So, here's to you, paternal sage,
Whose silent acts speak volumes vast,
In life's tumultuous, fleeting stage,
Your legacy of love will forever last.



Pranav Sharma
is a class IX student
of Manav Rachna
International School,
Mohali (Pb.)



My Reserve Bank of India!

Dad was not a hero to me, he was my security, an umbrella in the rain, a roof over my head. He was my Reserve Bank of India! Sixty years ago there used to be a reverence between father and children. The dialogue was through the mother. Fathers commanded respect and demanded discipline. I became frank with my father only after my two brothers and I were married. Ultimately my relation with my father changed to that of a friend. We used to discuss family matters, his grandchildren and mostly the holy scriptures. Though I was not well versed in these, he always liked to have my viewpoint on something that he had read especially The Geeta, which he read again and again. He would find a new meaning each time and wanted to know what I thought. Without my reading The Geeta, he made me familiar with the teachings of it.

The first time I found him emotional was when I came

home after a few hours of my marriage for the pagpera ceremony, the first visit to the parental home with the husband. I met my mother and my brothers and all the relatives but I couldn't see Dad. Mom told me that he must be on the lawn getting the tents removed and making payments along with one of my uncles. I went out to meet him. He was standing all alone in a corner with tears in his eyes. He hugged me and said, "Maybe we have married you off too early." My husband came out looking for me as it was time to go back. The next day we left for our honeymoon. I called him up one afternoon and his only concern was are you all right? Should I send some money?



ALKA KANSRA

is a retired educationist from Chandigarh, an author and a poet.

A few months after my marriage he was transferred to Calcutta. Every long vacation in college, I used to visit my parents. For my return journey, my parents and my brothers would come to see me off at the station where I boarded the Rajdhani Express. My father used to buy us Quality icecream. My mother and I cried when I boarded the train. But the image I always carried home was that of my father standing alone at a distance with a tear rolling down his cheeks.

From my honeymoon to my holidays to the time when we bought our house, my daughter's birth, and her marriage, he always asked me "If you need some funds don't hesitate. I would immediately transfer." One day I told him, "I know Papa, in case of need you are my last resort. When I have exhausted all my resources, you will still be there. You are my Reserve Bank of India!"



Refuge

Leitmotif of the careless days bygone
I wish I could bring those days anon
Be carefree, a happy child again.

Trudging ahead in this mechanical life
Pervading grime and despondent gloom
In every crevice of my subliminal leeway
Father, you are beside me every step of the way.

Those magical summer nights spent on the terrace
Stars streaming above in kaleidoscopic montage
Incessant power cuts, swirling mosquitoes
Your hidden treats of Fritos, a relief in the chaos.

Your tenderness was a soothing balm
The day doctor quickly pulled out a splinter
Embedded in my palms slashing my flesh asunder
Those special Sunday treats of icecream.

I let these special memories freeze in mind's realm
These stacked-up moments, my catalysts
Father, our everyday phone chats
Does not let me fall apart
Your love, my essence of life
Still providing me succour in the storms of life.



Dr Paromita Mukherjee is the Academic Head at Unity Degree College, Visakhapatnam. She has several publications to her credit.



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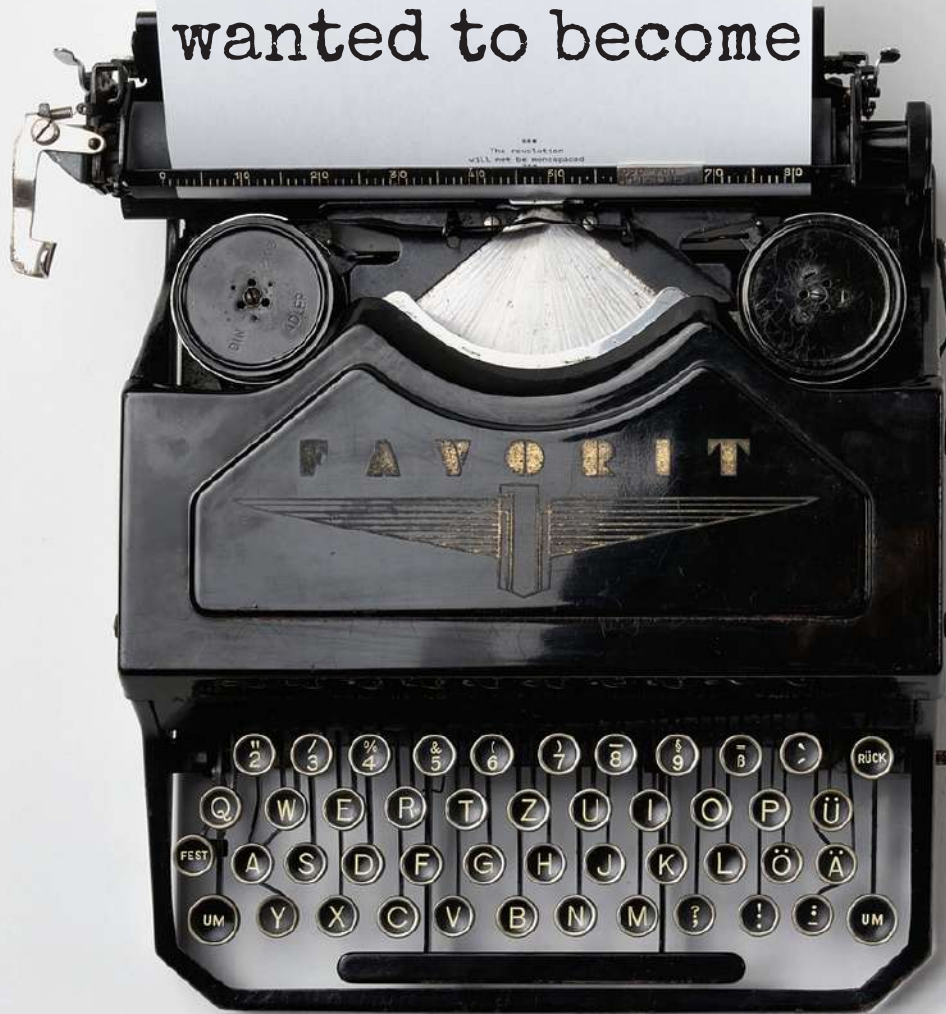
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