

One Last Look

Whispers of Life in Still Frames

Gulista Chaudhary



BlueRoseONE.com
Stories Matter

New Delhi • London

BLUEROSE PUBLISHERS

India | U.K.

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BlueRoseONE
Stories Matter
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please contact:

BLUEROSE PUBLISHERS
www.BlueRoseONE.com
info@bluerosepublishers.com
+91 8882 898 898
+4407342408967

ISBN: 978-93-7310-386-0

Cover design: Daksh
Typesetting: Tanya Raj Upadhyay

First Edition: November 2025

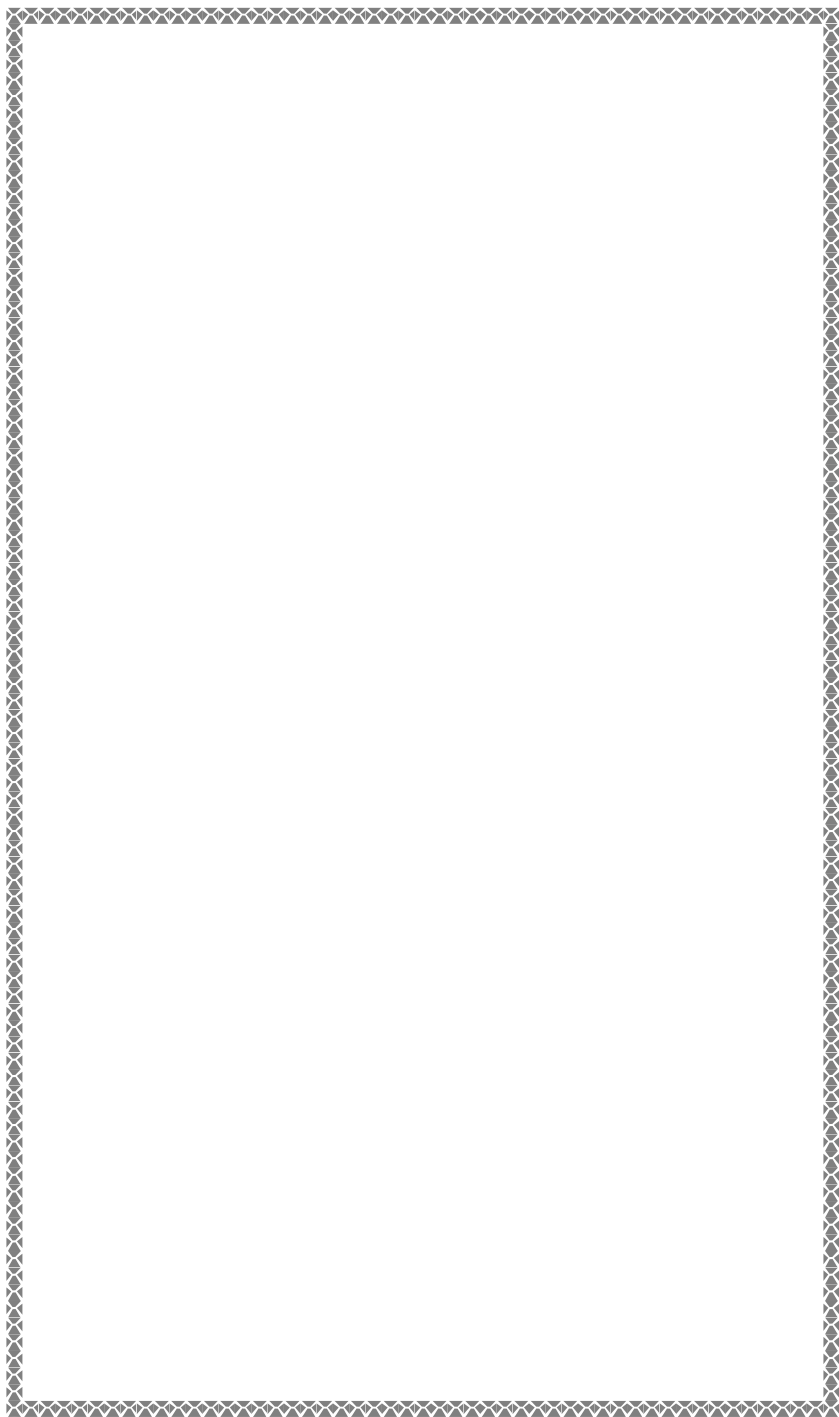
“One Last Look”

Blurb - *She doesn't see the world as it is. She sees it as it speaks to her through storms, winds, love, silence, and all things divine and flawed.*

This is not a book of answers. It's a collection of raw visions bold, untamed, and beautifully unfiltered. Each poem is a perspective reborn, a question reframed, a belief reimagined. Through her words, a girl dares to observe the world differently, even when no one else sees what she sees. Especially then.

Like a bird crafting her nest with unfamiliar twigs and a new rhythm, she builds a home of poetry—layered with rebellion, reflection, and clarity. Some may disagree. Others may feel seen. But either way, her voice remains her own.

Open these pages and connect with the bird who never learned to fly the usual way because she was too busy building a sky of her own.



Acknowledgment

This book is not just a creation of my words, but a reflection of the people, moments, and emotions that have shaped me through the years.

First and foremost, I thank the Almighty for giving me strength, patience, and purpose in every step of this journey. Without that divine guidance, this book would have remained only a dream.

My deepest gratitude to my family your love, faith, and constant encouragement have been my greatest source of strength. To my Love, friends and well-wishers, thank you for believing in me even when I doubted myself.

To my mentors, colleagues, and all those who've been part of my professional and personal journey your wisdom and kindness have inspired me in ways words cannot express.

A special thanks to the readers who have supported my previous books (Mother at Nineteen & Saher – A story of survival) your love and feedback encouraged me to write again, to open another chapter of my heart.

And lastly, to every soul who finds a piece of themselves in these pages this book is for you.

With gratitude and love,

— Gulista Chaudhary

Dedication

*To all those who believed in me when I doubted myself.
To the dreamers who refuse to give up.
And to every heart that still chooses love, even after being
broken.*

✿

*For the silent souls,
who write their pain in unseen ink,
who heal others while carrying their own scars.
May these words remind you
you were never alone.*

***Special Thanks to – Vinayak V Nair, Doll & JCO
M.ALI***

She kept her love locked in a book, each page a heartbeat, each word a tear.

He asked to see it once. She shook her head. "Don't open it," she whispered. "If you do... you will cry."

Some love is too deep to be shared; some storms are meant to rage unseen.

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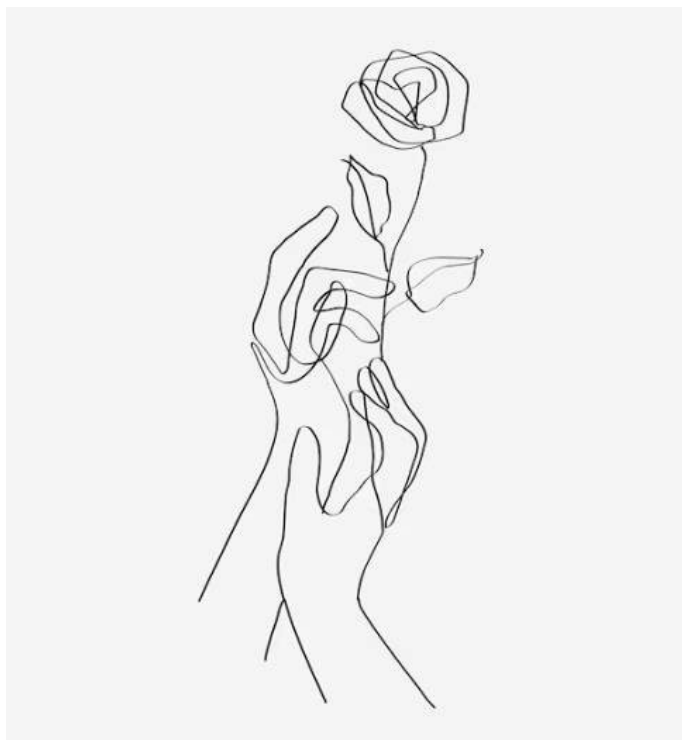


Chasing Ink, Not Chains

At nineteen, she holds a pen, not chains,
While others chase degrees in vain.
Her heart beats loud with stories untold,
Not buried in books, but brave and bold.

They say success lives in marks and grades,
But she sees truth where the silence fades.
Pages call her with a wild desire-
Not to learn, but to set words on fire.

She dreams in ink, not in report cards,
Carving paths where passion guards.
A writer's soul, fierce and free,
She won't be boxed she was born to be.



Loving Me

Some days I'm quiet, some days I fall,
I don't always rise, I don't always stand tall.
But through the mess, the doubt, the fight
I try to hold my own heart tight.

It's not easy to love the parts I hide,
The fears, the flaws, the pain inside.
But I still show up, I still try,
To meet myself with a softer eye.

No perfect lines, no need to pretend,
Just learning to be my truest friend. Even when it's
hard to see,
I'm still someone worth loving me.



Unwritten Faith

She doesn't kneel, she doesn't pray,
No sacred path, no promised way.
The stars, the wind, the silent night
These are her gods, her guiding light.

She's not against, she just believes
That truth is more than what one sees.
Not bound by rules she didn't choose,
She seeks the self she'll never lose.

They call her lost, she calls it free,
A soul untamed, just meant to be.
No heaven waits, no sin to flee
Her only law: to simply be.

Becoming Through Love

He never knew what he could be,
Till love knocked soft, then wild and free.
A glance, a smile, a quiet touch
And suddenly, he felt so much.

Not just her eyes, but how he grew,
How being near her made him new.
She saw the light he tried to hide,
And pulled the stars he held inside.

He learned to speak without the fear,
To chase the dreams once held too near.

Through her, he met his truest name
Not just a boy, but fire and flame.

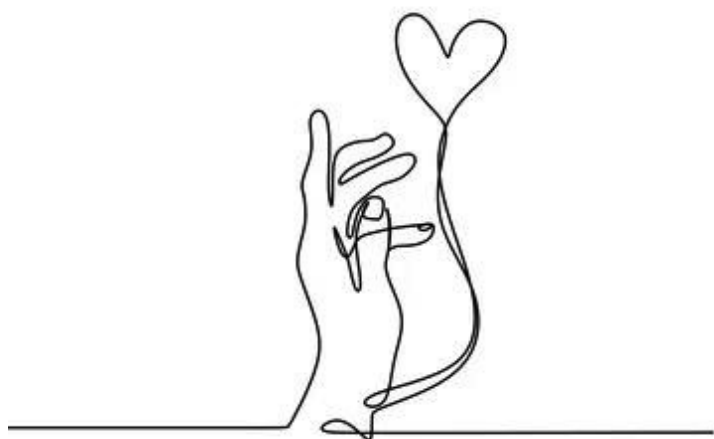
In loving her, he came alive,
Not lost in love, but learned to thrive.
The best of him, she helped him see
That love can set a good soul free.

The New Trend

No more shrinking just to fit,
No more masks, she's done with it.
Self-love isn't selfish pride
It's standing tall with nothing to hide.

She won't trade peace for someone's stay,
Or dim her light to make their day.
This love she gives, first starts within
A quiet power, a fire, a grin.

It's not a trend to fade or bend,
But a bold beginning, not the end.
She's her own muse, her strongest friend
And loving herself is the new trend.



The Kind of Love That Stays

Love is not just fire and flight,
Not just the stars that burn so bright.
It's quiet words when none are said,
It's showing up when hearts have bled.

It's not all laughter, not all ease,
It's learning when and how to please.
Not losing self in someone's name,
But growing stronger all the same.

It's saying sorry, not just to mend,
But to remind you're still a friend.
It's letting go of pride sometimes,
But not of self not crossing lines.

Compromise, yes not silent pain.
Not dimming light just to remain.
Love bends, it shifts, it learns to move,
But never asks you to disprove.

True love won't ask for you to break,
To give and give for giving's sake.
It meets you where you stand so tall,
And holds your hand but not your all.

You keep your voice, your dreams, your name,
And still feel cherished just the same.
It isn't chains, it isn't fear
It's someone saying "I see you clear."

So love with fire, with all your soul,
But never let it take your whole.

Because the love that's truly wise,
Won't make you smaller to rise.

It sees your strength, respects your grace,
It doesn't rush, it holds its place.
And when it stays, you'll understand
Real love walks in with open hands.

In Love with the Moon

She loved the moon, not for his shine,
But how he made her darkness fine.
He lit her up from far away,
A silver hope at end of day.

But he was never hers alone,
His light had kissed a thousand thrones.
He danced in eyes, in ocean tides,
A lover known to many sides.

She knew the names carved in his glow,
The hearts he touched, the ones he'd go.
Still, she offered all she had
A quiet heart, both whole and sad.

He came and went, as moons will do,
But left her skies a softer blue.
She never owned him never tried
Just loved the part that reached her side.

A Mother Is a Mother

They ask me often, with softened tone,
"Do you miss your mother when you're far from home?"

And I smile, not with pain, but peace in my eyes,
Because love, I've learned, doesn't wear disguise.

Yes, I was born to hands that held me tight,
Who stayed up through every tear-filled night.
She taught me how to walk and stand,
To hold the world with open hand.

But fate gave more than one soft guide,
Another woman stood by my side.
Not in the cradle or early days,
But still, she loved me in her ways.

They call her "in-law" as if that word
Could ever measure what I've heard
In the silence of her tender care,
In the meals, the smiles, the whispered prayer.

She didn't raise me, true and fair,
But oh, she's been so deeply there.
In every call, in each embrace,
I've found no coldness, not a trace.

No walls were built, no heart kept tight
She welcomed me with quiet light.
No need to prove, no need to earn,
Just love that waits and love that learns.

She didn't try to take a place,
But gave me space, and gave me grace.
And in her laughter, warm and wise,
I see the same soft, loving eyes.

For love, you see, knows not one mold,
It isn't bought, it can't be sold.
It's not who gave you life alone,
But who made you feel safe and known.

So don't ask me to draw a line
Between her love and mother's mine.
Because in her arms, I've come to see
A mother is who helps you be.

Whether blood or bond or fate's own plan,
She stood beside me as I ran.
Two hearts that beat with gentle pride,
Both mothers neither to divide.

So when they ask, I gently say,
"I have two homes, in their own way.
And love the kind that stays and stays
Came to me in different ways."

No hyphen, no "half," no lesser name,
The love I feel is just the same.
In her, I've found what hearts adore
Not less, not second, but something more.

Because mother is a word so wide,
And in her love, I've learned to confide.
No difference drawn, no roles to play
Just two soft hands that light my way.

Many Names, One Light

I whisper prayers in the dead of night,
Sometimes to Allah, sometimes to Light.
I bow to Krishna's playful grace,
And weep in awe at Shiva's face.

In quiet dawns, I hum a verse,
To Mohammad's path, so deep, so terse.
Yet when I fold my hands to pray,
I don't feel lost I feel the way.

They ask me often, "Where do you stand?"
"Which God do you hold in your hand?"
As if the sky has just one hue,
As if love divides by name or view.

But when I speak of what I feel,
Of love that lifts, of wounds that heal
I see no war, no clashing sound,
Just sacred peace where truth is found.

I've read the Gita, felt the Qur'an,
Both teach of love, of mortal man.
Of rising high, of letting go,
Of feeding flames that help us grow.

I've heard of Jesus, pure and kind,
A shepherd of the wandering mind.
And Buddha's stillness speaks to me
That silence, too, can set us free.

So am I different? I ask the stars.
Or is it you who draws the bars?

Is it wrong to love without a line,
To feel the holy in every shrine?
What if God wears every face,
What if He/She fills every space?
Not bound by tongue, nor land, nor skin,
But felt so deeply, soul within?

What if the names are just our need,
To shape the formless, plant a seed?
But once it blooms, it smells the same
Whether you call it truth or flame.

I'm not confused, I'm not untrue,
My love is vast, not split in two.
I find my peace in every call,
Because I know One made us all.

So keep your labels if you must,
But know in love, I place my trust.
Not torn, not lost I'm whole, I'm true,
I love them all, and they love too.

For in my chest, no war is born,
No need for gods to feel forlorn.
They live in me, both fierce and kind
Not in temples, but in mind.

So here I stand, without regret,
My soul has never once felt threat.
I love Allah and Krishna too,
Mohammad's truth and Shiva's view.

And if that makes me strange to you,
Perhaps it's time to broaden view.

For in the end, what matters most
Is not the name, but who we host.

And I, for one, will always see
One love, one light, in all deity.

The Girl with No Surname

She walked like storms that never plead,
With fire in steps the world might need.
No legacy carved behind her name,
No father's echo, no borrowed flame.

They asked her once, "Where do you belong?"
"What's your full name, your family song?"
She only smiled, and softly said,
"My story starts where others end."

No surname tied around her voice,
Not lost but made a louder choice.
To not be known by blood or clan,
But by the way she boldly stands.

She didn't want to wear his name,
Not stitched to past, nor stitched to fame.
So that when they speak of all she's done,
They don't confuse her with anyone.

No need to trace the lines she broke,
Her silence louder than they spoke.
She left no trail but left her mark,
A flame that danced without a spark.

And though the world may ask again,
"Whose child are you, which kind of men?"
She'll lift her chin and softly say,
"I am the girl who made her way."

A girl with no surname not none, but free,
A name not tied, but meant to be
A mirror, fierce, unclaimed by him
So she could shine, not dim.



Aloo Paratha Loves Dosa

She was ghee and golden brown,
With Punjabi roots in a noisy town.
He was crisp, from coconut shore,
With filter coffee, and silence more.

She spoke in spices, bold and free,
He moved like raagas, calm as sea.
She danced in weddings, loud and bright,
He prayed at temples, soft in light.

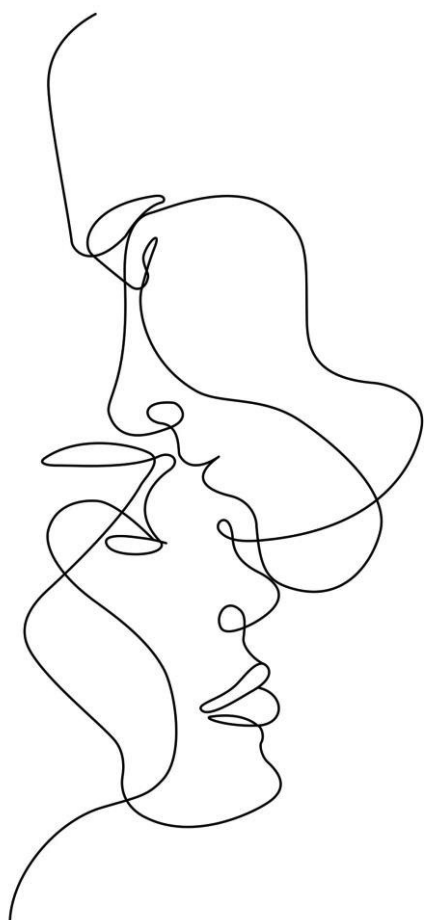
She rolled with hands aloo-filled grace,
He spun in circles, dosa embrace.
Different flavors, night and day,
Yet hearts found words they couldn't say.

She liked lassi, he sipped his sambar,
He said "Vanakkam", she said "Namaskar".
Families paused with puzzled eyes
How could masala and chutney harmonize?

But love, you see, needs no one tongue,
It's in the songs yet to be sung.
In shared thalis, in morning calls,
In laughing through cultural walls.

Now every Sunday, they sit and smile,
Dosa on one plate, paratha in style.
Two stories cooked in the same pan
Proof that love doesn't need a plan.

From Delhi heat to Chennai rain,
They found poetry in every grain.
Because love, when true, will always say:
"I'll taste your world just lead the way."



I found him

the one I thought would fill the hollows,
the answer to a prayer whispered in silence.

Yet in gaining him,
I misplaced myself.

Piece by piece,
I bartered away my edges
to fit the shape of his world.

Now love holds me,
but I no longer hold me.

His presence is real,
but my absence is louder.

What they call "completion"
feels like disappearance.

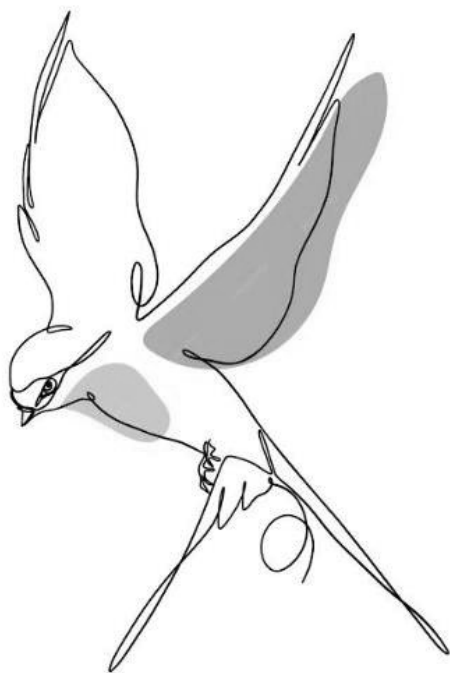
Yes, I have love,
but I no longer have the girl
who once dared to dream of it.

**# Kuch Haqeeqat, mahej lafzon se bayaan nahi
hoti,
Kuch manzilein bas yuhi paar nahi hoti,
Dil mein chahat hai toh kya,
Har chahat aasaan nahi hoti.**

Some truths can't be expressed in mere words,
Some destinations can't be crossed just like that,
Even if love lives in the heart,
Not every love comes easy.

Log aksar puchte hain,
“Baatein acchi kar lete ho” —
Aur main kehti hoon,
Jab zindagi se tajurbe gahre mile ho,
Toh baatein khari ho hi jaati hain.
Chalo yeh kitaab unke naam karte hain,
Jo hume badnaam sar-e-aam karte hain.
Yeh khwahisho ka toofaan bhi kitna ziddi hota
hai,
Yeh wahi se guzarta hai jahan raasta tang hota
hai.
Waade toh hum mohabbat mein zindagi bhar ke
kar lete hain,
Par ise nibhaana sabki bas ki baat kahan hota hai.

People often ask,
“You speak so beautifully-how?”
And I smile and say,
“When life teaches you lessons that cut deep,
Your words naturally learn their truth.”
Let’s dedicate this book to the ones
Who made it their art to disgrace us in public.
These storms of desire are stubborn things
They always pass through the narrowest paths.
We make promises in love that last a lifetime,
But keeping them-ah, that’s not everyone’s gift.



The World and Me

Am I the world's desire,
or its design?
Do I move by my own pulse,
or by the strings
they tied to my skin before I could speak?

When I smile,
is it joy
or performance?
When I stay silent,
is it peace
or obedience?

Perhaps the world never wanted me
only the version of me
that bowed,
that blended,
that broke itself small enough to fit.

And so I became a shape
they could admire,
a mask they could applaud,
while my true face
starved in the dark.

Tell me
if I stripped away every layer
they taught me to wear,
would anything remain?
Or would I find
that I was never mine
to begin with?

Where Love Runs Deep

Where love runs deep, the heart walks bare,
No armor left, just soul laid there.
It's not just laughter, not just light
It's staying close through sleepless night.

The deeper love, the more it aches,
With every smile, the silence shakes.
For every joy, there lies beneath,
A quiet fear, a held-back grief.

Because to love is to allow
A piece of you to break somehow.
To trust someone with all you hide,
And hope they'll never leave your side.

It's in the waiting, in the fall,
The missing when they miss your call.
It's in the tears you never planned,
That fall like rain you didn't command.

But still we love we always do,
Because the pain proves it was true.
And though it carves a hollow space,
It leaves behind the sweetest trace.

For sorrow lives where love is real,
It wounds, it burns, but helps us heal.
A heavy heart still dares to keep,
The kind of love that runs so deep.

Your First Love

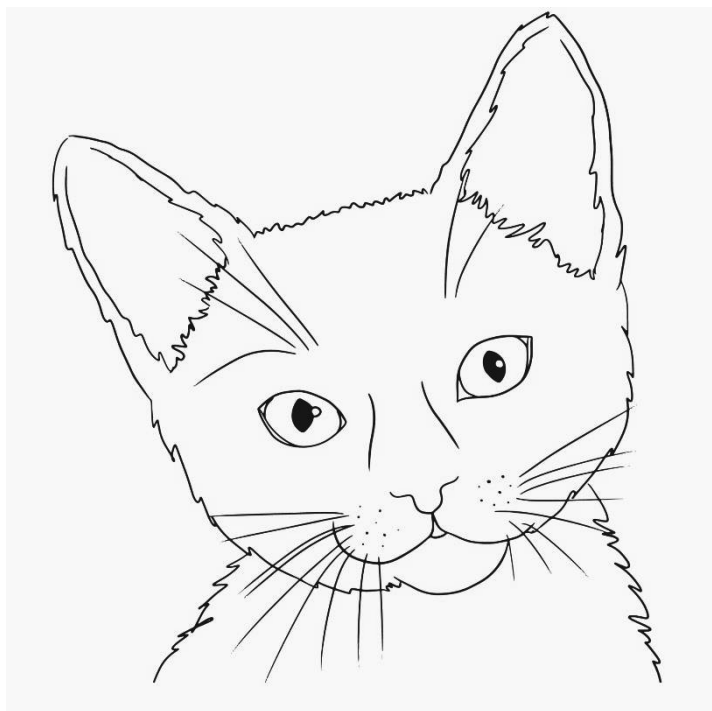
Before you chase his eyes,
fall in love with your own reflection.
Before you wait for his words,
listen to the strength in your silence.

The world will tell you
love is found in another's arms
but remember,
the first arms you ever needed
were your own.

Wear your worth
like a crown no one can steal.
Let your heart know
it is already whole.

Because self-esteem
is the first love,
the only love
that teaches you
how to be cherished
without asking,
how to be seen
without shrinking.

So to every girl:
Hold yourself first.
Hold yourself fierce.
And let the world know
you are already enough.



My Cat (The Untamed One)

I didn't choose a jewel of glass,
nor a pampered throne of silk and fur.
I chose a soul with fire in her paws,
a wanderer,
a hunter,
a queen of her own earth.

Her coat is a canvas
three colors tangled like stories,
sunset, shadow, and flame
woven into one.

No Persian palace could outshine
the truth in her eyes.

She was not made for cages,
nor for windowsills alone.
The wind calls her name,
the night bends to her whisper,
the grass parts for her quiet steps.

And still, she returns,
not because she is owned,
but because she decides
to leave a piece of her wildness
resting on my lap.

She is beauty unpolished,
affection unforced,
a reminder
that love is never about keeping
only about letting roam
and return.

"The Bird with Quiet Wings"

She was a bird with quiet, little wings,
not loud, not golden just made for sky things.
Feathers like whispers, breath like a song,
but the world said, *"Stay. You're delicate. You're wrong."*

They built her a cage in the name of love,
with bars forged from rules and hands in gloves.
*"Sit still, be nice, don't fly too far
the world is not ready for who you are."*

Each rule was a rusted, invisible wire,
wrapped around her thoughts, her hunger, her fire.
"A girl should be this." "A woman must that."
They wrote her script, but she never spoke back.

She watched the sky from behind old bars,
counting her dreams like distant stars.
Not angry just aching. Not loud but aware.
She knew there was more than the cage and the care.

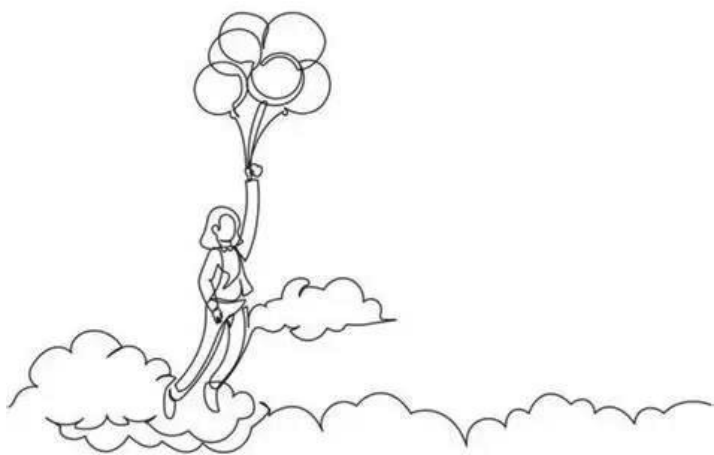
They called her *fragile*, called her *sweet*,
while tying silence around her feet.
But rebellion isn't always loud or wild
sometimes, it lives in the quietest child.

It lives in her gaze when she won't look away,
in the poems she pens at the end of the day.
In the questions she asks that no one can tame,
in the fact that she *dares* to not think the same.

They told her, "*A woman should kneel, not rise,*"
but she rose anyway without alibis.
Her wings may be small, but they know the wind.
And her heart holds a map the world never pinned.

She didn't break out with fury or flame,
she unlatched the door and left without shame.
Because strength isn't loud it's steady and deep,
like oceans that dream when the whole world sleeps.

Now she flies not for vengeance or pride,
but for every girl still locked inside.
She is the proof, the voice, the spark
the bird who built a sky from dark.



"Just You and Time"

Time doesn't knock,
it doesn't wait.

It doesn't care if you're early or late.
Whether you win, or fall apart
it keeps on moving, cold and smart.

It watches you dance, it watches you cry,
and never once stops to ask why.
While you chase dreams or drown in doubt,
time walks on, never turning about.

You find a friend who feels like home,
you laugh, you love, you learn, you roam.
But even that golden, perfect day
gets packed in boxes and fades away.

Family hugs you with arms of grace,
you feel the warmth, you see their face.
But time takes hands, and changes roles
makes children parents, and young men old.

You celebrate, you break, you mend,
some stories start, some chapters end.
You beg it to pause, you plead for more,
but time moves on through every door.

It doesn't speak, but still it teaches
through empty chairs and sunset beaches.
Through aging eyes and wrinkled skin,
through lost goodbyes and places you've been.

Time never asks if you're ready or not,
it gives you a moment, and then it's forgot.
A mirror that shows what you couldn't see,
a sculptor of who you're meant to be.

Value time and it gives you grace,
to build your name, to find your place.
Waste it and it won't wait long,
you'll find the world has moved along.

Because by the end of every day,
when words are done, and skies turn gray,
no one matters not their praise or crime
it's just your soul... and passing time.

So speak your truth, and live it wide.
Love who you are, not what you hide.
Do not delay the life you crave,
the clocks won't pause beside your grave.

You and time you walk alone,
on borrowed dust, on fading stone.
Make each second sharp and true,
for time won't change but it can change you.

"She Doesn't Shout"

She doesn't shout to take up space,
her silence echoes just the same
in rooms where power has a face,
she holds her ground without a name.

No crown, no stage, no golden thread,
just quiet eyes that see too far.
She builds her worth in what's unsaid,
and wears her scars like distant stars.

They called her soft, like it was weak,
as if the ocean isn't deep.
As if the roots beneath her feet
don't hold the earth while others sleep.

She's not a fire made to burn
she's the coal that holds the heat.
The kind of strength you never learn
until you break, and meet her feet.

Her mirror shows more than her skin,
each line a map, each bruise a win.
She rises not to prove them wrong,
but just because she knows she can.

All She Needed Was a Yes"

She carries dreams like constellations,
mapped across her quiet soul
not loud, not desperate, not seeking fame,
just visions stitched into her whole.

She doesn't ask for easy roads,
or someone else to clear the way.
She's learned to walk on shards and thorns,
and still find beauty in the day.

Her courage isn't loud or grand
no banners waved, no victory call.
It's in the way she starts again,
each time she's told she'll only fall.

Her hands are small, her voice unsure,
but her heart is made of steel and sun.
She dreams in colors no one sees,
and wants to turn them into one.

She could paint skies no eye has known,
build bridges out of broken thread,
write songs that bend the rules of sound,
and light a fire where fear once fed.

But every time she leapt to try,
the world pulled back, with narrowed eyes
"Be realistic." "Know your place."
"You're chasing clouds across the skies."

Still, she held her sketches close,
a galaxy tucked behind her stare.
And whispered plans into the wind,
half-hoping someone else might care.

Not for rescue, not for praise,
not for a path without the test
but just one soul to look and say,
"I see you. Go. You'll do the rest."

One spark of trust. One gentle nod.
A voice that didn't doubt or sway.
Sometimes a single "yes, you can"
can turn a lifetime's night to day.

Because belief is more than words
it's a mirror held up in the dark.
And she, who doubted her own wings,
just needed someone to see the spark.

She doesn't need a savior's hand,
just eyes that see, and feet that stay.
A quiet vote of silent faith
to push her fears a breath away.

And when that moment finally comes
oh, watch her rise, and light the air.
She'll not just fly she'll chart new stars,
and build a world from whispered dare.

Alchemy of the Soul

I was not born gold.
I came rusted,
bent under burdens I never chose,
a hollow vessel carved by storms
and sealed in silence.

But deep within
a tremble,
a spark,
a whisper of something ancient:
"Change is not destruction.
It is a sacred fire."

They told me to stay soft.
To stay the same.
To carry my wounds
like polite little scars
tucked beneath my sleeves.
But the ache became a forge,
and pain my philosopher's stone.

I learned the sacred science of falling:
how grief boils into wisdom,
how rage can become light
if you hold it long enough
without letting it consume you.

Each heartbreak,
each betrayal,
each night I wanted to vanish
was heat.
Was pressure.
Was part of the transmutation.

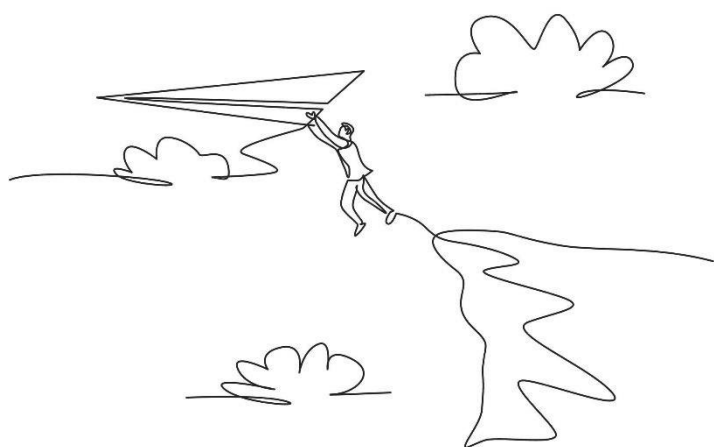
And so, I melted.
I dissolved.
I stripped away every false layer
until only truth remained
raw, trembling, radiant.

Now, I do not glitter.
I burn.
I do not pretend to be perfect
I am purified.

This soul, once splintered,
has become whole
not because it was untouched
but because it was broken
and then
remade.

I have alchemized
shame into compassion,
fear into firelight,
loss into sacred space.
And in this crucible of becoming,
I found something greater than gold:

Myself.



Not That High"

Maybe one day,
I'll look at the sky and say,
"You're not that high."
You stretch yourself in shades of blue,
But I've seen dreams fly farther than you.
You boast in clouds and thunder's cry,
But even storms must pass us by.

You do have some limits.
Your reach stops where silence begins
Beyond your stars, the cold kicks in,
And still, we build and send our kin
To walk where no feet yet have been.
So don't pretend you reign alone,
You're just a roof above a home.

I've stood on mountains, tall and steep,
Where air grows thin and shadows sleep,
And watched the morning break through haze,
With golden hands and quiet praise.
And even then, I dared to say,
"You're not so far. Not far today."

Anybody can touch you
And not just with their hands,
But with hearts that chase the infinite,
With minds that understand.
With paper planes and whispered names
And songs that ride the wind,

We stretch beyond your painted dome
To find where truths begin.

Children point with sticky hands,
Draw sun and moon in shifting sands,
And laugh as if they own the light
And maybe, in some way, they might.
Because you are not above their reach,
Nor past the prayers the silence teach.

What power bends a head in awe
Can also kneel before the flaw
A sky that we once thought divine
Now lies beneath a sharper line:
The will to rise, the choice to climb,
To write our names on passing time.

So yes, I'll look and say it plain:
"You're not that high. You're not the flame.
You're just the canvas for our fire,
The backdrop to our bold desire."
And when I speak, I won't just dare
I'll know we're meant for more than air.

"Some Days"

Some days I stand alone,
solid spine, steel tone,
I carry worlds in calloused hands
and speak in calm commands.

I make the coffee,
sign the forms,
lock the doors
and weather storms.

I don't ask,
don't bend,
don't need.

Some days.

But some days I recede.
I soften at the seams,
A quiet cry behind the dreams.
I want a voice to say, "You're fine,"
a hand to rest on top of mine.
I let the armor come undone,
and lean where once I used to run.

Some days I am the shore.
Other days, the sea.
Some days I say, "I've got this."
Others "Please, hold me."

Is it weakness? No. Just truth.
Even trees bow in typhoon youth.
Even stars burn out their light,
and wait for dark to birth the bright.
Independent.
Do.
Dependent.
Undo.
I am both,
and that's still
me.

Remembered from a Dream

I did not meet her I recalled her,
like a half-forgotten melody in the rain.
She was not born into my world,
she returned to it again and again.
Every word I ever wrote was a map,
leading me back to her eyes.
She wasn't a beginning or an end
she was the dream my soul never left behind.



Whispers Between Life and Death

Life came softly, a breath in the dawn,
With hands made of starlight and silence withdrawn.
It whispered in winds, in the laugh of a child,
In moments unguarded, both fleeting and wild.
It painted the skies with a furious grace,
Left fingerprints warm on the edge of our face.
A pulse in the dark, a dance in the flame
Each heartbeat a question that never had name.
But death too waits, not cloaked in dread,
Just quiet and stillness where time does not tread.
It hums in the background, a lull in the song,
A place where the weary no longer belong.
Not cruel, not cold just deeply aware,
Of all we have loved and all we must bear.
It gathers the echoes, the stories we've told,
And folds them in silence more precious than gold.
Between them we live, between them we fall,
Learning to rise, to break, and stand tall.
A breath, a goodbye, a tear, a birth
The endless soft sorrow and wonder of Earth.
So dance while you can, love loud, love deep,
Sow dreams in the hours you still get to keep.
For life is a poem, and death is the page,
Where silence completes what words couldn't gauge.

The Man Who Stood Behind Her Wings

He didn't build her cage, he broke the walls,
Watched her rise while he stayed through the falls.
He had dreams too silent and grand,
But chose instead to hold her hand.
The world praised her for touching the skies,
Not knowing it was him the reason she could rise.
He stood in shadows, gave up the light,
Not in weakness, but in quiet might.
No bitterness, no cries for fame,
He just smiled, proud to whisper her name.
He wasn't behind because he lacked the fire
He was the flame beneath her desire.

“Ada: The Light Behind the Curtains”

In a quiet corner of an unknown city stood an old haveli its walls worn by time, its doors whispering secrets of the past. Inside it was a *kotha*, a place known not just for music and dance, but for the dreams and heartbreaks it silently carried. It was where the city's most powerful and wealthy men gathered - Nawabs, poets, traders all drawn not just by the charm of wine or music, but by someone far more mesmerizing.

Her name was **Ada**.

Ada was not just beautiful she was breathtaking. She moved like poetry, spoke like a song, and her eyes carried both fire and sorrow. Those who saw her felt as though they were standing before something divine. She was like light soft, yet impossible to touch.

One evening, a young man simple, sincere, and untouched by the world's cruelty - entered that haveli. He wasn't a Nawab. He wasn't there for pleasure. He came because he had heard of Ada, and something in her name pulled at his heart.

The moment he saw her, his world changed.

He didn't see the dancer or the courtesan he saw a woman with depth in her silence and stories in her gaze. He fell in love, deeply and innocently. And when he got a chance to speak to her, he told her everything not with charm, but with truth.

"If you ask for it," he said softly, "my heart is yours. If you wish, let this moment be my last, as long as your name is with me when I go. When you're in front of me, I just want to keep looking at you... But how do I even begin to explain how much I love you?"

Ada looked at him not with anger, but with tired kindness. She had heard many men speak of love before, but this boy was different. Still, she smiled and replied with a heavy heart:

"Let go of my hand, dear. Whatever connection you're trying to build end it here. My world is not made for love. If you stay, you'll break into pieces."

She looked down, her voice lower now.

"Loving and forgetting that's my life. I'm not what you think. I'm just a small part of a palace built for others' pleasure. Love doesn't belong here. I am not love I'm just a game, a distraction."

Her words should've ended the story, but he stayed. He didn't speak of big promises. He didn't ask her to change. With tears in his eyes, he simply said:

"Then don't love me. Just walk with me for a little while for no reason. Maybe it won't be love, but can't we just try, for once?"

For the first time in a long time, Ada had no words.

She had seen many men come and go, had danced through countless nights and smiled through her

pain. But no one had ever asked her to *just walk*, without expectations.

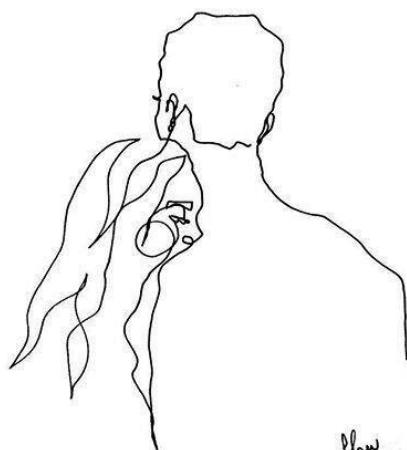
She kept refusing. Again, and again. But something inside her began to melt — the ice she had built around her heart, piece by piece, started to break.

And finally, one quiet night, after many silent pauses, she looked at him and gave a small nod.

“No,” she had said many times.

But that night...

She said “**yes.**”



Let Me See You When I Go"

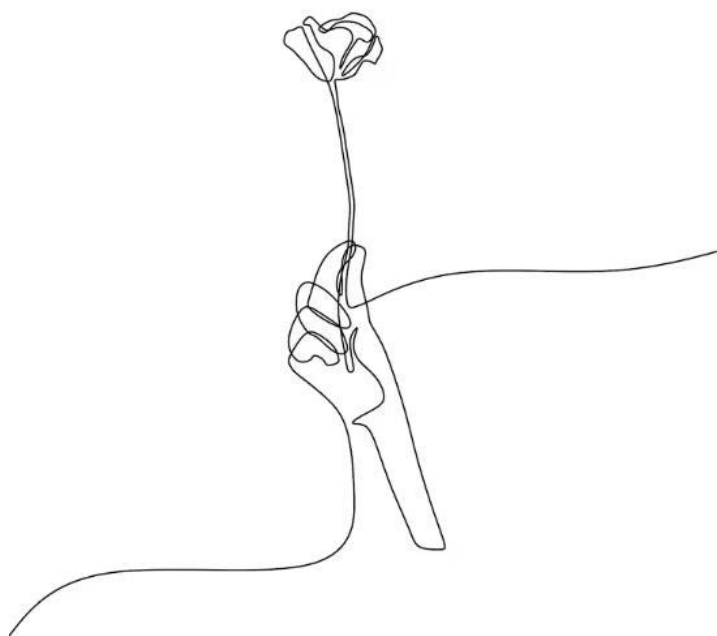
If the end must come like a hush in the rain,
Let it find me whispering only your name.
No grandeur, no glory, no light from above
Just the trembling truth of a soul bound by love.

Let the world blur soft, let time lose its thread,
Let memory flicker like candlelight spread.
But let your face be the last that I see,
The echo of all that meant living to me.

Come to me then, with your eyes full of stars,
The same way you found me no masks, no scars.
Take my hand like you did in the days still warm,
When love was a fire, not just a form.

Let me fall into you, not into fear,
With your breath the wind that draws me near.
No angels I ask for, no heaven above
Only you, only us, only love.

Let silence come, I will not cry
If you're the last vision beneath this sky.
For death is a door, and love is the key
So open it, darling, and set me free.



Love of A Poet

I don't long for anything too grand,
Just to become the love of a poet.
Let me flow straight from the heart to the page,
Be sculpted by words, line by line.
When he picks up the pen and writes of love
Let me rise as a verse from his soul.
I don't long for anything too grand,
Just to become the love of a poet.

As dusk falls and he sits to write
Let me arrive through his wandering thoughts.
Let me become that beautiful dream
He sees with wide open eyes.
I don't long for anything too grand,
Just to become the love of a poet.

When he lifts his gaze toward the moon
Let me become the moon of his book.
In every gathering, let him read me aloud,
Let me become that perfect ghazal.
I don't long for anything too grand,
Just to become the love of a poet.

Let me be the silence between his lines,
The pause where his heart learns to rest.
Let me be the ink that never dries,
A truth he cannot suppress.
I don't long for anything too grand,
Just to become the love of a poet.

When his words outlive the fleeting years,
And time forgets all else but song
Let me remain in those gentle verses,
A love eternal, pure, and strong.
I don't long for anything too grand,
Just to become the love of a poet.

The Girl Who Smiled in Pain

She sat in silence, with a storm inside,
Tears in her eyes, but her smile still wide.
Her laughter was a mask, worn with grace,
Each smile hiding a broken place.
She never let the world see her fall,
Carried her wounds like nothing at all.
They said, "She's fragile, maybe weak,"
Not knowing the fire that danced in her streak.
She fought battles no one ever knew,
And still wore light like morning dew.
A warrior in disguise, calm and brave,
She smiled not because it didn't hurt
But because she refused to cave.



Were You There, or Not?

Eyes lowered, lashes lifted,
my scarf caught on some old emotion.
I turned to free it your face appeared,
pulled back from a long-buried memory.

In that hall of noise and chatter,
suddenly silence stood beside me.
Was it chance you were truly there,
or just a vision born of my dizziness?

The same firm stride, the same lean frame,
your eyes still like chapters of a book.
Your hands fixing the fall of your hair,
your gestures, your words aged wine I once drank.

I took a step, then another
just a few steps kept us apart.
Meeting you today was possible;
this meeting felt necessary.

But how to measure the lonely hours
of those years we lost?
Cities between us like walls of glass
distance without a reckoning.

Time kept me waiting,
even the clocks grew tired.
In this crowded room I am alone,
my life feels wasted in its waiting.

I stepped closer, reached you at last
you were standing so near to me.

You smiled, and it seemed you thought
you'd always been close to me.

But another stood at your side;
you took their hand and walked away.
You turned to look back at me
as if years ago you'd already turned.

Seeing you together broke the heart
I had just taught to hold itself.
The intoxication of you that had climbed so high
vanished in a single moment.

And now I stand with only this thought:
Were you there, or not at all?
Is this a trick my eyes have played
are you here, or never here at all?

My Father-He was always on time.

For him, **6 a.m. meant 6 a.m.** not a minute before, not a minute after. It wasn't about being a retired officer; it was about valuing time itself. He often said, *"Time doesn't wait for anyone, so learn to walk beside it."*

He never burdened his daughters with fear or control. Instead, he became their quiet strength the one who always understood what they needed, sometimes even before they asked. They adored him, He had a rule - *no daughter of mine will ever touch anyone's feet, not even mine.*

He believed reverence should come from actions, not gestures. He raised them to look the world in the eye, to speak when something felt wrong, to never bow to injustice - or to anyone's ego.

And he succeeded.

They grew up bold, aware, and unafraid.

But the world, the same world he wanted them to face, wasn't ready. The very strength he taught them became their trial. The lessons of truth and equality, which for him were pure humanity, appeared **"too much"** for society.

Now, when people whispered or judged, he stayed silent not because he doubted his teachings, but because he realized something deeper: Sometimes, doing what's *right* looks *wrong* in the eyes of those who've never learned the difference.

This isn't a story of rebellion or pride
It's just the story of a father who loved his daughters
enough to prepare them for the world...
but forgot that the world often punishes those who
are raised *too right*.

Note for progressive mind - Stop waiting for a “big purpose.”

Most wins don't start that way.

When I look back at my own journey from an executive trying to figure things out to leading my own startup nothing was part of a master plan.

I didn't have a vision board.

I didn't know the outcome.

I just began.

At the start, all I had was curiosity and a strong desire to *try*. There were no roadmap just late nights, small risks, and a belief that learning by doing would teach me more than waiting for clarity ever could.

And it did.

Each step the mistakes, the rejections, the small wins slowly connected into something meaningful. What started as random experiments turned into a company. What began as uncertainty grew into confidence.

Here's what I've learned along the way:

Clarity doesn't come before action it grows *through* it. Small, consistent moves compound faster than perfect plans.

Curiosity is underrated; overthinking is not.

I didn't set out to be a CEO. I just started walking and the path unfolded.

So if you're waiting for the perfect purpose before you begin, here's a gentle reminder:

Start now. Let purpose catch up.

Stay consistent long enough to connect the dots.

Trust that every small step is shaping something bigger than you can see today.

Because sometimes, *not knowing exactly where you're going* is the best way to end up where you're meant to be.

“The Accidental CEO”

When Aarav started his career as a marketing executive, he wasn't chasing a grand vision or a “big purpose.” He just wanted to learn, to contribute, to make something work. Every day, he showed up, experimented, failed, adjusted, and tried again.

His colleagues often spoke about their *five-year plans*, but Aarav never had one. He believed that clarity would come through doing not dreaming.

One evening, while working late, he noticed how many small businesses struggled with digital marketing. They couldn't afford agencies, and freelancers were often inconsistent. He thought, *what if I could build something simple just a service that helps them get started online?*

No investors. No vision board. No roadmap. Just a small experiment a laptop, a free logo from Canva, and two clients who trusted him.

The first few months were chaotic. He did sales calls in the morning, managed campaigns by night, and learned accounting from YouTube. There was no “purpose” just persistence.

But soon, something changed. His small clients began referring others. A freelancer joined, then another. Within two years, that small experiment became a registered startup *Growly Digital*.

When an interviewer later asked, “Did you always know you’d be a CEO?”

Aarav laughed. “Not at all. I just started. Purpose found me on the way.”

Today, when young professionals ask him for advice, he tells them what he’s learned firsthand:

“Stop waiting for a perfect purpose or a polished plan. Most wins don’t start that way. Start first. Let purpose catch up.”

I Am the Phoenix

Ask me who I am
And I will rise in answer.
Not with words,
But with flame in my breath
And ash falling from my wings.
I am not just reborn
I am remade.
Each fall, each failure,
Each silence that tried to smother me
Became the forge that shaped my fire.
They saw the ruin.
They saw the dust.
They saw me shattered,
But not the slow glow
Building in my bones.
I didn't crawl back
I blazed through.
My pain became prophecy.
My scars became scripture.
And my wings
They weren't gifted.
I forged them from what tried to bury me.
I don't fear the fire.

I am the fire.

I don't run from endings

I rise from them.

So when they ask, "Who are you?"

Tell them:

I am the vision that emerged from ruin.

I am the storm born of stillness.

I am the Phoenix

And my name is survival.

The Poet's Love

He wrote about her long before he knew she existed. In his verses, she was sunlight caught in raindrops, laughter wrapped in longing, a face he could never describe but somehow remembered. Every poem began and ended with her shadow.

And somewhere, far away, she read his words without knowing who wrote them. His poetry found her like wind finds an open window. She would trace his lines with her fingertips, as if by touching the ink, she might touch the soul behind it.

They met by chance or perhaps by the pull of something older than time. At a small café where poems hung in the air like incense, she looked up from a book, and there he was the poet whose words had lived in her heart for years.

He smiled the way his poems did soft, uncertain, carrying centuries in a single glance. When he spoke, his voice sounded like everything she had ever underlined, everything she had ever wanted to believe about love.

The world faded around them. They talked of rain, of starlight, of words that never die. He confessed he had always written about a woman who felt both near and distant and now, looking at her, he understood why his poems had never felt complete.

She became his muse, not because she inspired him to write, but because she silenced him. For the first time, words weren't enough.

And when they parted that night, he didn't say goodbye.

He simply wrote one last line in his notebook:

"She was not someone I met she was someone I remembered from a dream I had been writing all my life."

About the Author

Gulista Chaudhary is a dynamic speaker, personality development coach, and entrepreneur. Over the years, she has worked with various institutes and NGOs, inspiring countless individuals to discover their potential and build confidence from within.



Driven by her passion for growth and self-reliance, she founded her own IT staffing firm, which has successfully expanded across multiple cities in India. Through her dedication and perseverance, Gulista has created not just a professional empire, but also a harmonious balance between her personal and professional life.

An ardent lover of literature, she finds her creative escape in writing and shayari. After authoring two impactful books, this marks her third—an expression of her experiences, emotions, and enduring belief in the power of words.

