

OUR PIECES that Remain

Poems of Healing and Reflections

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BlueRose ONE^{.com}
S t o r i e s M a t t e r

New Delhi • London

BLUEROSE PUBLISHERS

India | U.K.

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BlueRose ONE
Stories Matter
New Delhi • London

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ISBN: 978-93-7139-177-1

Cover design: Yash Singhal

Typesetting: Namrata Saini

First Edition: August 2025



This book is dedicated to the whispers of
my mind and to all the unspoken thoughts.

Preface

People are stories in motion—living, breathing books with no final chapter. With Each day, an unexplored sentence is written: few light and full of laughter, and others heavy like storm and loud like thunder. Getting to know people is like reading a favourite novel—pausing on their turning points, wondering how they made it through the dark pages, and cheering for the moments they rose again.

We've all been through plot twists- grief, joy, heartbreak, hope. And yes, some chapters hurt to remember. But no single part defines the whole. We are not our worst days and neither our thoughts. We are the collection of everything: the joy, the lessons, the scars, the comebacks, and the love that kept us going. Your story is still unfolding with many changes, constantly—and that's what makes each of us worth knowing, worth reading. After all, everyone of us wants nothing but to be understood deeply.

What do you think -How much feeling is *too* much? It's a question that echoes quietly in the hearts of those who feel deeply- those who carry the weight of moments long after they've passed. But the truth is, we were *born* to feel. It's stitched into our DNA, into the soft architecture of our souls and that's what makes us

human. Joy, sorrow, fear, love—they are the invisible threads that connect us to ourselves, and to each other.

To numb ourselves, to silence the trembling strings of the heart, is to betray something sacred and to lose our authentic self. It's like trying to mute a song that was written to be heard. When we block our ability to feel—whether from fear, pain, or exhaustion—we lose touch with something ancient in us. Something human. Something *real*.

But still, there is a cost. Feeling too deeply can sometimes feel like drowning in emotions. Like trying to hold the ocean in your chest. Empathy, when left unchecked, can blur boundaries until we're no longer sure where our pain ends and someone else's begins. It's beautiful, yes—but without care, it can become consuming and that's why we don't need to feel *less*—we just need to feel *with intention*.

Empathy, as powerful and luminous as it is, can overflow. Sometimes, we absorb more than we're meant to—carrying pain that isn't ours, bleeding from wounds we never received. Even light, when too bright, draws in moths and shadows. That's why even a lantern needs a glass casing—to glow without being consumed.

So, build your boundary, not as a wall, but as a gentle filter. A sacred edge that keeps your soul intact. Because when your heart is protected, not hidden, the gift of feeling becomes exactly what it was meant to be—a blessing, not a burden.

What I am writing ahead, is a journey toward understanding and embracing the parts of ourselves that we try to avoid. 'Our Pieces that Remain' is a motivational and humanistic reminder that we can learn to coexist with our past, heal from it, and still move forward.

It is just an attempt to tell you that everyone of us have had or will have some scary chapters as well that teach us the most. These are not mere words but experiences of each one of us, written poetically, in a mix of writing styles.

I once read something that stayed with me: "*If you are going through hell, why stop there?*" It's such a simple question, yet it carries a world of truth. Pain has a strange way of convincing us to pause, to sit in the fire and call it home. But you weren't meant to build a life in the middle of your suffering. You were meant to walk through it, scarred maybe—but not broken. Tired, but not defeated.

This book—though small—was written with hope in its pages. Hope that it finds you wherever you are on your path. Maybe you've lost sight of the exit. Maybe you've convinced yourself that this is all there is. But I promise you, the story doesn't end here. Keep moving, even if it's slow. Even if all you can manage today is a single breath, or a single step. That's still progress. That's still you, choosing not to stop in hell.

I hope these words become a flicker of light for you. Not a map, but a match. Something to spark that inner fire again—the one that says: *You've made it this far, and you are not done yet.* Keep going. The worst parts of your journey do not get to be the last chapters. Not if you don't let them.

“Words are chameleons,
which reflect the color of their environment.”

-Learned Hand

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Note: Context to each poem is open for interpretation.

Chapter 1

Many people hear the word *anxiety* and think it simply means being nervous. But it's far more than that. It's not just butterflies in your stomach before a big moment—it's a storm in your mind that you can't always predict or prepare for. And when you don't understand what someone is going through, how can you truly help them?

Imagine this:

It's a cold, quiet morning. You've arrived at your exam centre, trying to steady your nerves. Everything should be routine—until you check your bag and realize something horrifying: you've forgotten your pen. Just a pen. Such a small thing, yet in that instant, your world starts to collapse.

You are frozen. The fear creeps in quickly—tight in your chest, your hands begin to tremble. You want to ask someone, but your throat closes up. You feel exposed, vulnerable, and stupid. The walls of the room press in as worst-case scenarios unravel in your head faster than you can stop them: your teacher's disappointment, the judgment of others, failing the exam, the future you've planned slipping away—all this in the span of a heartbeat.

And then, just as your mind spirals toward disaster, someone notices. A quiet kindness—a fellow student sees your panic and simply offers you a pen. No questions, no judgment. Just help. And in that small, generous moment, your fear ebbs away. Relief washes over you like sunlight after a storm.

Now, imagine if that intense, breath-stealing panic didn't pass. Imagine if it followed you—not just in exams, but in everyday conversations, in crowds, in silence, in sleep. Imagine a mind that's constantly awake, races, a heart that never stops pounding, a body that reacts to invisible threats all day long. That's anxiety. It clings to you. It distorts reality. It convinces you that disaster is always just one step away.

For some, help comes in therapy or medication. For others, in conversation or touch. And sometimes, unexpectedly, it comes in a colour.

For me, it came in lavender.

Lavender, to me, is more than just a flower or a shade. It's a lifeline. It's the colour of courage when everything feels overwhelming. It's the shade of my imaginary safe space, a mind map where I breathe a little easier. It is, in its quiet elegance, the root of my happy purple heart. (What's your happy place?)

And maybe that's the most important thing to remember: sometimes, the help we need doesn't come with a big gesture. Sometimes, it comes in the form of a colour, a gesture as small as a pen, or a heart willing to

Our Pieces That Remain

listen. Anxiety may not always be visible—but empathy, even in its simplest form, always is.

Lavenders : Serene Sleep

In yet another sleepless night
I took a flight with closed eyes
Towards a sweet-scented path
In a field of purple sky

Curvy tops and feathered, they stand
In oily hair, covered in dew.
Growing, glowing, green and glitzy,
What a pretty picturesque!

There I slept, watching some
To be a bride's confetti
And few dried, drenched and draped
For decorating the corpses ready.

Then amidst the haze,
I saw, personification of romance
She had the aroma of love
And a calm heart, devoted in her dance.

There is so much to this panorama,
an unexplained mindful art
that's how when I wake up,
I wake up with a purple heart !

Chapter 2

The fate of a book mirrors our own in many ways. Books are people, and people are books—each of us a collection of pages, filled with meaning, waiting to be read. Some of us require deep understanding, layers to be uncovered over time. But too often, we are seen as placeholders, briefly noticed before being replaced by something new and exciting.

Some books are never discovered, hidden on forgotten shelves, much like the parts of us that remain unseen by others. Yet, no matter the fate, every book, like every person, carries inherent depth and meaning. We all have our rightful place, a moment when our story will be truly understood.

In time, the right reader will come along, and our narrative will unfold. Until then, we wait—knowing that our worth, like the finest books, will one day be revealed.

Judging by the Cover

The world of the book with yellow pages
wrinkled, warm, which wisely ages

Vast enough to hold the universe's song
In turmoil when held roughly and wrong

Are you the book, they hold for pictures,
the one that gives aesthetics to all
Only to see them waving bye,
after attending a perfect shot!

The book that's kept in front of the show,
with a hard cover, gleaming glow.
Beside a side vase, sitting alone
Showcasing writer's sign yet no one to own

Fragile enough to be turned into dust
Longing for a reader's lust

To sit on the throne of chest pockets of coats
And to get little proud pencil notes
Where the quotes are underlined with amber.
Our Books are in need of the hearts that remember!

Chapter 3

Your identity is your power—uniquely yours. It carries the wisdom of every struggle you've faced, every misstep, every stain that's stitched in your soul. What we often see as blemishes—those moments of doubt, failure, or pain—are in truth the most beautiful parts of our becoming. They are not stains to be washed away, but symbols of healthy growth.

Yet, we rarely recognize this in time.

We move through life comparing our raw, unedited chapters to someone else's polished story. We measure our worth by timelines that were never meant for us. And in that constant comparison, we lose touch with the most authentic parts of ourselves—we forget to live *our* life, distracted by the illusion of someone else's.

But this isn't how it has to be.

The below poetic piece urges you to ask yourself a series of questions, to pause, to look inward, and to truly see yourself.

To explore your identity not as something to be judged, but as something to be celebrated.

It urges you to embrace your journey—the detours, the delays, the heartbreaks, and the victories—as essential elements of who you are.

Jyoti Srivastav

Because you were never meant to be anyone else.
You are meant to be *you*.

What's Your Identity?

If given the chance to change your name,
into someone famous, what would you claim?

If given a chance to be someone else and step into
another skin,
Would you trade your story for the unknown within?

Would you paint yourself more handsome,
Exchange features and traits for praise and ransom?
Would you sharpen your mind to be more cunning,
Or lose your truth in the race of running?

Would you rather bend to the world's demand,
Or choose to stand—less polished, but grand?
If you could rewrite your beginning,
Would you choose a new home or a different
upbringing?

Do you wonder how would that be?
Less real and more fancy?

Yet here's the truth that quietly shines:
You would never be you if you rewrote the lines.
Every scar, every stumble, every climb—
They stitched your name in the fabric of time.

So—do you like yourself?
Or do you wish yourself to be someone else?

Chapter 4

*A*fter self seeks to connect with anyone who has ever wrestled with the storm within their own mind. When chaos reigns, the mind can become a master manipulator, twisting thoughts into shadows. Yet, it is within these very depths—the dark, painful corners—that we find the most profound parts of ourselves. These difficulties, have the power to shape and define our lives in ways we often cannot see, but must ultimately confront.

Alter Self

I staged myself
and became my own spotlight,
then through those dusty rays
I saw my real fights.
Some part of me is dreading for a while now
Counting the breaths,
And exceeding by one somehow.
The one that was alive,
Was my alter self,
Who coloured me blue, now and then.
How naïve, how could I?
Not see and unsee all this time.
She was a parasite to my thoughts
And argued with me a lot.
She called upon the tragedies
And praised panics, her vanities.
My days were more than of twenty-four hours.
I counted them,
As they passed by.
It seemed that she had lived in me,
More than I.
So, while I wait for her to leave,
And for me to dance and dwell,
I have learnt to get along
With my alter self.

Chapter 5

Even the most mundane, most ordinary things can carry a heavy emotional burden .

It's like the effect on a child when he sees ice cream, Indeed, the kid becomes happy because that's his source of happiness. An ordinary thing for us becomes extraordinary to the child. It's not unnatural to have a bond with things that cannot feel. A photograph, an old sweater, a song, or even a scent—these lifeless things often carry the weight of the people, places, or moments we've loved. The only way to move ahead is to get a closure, and sometimes in desperate times, those `things` give us closure.

During the second wave of covid, when I was with my grandfather beside him for the last time, I was wearing a checked shirt, full sleeves, comfortable and one of my favourites.

I was wearing it when we took him to the crematory ground and since that day the shirt became horrid to me. Whenever I saw it, It took me to that same ground, same day and to same remorse. I was too afraid to wear it, even see it or touch it again. I knew that I had to let it go and I chose to leave it at the holy shore of Haridwar.

Mnemonic: Things That Breathes

One day, one shirt of mine
Got a soul of its own.
Powerful & witchy,
she turned herself in a darker tone.
I absorbed her skin,
Pumped her heart
And wore her mind, all day!
Living in loop of a day in her life
I carried all that weight.
She returned from a cremation,
Burnt herself a little too
Smoked and grey, the then bright green
Slowly turned blue.
Like she soaked the fire
And dipped herself in depth
Frozen are all the memories
That's exhaled breath by breath.
Now just so unfit in drawer,
Amongst all the happy ones
Destined to be afloat
Whenever the time comes.

Chapter 6

My nana used to say that - *Life is like a bubble; it can burst at any point.*

Planning too ahead and worrying about it takes away our present. We forget to appreciate the moment we're in, the warmth of today slipping through our fingers like sand. The truth is, we can't predict what will come, but we can shape the future by how we live right now. The secret to a bright tomorrow isn't in the endless chase for controlling everything as per choices—it's in embracing the present, with a heart full of joy, gratitude, and light. Because when we fill today with happiness, tomorrow will find its way to us, naturally.

Here and now tries to explore life, and what it means to be in the present.

Here and Now: To Live in the Moment

Endless thoughts that I weaved
While looking up at sky
What is life, if not
A mirage, a disguise?
For what is unforeseen gives hope,
And so, we live in a day ahead.
With minds drowning in the lapses of future
Why not live in the moment instead?
Or are we really living?
Us, the passengers of the unknown
Somewhere to be destined for
Yet just nowhere and alone
Or are we shadows?
Unaware of our invisible realities?
And for once we reach our fate
We realise the truth of mortality.
Well, the soul is real and the faith within
The warmth, the cold, joy and sorrows
But the sole existence is questioned ,
When we perceive the illusion of tomorrow!

Chapter 7

They say the most radiant smiles often bloom from the most broken hearts—and perhaps, there’s truth in that. When someone has faced life’s fiercest storms, their smile carries a depth that words can’t capture. It’s not just an expression—it’s a quiet victory. A sign that pain didn’t win.

Those who have been humbled by hardship often become gentler, more compassionate souls. Life has softened their edges, not with weakness, but with wisdom. And when they smile, it’s not out of naivety, but resilience.

And here’s the magic—smiles are infectious. One genuine smile has the power to shift a room, to make others feel safe, seen, and welcome. It creates a space where people feel free to be their most authentic selves.

The below poetry is written with intent to encourage you to smile more often.

Smile Please!

Are you sitting with a wounded heart?
With a little grin, why don't you start?

Walking, talking, crying, Alas!
don't let it settle, giggle fast.

Invisible scars, screeching in need,
Stitch it with a smile, so sweet.

It will cure, thousands more
Tale, you started, on repeat!

From head to heart, it takes you through
The longest journey, mankind knew.

a sincere smile can simply be.
not just kindness—but alchemy.

Now every time someone smiles at you,
You find yourself smiling too!

Chapter 8

It's important, every now and then, to pause and look back—not with regret, but with the intention to understand. Our words and actions leave behind quiet echoes, and sometimes, growth begins with simply listening to them. Introspection is a courageous art that gives us strength and make amend with grace.

For me, walking is when this inner dialogue unfolds most naturally. Step by step, thought by thought, I untangle the knots in my mind. This makes me learn from my own story.

The rhythm of walking grounds, while thoughts take flight—free to roam, reflect, and return with quiet clarity. In a world that moves so fast, reflection is an act of self-respect. It helps us grow not just forward, but inward.

Too Many Thoughts!

Up and down,
I pace , I walk.
Chilled with vibes,
I 'hit the rocks'
Wounded with the hit
I curb the pain
Strolled and smiled
I hid the stain
Then I cursed the hour
'fool and vile'
Damn, it cursed me back
With its cruel smile
That's the end
of this introspectory walk
Where I feel, I shun
And then I fall !

Chapter 9

Your home is your safest haven — not just a place, but a living soul that nurtures and protects you. It witnesses your everyday moments, holds your memories, and offers you a sense of belonging. You don't just live in it — you build it, decorate it, and pour your energy into it. In return, it shapes the atmosphere in which you live.

The joy you bring in? It lingers.

The stress you release? It settles.

The walls of your home absorb everything: your laughter, your anger, your tears, your joys. They become silent witnesses to your life. What you give to your home — emotionally and energetically — is what it gives back. It reflects the mood you create within it.

This is why it's so important to fill your home with peace, joy, and love — to create a space where your mind can rest and flourish. Your environment deeply affects your mental well-being and the overall quality of your life.

If you are a parent, this truth carries even more weight. Children don't just listen to what you say—they absorb who you are. They grow in the atmosphere you create. And an angry man, no matter how loving his intentions,

plants fear in small hearts. That is not the soil in which confidence or kindness can thrive. A house where rage roams freely, even silently, is a house where peace struggles to take root.

Some people are more sensitive to this than others—I know I am. Chaos doesn't just stay outside; it comes in and finds a place in my chest. But peace? Peace quiets everything. It lets me breathe deeply. Think clearly. Sleep soundly.

So, here's something simple—but powerful: If you've had a hard day at work, don't rush through the door with your storm still raging. Take a moment. Walk. Breathe. Let the tension leave your shoulders before your feet cross the threshold. Ask yourself: What energy am I about to bring into this space I call home?

Then smile. Even if it's small. Even if it's tired. Ring the bell with intention, not exhaustion. Not for perfection, but for peace. Because what you bring in, lives there.

And this goes beyond just your home. It extends to the people you invite into your life — your family, your friends, your daily circle. Their energy becomes part of your environment too. The way they speak, the way they show up, the peace or chaos they carry — all of it settles in your space and in your spirit. The energy you welcome into your space ultimately shapes your experience of life.

Home Breathes

Its bones remember every sunrise,
toward the light, its windows gently leans
It hums beneath our feet—a quiet, waiting warmth,
as if love once poured into plaster never truly leaves.

We walk its hallways daily, brushing against old
laughter
tucked between the walls, it lives
and holds our mornings like breath,
It listens. It learns. It forgives.

But words, I learned,
can rot like fruit when left unsheltered.
didn't know how silence could fume,
how even joy, if unguarded,
could bruise the corners of a room.

It's alright , I murmured to my heart a hundred times
But all I heard was my home crying
Screaming walls and angry bricks
Talking to me in highest pitch

Love tried to fill the growing cracks,
but a house can see behind the acts.
It hears the truths you never say,
and holds the heat when hearts betray.

The sighs that echoed in the kitchen air,
apologies unfinished, clinging where
our heads once lay on restless nights—
the house held rage and dimmed its lights.

Every morning when I wake up
Dancing to the tunes, these walls remember
And every time we laughed
Our home had us photographed

The beige-toned tiles I chose with care,
the light that glow along the stair—
they hold a soul, a quiet grace,
a childhood wrapped in every space.

And echoes of the one I loved the most,
now living here, he is a protecting ghost.
Wherever it stands, wherever I go,
I will whisper back to it:
You are my lovely home.

Chapter 10

Sometimes, I find myself wondering about the paths not taken, the choices that was not made. It's a strange kind of feeling, imagining how life might have unfolded if different decisions had been made.

My Mother.

She is strong—fierce, even. A woman who carried the weight of our too. Her children became her world, and I can't help but wonder whether she placed parts of herself on pause to raise us? Did she trade pieces of her story so we could write ours freely?

What would her life have looked like if she had chosen differently for herself? Would she have travelled farther, dreamed louder, danced more often, or lived with less worry? I'll never know for sure. But I do know that she chose us. Over and over again.

Still, in my heart, I carry not only gratitude but curiosity—for the woman she is, and the woman she might have been. Both, I love deeply. And I am sure you all might have looked at your mother and wondered the course of her life if she chose herself first, at least once.

Mother

In a parallel world where I don't live,
She lives a life I never missed.
Her life is hers and her heart is free,
No weight of memories tied to me.
She chases dreams in open skies,
With fire and wonder in her eyes.
And she sees her boundless grace,
Her talent shining, finding place.
Where she can be bold, courageous and free
becoming the woman she was meant to be
I wish she sees herself like I do
Blooming and breaking through
Strong wavy hair & Glowing white skin,
she is epitome of beauty with ambition within.
Her eyes still sparkle, I wonder what she holds
I wonder how she might have been.
Mother, an entire world, unexplored!

Chapter 11

In our early twenties, there's often a rush—a pressure to achieve, to be fast, to accumulate all the success and excitement we imagine life should offer. We chase after the fancy things, convinced that the sooner we get them, the better. But amidst this whirlwind, it's easy to forget that these years are not just about ticking off accomplishments. They are, in fact, the most formative years of our lives.

This is the time when we make mistakes, when we stumble, and when we learn the most about who we truly are. It's when we shape ourselves, not just through our triumphs but through our failures too. These moments, though imperfect, are the ones that teach us the value of patience and self-awareness.

Rather than rushing forward, it's important to take a step back and allow ourselves to reflect, to embrace the uncertainty, and to fill our minds with clarity about what we really want from life. The path we walk now is one of self-discovery—less about achieving everything at once and more about understanding the essence of who we are and where we want to go.

Life is not a Race

These wrinkles trace our weary heads,
While city lights are bleeding red.
We're not that old — not just yet.

They wore their pantaloons to shreds,
And bragged beneath their cigarette breaths.
How drunk we are — our souls in debt.

We looked too shiny on the outside,
But broke to pieces deep inside.
When did we quietly fall asleep?

They chased their dreams in speeding streams,
But stumbled hard on metal beams.
Just slow it down — go slow, you, see?

Don't sulk — let miseries teach you grace,
You are carving stories, not a race.
It won't begin smooth, but you'll grow wise.

Oh baby, you are just twenty-three,
No need for storms or a killing spree.
Haven't you learned? Well, now's the time.

Our Pieces That Remain

So, you have laid out all your future plans,
While love and life slip through your hands.
Are you all set — or caught in the world's net?

Look how feelings are all turned,
in something blue and something burned
We lost us- It's just too sad.

Yes, life is not always a gentle ride,
Feel every joy, every fight inside.
Do you love it? Or not just yet?

Now wander far — from ocean's shore,
To where the mountain spirits soar.
You will roar then — haven't you roared yet?

Chapter 12

I used to visit the CGHS dispensary almost every month to collect medicines, and each time, I found myself standing among a quiet queue of the elderly—stooped shoulders, wrinkled hands, and eyes that had seen more than a lifetime’s worth of stories, waiting patiently in long queues.

What struck me most wasn't just their endurance, but their spirit. They spoke freely, with anyone and everyone—no pretence, no ego. Just pure, open conversation. They didn’t judge; they didn’t pretend. They had already walked through the fire of life and emerged with a kind of wisdom that didn’t need to shout to be heard.

And I, a quiet visitor with a numbered token, became a student in that humble hall, grateful for the medicine I came for—But even more, for the lessons I never knew I needed.

Worthy Wrinkles

Stillness in a line
May spark the rarest climb,
When you observe the company
And drift beyond the time.

Amid the wise and old,
Their stories bright as gold,
Those wrinkled faces laugh aloud,
In memories retold.

I saw one man steeping
Must be tired of standing, I thought
But then I found a smile
Among the cutest lot of all.

They just share the infection
Of smiling ear to ear
No ego, no differences
Just mutter the heart, all clear.

Some had come for medicine,
Some with aching bone,
They just kept on talking
And I heard them in their slow tone.

Maybe that's how it is
When you have finally learned to live
A simple life,
that's so complicatedly perceived.

And I see them giving each other
These doses of compassion
Early morning, in an ordinary place
They sit and rant life lessons!

Chapter 13

Sometimes, when you finally pause and tune out the noise around you, you hear something real—that quiet voice inside that says, “You are meant for more.”

It’s your gut, your conscience, your truth—whatever you call it—it pushes you to grow, to break limits, to stop playing small.

But here's the thing: the world is loud.

People’s opinions, their judgments, the fear of failure—it all starts to take up too much space in your head.

And slowly, that voice inside? It gets buried under the weight of “What if I mess up?” or “What will they think?”

That’s what holds us back. Not ability, not luck—fear.

But here’s the plot twist: courage isn’t the absence of fear. It’s choosing to move forward with it. And funnily enough, fear is usually guarding the very thing you need to grow.

Sometimes, it’s like life or even something divine puts that fear in your path on purpose. Not to stop you, but to show you that you are stronger than you think.

Jyoti Srivastav

The wild part? Courage is already there, waiting—just
one step past the fear.

Take that step.

The Path We Walk, Fear and I

It takes a whole life,
To unravel the purpose of existence
But what if the days we cherish most
Are shadowed by doubt and resistance?

I turned to my conscience, said, "You are astray—
This world still sings, I want to stay."
I screamed through silence, fierce and long,
To break the grip of her stubborn song.

"oh, my dear, ask yourself, what are your deepest
fears?"
I spent a day to question myself, until, I broke in tears.
The world is what I fear the most, I accepted my
conscience.
Then I started to unpuzzle. How this, I never realize?

It was when my fears answered.
"because I make you weak,
with what will the world think of you?
And How will they critique?"

I whispered, "Please leave," but she just grinned,
"It's not me who stays, but the thoughts you've
pinned."

Finally, I called upon my strength, long buried deep,
For years, I let it fade, a secret to keep.

My strength stood ready, steadfast and near,
"Take me in, for I've always been here.
We're a step from your dreams, yet close to your plight,
A step from your hope, and one from your fright."

Chapter 14

Authenticity is rare in a world like ours where personalities are picked up over social media and changes with trend, where memories can be easily manipulated with validations from strangers and where emotions changes with just a swipe until the next reel. Remember! No one shares their worst memories and best lessons online. They share what's aesthetically valid and in fashion.

The real lessons—the ones that shaped us, the ones that transformed our pain into strength—are often born in silence. So, don't judge your own journey by someone else's highlights on Instagram. The truest growth often happens in the unseen moments, away from the spotlight, where we learn to rise from what we've endured.

There is so much more to the filters and smiling selfies and group trips and what not ! It's very easy to get drowned in the emotions that are spilling over the internet. But what can save you from this is your authentic self. Deep within the charades, there is a foundation of your soul, that's where you will find the root to your OG life!

Attachments

Behind the curtains — tainted hearts,
And painted nails, typing fast.
Blinded by illusions, lost in endless thoughts,
Dwells a mind to which all things are caught.

You seek only to love, to laugh, to feel —
But who are you, in real, not in reel!
Love is fleeting, and so is grief,
Each emotion passes like a falling leaf.

On glowing screens, emotions gleam,
But not all truth is what they seem.
Smiles can be masks, tears just art —
Stories staged, not from the heart.

Yet one connection endures beyond the rest —
The bond with self, quiet and blessed.
Detached yet rooted, silent yet strong,
In this presence, you truly belong.

Alone is no longer lonely or stark,
And together no longer feels dark.
When you stop seeking what is not,
You find the love you long forgot.

And in that moment, softly taught —
Life becomes more than you ever thought.

Chapter 15

Have you ever noticed how sometimes your mind keeps replaying the same scenario over and over—so much that, eventually, it almost becomes real? That’s the power of focused thought. It’s not just overthinking—it’s a kind of manifestation. When a thought takes up all your energy and belief, it starts shaping your reality without you even realizing it.

Our minds are powerful. They’re like a garden for all our desires, fears, hopes, and future possibilities. What we feed it, grows. What we focus on, becomes our lens. If we constantly fill our thoughts with negativity or fear, that’s what we start to see in the world around us.

But there’s a flipside. If we allow negativity to take root—if fear, doubt, or resentment become our daily mental companions—then the world starts to reflect those shadows back at us. It took me a while to truly understand this. But once I did, something shifted. I began to choose thoughts like I would choose companions. And I encourage you to do the same.

Maybe it’s a very Pisces thing to do—getting lost in imagination and soft daydreams—but it honestly became my superpower. Holding space in my head for joy, creativity, and better days has helped me get through the harder ones. And if you are someone whose mind tends

to wander a lot, try pointing it toward the things that lift you up. It really does make a difference. Because when you protect a place in your mind for hope and wonder, you don't just survive—you create. You manifest. You become.

Manifestations

How manifestations struck me
How all the writings became true
As if the ink knew the future
Or I kept carving the realities in a queue

Even when the pages were worn out
They had the will to live like fabric
So those words made me their mannequin
And I empathetically wore the magic

And now I am , the living page of my poem
With soaked ink in the veins
Drop by drop it drips
Leaving behind some stains

As if the mind had glimpsed tomorrow,
Or etched the path to journey through.
Each thought I held dissolved the sorrow,
And dreams began to bloom in view.

I wonder how much pain I painted,
Or if my thoughts had shaped the bends.
I wish I had written something softer,
Or at least had chosen how it ends.

Jyoti Srivastav

But now I write with lighter fingers,
With words that heal instead of hide.
I plant my hopes in honest pages,
And let the lover in me decide.

Chapter 16

Love. Is it simple or complicated? It's both. A word we know by heart but can never fully define. It's abstract, yet somehow, when it hits, you feel it deep—no explanation needed. It's not just romance, not just the happy moments. It's the rollercoaster—the highs, the lows, the mess in between. It's real, raw, unpredictable.

Love isn't one-size-fits-all. It's different for everyone, shaped by our own lives, desires, and scars. It can't be captured by a single thought or definition because it's an experience, ever-shifting, ever-expanding. It's a journey that keeps unfolding, each twist unique, each turn a story of its own.

And yet here I am, attempting to write about this unexplainable emotion. What do you think about love?

Love isn't magic

Just so you know, my friend,
Love's not the magic tales pretend.
Not sparks that fly or perfect scenes,
Not fairy dust or movie dreams.

I can tell you what not is love,
But what it is, cannot be told
For something, meant to be experienced
Its precision, cannot be sold.

It's work, it's warmth, it's showing up true,
And it gives back more than it asks of you.
Not control, or pride, or keeping score,
Not needing less, or wanting more.

It's not a definition—it's a feeling,
Growing, breathing, breaking, healing.
Don't bolt when love wears a softer disguise—
It whispers in shadows, not just in sunrise.

It looks different through each person's view,
No single form, yet all of them true.
Because real love, the kind that stays,
It's efforts, it's fire, it's grace.

Chapter 17

At times, life presents us with questions that shake our confidence, leaving us grappling with decisions that don't always feel true to our core. In those moments, the weight of doubt settles heavy on both heart and mind, tempting us to retreat, to hide, to shut it all out. But here lies the undeniable truth: the magic is in the rise. It's in gathering the quiet strength within to keep moving forward, no matter how insurmountable the road may seem.

Understand this: no single chapter defines your story; no temporary setback marks the end of your journey. Instead, each challenge is a lesson—a stepping stone, an invitation to grow. It calls upon that relentless, curious spirit within you, the part that refuses to surrender, always ready to meet each new hurdle with courage.

Disappointment, though inevitable, is not the end. What truly matters is rediscovering your faith in yourself, rekindling hope, and finding the wisdom in every experience, however painful. The world is vast and full of possibilities, yet not every door will open, nor will every hand reach out to pull you through. But through it all, you will keep growing, evolving, and moving forward.

In the end, it is not the absence of difficulty, but the way we confront it, that shapes who we are meant to become. Each challenge, each failure, each triumph becomes a thread in the fabric of your story, creating the unique tapestry of your life. It is through this process—through the rising and falling, the gaining and losing—that you are forged into the person you are destined to be. So, keep going. Keep growing.

For it is the struggle that forges you, shaping the person you are meant to become.

Heavy Hearts

I wish there was a world far away,
Where my heart could dance and sway.

Where I could hide, if just for a while,
And breathe in peace with a gentle smile.

It feels like I carry two rocks,
One on my heart, where dreams have tiled,

The other one is on my mind
Dangled amidst the thoughts I piled.

But faith is the light that lifts me high,
When shadows fall and hope feels shy.

For every struggle, there's strength to gain,
And every tear falls to wash away pain.

So let the rocks, however they seem,
Be the building blocks of a greater dream.

For even when I stumble or fall behind,
I know in my heart, I'll rise and find...

A way to shine through the darkest night,
To trust in myself, and in what's right.

Jyoti Srivastav

For faith is the spark that lights the way,
Even when doubts try to steal the day.

The world is waiting, bright and wide,
With every hope I have kept inside.

And when the pieces fall, like stars in lace,
I Know they are leading me to my true space.

Chapter 18

There are times in life when just getting through the day feels like a quiet battle. When your mind is heavy, and your day becomes of more than just 24 hours to pass, when every imagination and every thought becomes out of control and the insides becomes like a sinking ship. When nothing makes sense anymore and you feel like you are barely holding it together.

The hardest part is to take the first step away from this dark pit of emotions, but when you take that first step you see that the only way forward is to surrender and feel everything that hurts, accept your loss and collect the courage to start your journey towards a divine light.

Because healing doesn't begin in escape—it begins when you decide to face the depth of your sorrow and sit with it, not as a victim, but as a witness to your own story. You begin to accept your loss, the broken pieces of your past, the moments that shattered you—and in doing so, you begin to rebuild yourself from within into someone stronger and softer.

And as you rise, you begin to see that even the darkest night must eventually give way to the brightest light. This not just makes you brave, but gives you a perspective to see the world and life beautifully and value it even more. This light becomes an anchor to

your life ahead, your constant reminder that you *can* and *will* find joy again, telling you to always listen to your heart, learn and go after what makes you the most alive.

Believe that your story isn't over. That your best days aren't behind you, but just ahead—waiting with open arms.

Brightness of the Dark

When darkness falls and hope feels gone,
it's like breathing a battle, each day drags on.
The silence echoes, the heart stands still,
Survival becomes the strength of will.

The world shrinks down to a quiet fight,
A fragile life without its light.
But in this bleak and shadowed land,
A truth still reaches out its hand.

To move ahead is to begin—
The only way is from within.

This darkness, darkness everywhere,
but not mighty than the God
with spiritual grace on your side.
Need not frighten a lot.

Speak gently, heart, and name your pain,
In truth begins your healing gain.
For even sorrow holds its fire,
To forge resilience, to lift you higher.

This season fades, as all things do,
Making way for life anew.

Chapter 19

Nothing is forever, every phase, every up and down of life passes with time. When life brings constant changes and everything feels beyond your control—when the noise outside turns into a storm within—hope can begin to fade. In those moments, self-doubt creeps in quietly, and confidence fractures like glass under pressure. You start to question everything: your path, your worth, your strength. But sometimes, in the thickest part of the dark, a single glimmer appears—small, almost forgettable, yet unmistakably there. And that glimmer? *That's hope.*

It reminds you, in the softest voice, that even this—especially this—will pass. Because hope isn't weakness. It's the bravest thing we can carry when the world feels too heavy to hold.

Hope

The sun was setting far away,
Leaving its crimson to spill behind
But it faded—oh, it faded quick,
triggering doubts, both deep and blind.

As Uncertainty began to creep,
sky azured, no ground to keep.
The world grew dim, a quiet night—
Not just outside, but out went light.

But as the dark began to grow,
A glimmer sparked, a subtle glow.
I caught one of its glimmers and held it tight,
A fragile flame against the night.

For even flickers,
Can carry hope,
don't ever call it small,
It's strong enough to stand through all.

I was beside the casted shadows
and felt the shift at the break of dawn.
And in that moment, so pure, so right,
there I knew, I was standing in the light.

Chapter 20

In a world that's always rushing—faster, louder, busier—it's easy to forget to pause.

We move so quickly that we rarely stop to ask ourselves a simple question: *What truly brings me joy?*

I believe that life has its own way of guiding us to where we're meant to be. But the real journey? That's inward. It's your responsibility to know your own heart. Because no matter how far you run, peace won't come from the outside—it lives within you.

Pauses in life shouldn't only happen when we burn out or fall ill. They are meant to recharge us, to realign us, and to remind us what it feels like to actually live. If something drains your energy, it's probably not meant for you. But here's the thing—recognizing that requires stillness. It requires tuning in to your energy, to your intuition. After all, before you say a single word, your aura is already speaking volumes.

Life isn't just about achieving. It's about feeling. It's about watching the clouds take forms, enjoying a sunset, dancing in the kitchen, laughing with someone you love, exploring nature. We were made to connect—to bond, to belong. Isolation goes against the very design of a human being.

So, ask yourself this:

What's the smallest thing that makes you smile? Pause and sit with this thought.

Are you truly living... or just existing?

What belief, what mindset, could you shift today to let in more light, more joy?

Because at the end of the day, it's not about what you've earned—it's about what you've felt. Peace doesn't live in your possessions; it lives in your pulse.

For me, it's the smell of the first rain— and every rain that comes unannounced.

That scent? That moment? That's when I know I am living.

Little Things

Hearing it beat on the windows and doors
Shining drops on the morning floor
I ran towards the brightest thread
To hear their stories, in tune, unsaid

March brought spring, and the flowers grew,
Now poised to gleam in morning dew.
How lovely, fresh this picturesque
Vibrant, green, in their deepest hues

The warm, sweet mix of petrichor
Slowed time—it rushed no more.
I sat in stillness below the pouring sky
And I poured my heart, likewise

I was drenched in her, she slowly healed
Bleeding scars, that were concealed.
Now Until the time she visits again
Happiness to me will smell like Rain.

Chapter 21

Ever get that weird gut feeling when something just *doesn't* sit right? Like your stomach tightens up, your energy shifts, and suddenly, it's like your inner voice is screaming at you—"do this" or "don't go there." I've felt it more times than I can count, and honestly, I think it's one of the most underrated superpowers we have—especially women.

Call it intuition, sixth sense, or just a vibe—but it's *real*. Like when you meet someone and just *know* whether they're good for you or not. Or when you're traveling and a place gives off that "not safe" energy. Most of the time, it turns out our gut was spot on.

But here's the catch: the times I ignored that voice? Yeah, didn't end well. That's why I've learned (sometimes the hard way) to trust it more than anything else. It feels almost magical—like some divine warning system built into us. Whether it's God's way of protecting us or just a gift of deeply tuned senses, I've learned this: intuition is never random.

It's there for a reason. And listening to it? That's self-protection at its finest.

Always Listen to Your Intuition

Feeble, fleeting, yet flawlessly clear—
She whispers truth for those who hear.
she creates music, twist and swirl
Like tip-taps of a happy girl.

She forces the insides to dance,
Until her message gets a chance
To be heard, and to be understood
she forges the line of bad and good

Do I trust her voice, or let it fade?
I wonder what call I should make.
A well-wisher, divine and deep
She barely stays, no message repeats

Who is she? If not heavenly
Blesses with bliss, best and bravery.
Lives within me, a part so pure
Comes whenever I need to be sure.

Chapter 22

Aren't we all just trying to find ourselves? Every one of us is searching—for purpose, for direction, for meaning. We want to know why we're here, what our future holds, and deep down, none of us really wants to be the "bad guy" in someone else's story.

We strive to be good—maybe the best in the room, or at the very least, not the worst. And in doing so, we act based on what we *believe* is right. We shape our behaviour, and sometimes even bend our thoughts, to align with our sense of self. We justify our actions—not always because they're perfect, but because we need to believe we *meant well*. It helps us hold onto our self-confidence, our self-respect.

Eventually, we cross paths with others who think like us. But it all makes me wonder:

What is real righteousness?

What if the path that feels easy and "right" is only so because it's familiar?

And what happens if, one day, everything we believe is challenged?

That's why it's powerful to be your own critic. Not the harsh kind—just someone who checks in, reflects,

refines and filters thoughts. That's what self-improvement really is. It's like a form of meditation—staying aware, conscious, and curious about who you are and who you're becoming.

The poem below invites you to do just that: To question your path, your truth, and what *righteousness* really means—to *you*.

Are You a Good Person?

Hey!

What does it take to be good man?
Your precious gems? No, nothing other than
A simpler, softer, sweeter heart
Amidst the wretched world, alas!

How do you perceive this life you have?
A greater purpose, have you planned?
Deeper than a mere death,
To be kinder by every breath.
To lift another when one fall,
To answer mercy's quiet call,
To think not just of self alone.

thrive through love,
through sincere care
To extend hands, help and share
That's how people will remember you
Not by the brand of your shirts and shoes

Yet every act we choose to do
Is shaped by what we hold as true.
But truth, elusive, wears disguise—
What's right for one may not be wise.

So now what, how do we realise,
What's good, what's bad in all eyes?

Hold on, and see through others' pain;
Let judgment yield, by one's own grace.
For goodness walks a winding way,
Not carved in stone, but made each day.

So, question again to yourself at last
Do you have a gentle heart?

Chapter 23

Keeping a journal is one of the most effective ways to navigate the emotional storms we all face. It helps us process our thoughts and find clarity. When we write with positivity, we imprint that same energy onto our hearts, making it easier to find a smile—even in the midst of an inner struggle.

Do you keep a diary? Or have ever tried to maintain one? If so, you'll know that some days of your life are captured on those pages more vividly than in your own memory. A diary becomes a time capsule, gently carrying you back to both your happiest and hardest moments.

Grief is at times difficult to voice in words, but hands—they still remember how to speak. That's why my diary has become my constant. I carry it with me even when I have nothing to write, even on vacations, not because I may need to hold a grip of my emotions, but because I need to feel safe, and to have a companion that's a part of my journey, this way I know I am carrying myself wherever I go authentically with all the bruises and scars on me.

These pages offer a kind of safety and compassion I can't always find elsewhere. My emotions slip freely between the lines, unjudged and unfiltered. No one watches, no

one interrupts, while the pages quietly absorb every tear.
That's where calm begins for me.

And sometimes, even when I wish I could open up to
someone, I hold back — because what I place inside the
chest of my diary feels too heavy for another heart to
carry.

Dear Diary

The grief grips the neck too tight
Wired tongue drips bleeding words,
Misunderstood in stuttering voice
Like trying to fly in a cage of birds

Easier hence is to move with choice
Without implying the grief on world
Writing ink between the lines
And hiding emotions through wet words

Constant friend, sitting in a pocket
Or sometime spying through the purse
That's how I regulate, the uncontrollable
Penning thoughts, from bad to worse

My diary of yellow recycled pages,
is heavier than my chest
Like a person carrying secrets in verses
It's on a long vacation with no rest

Chapter 24

Have you ever dropped a loved one at a train station? Watching someone you love disappear into the distance? It doesn't hit you at first. There's conversation, maybe a hurried embrace, a soft smile trying to mask the ache beneath. You wave, they wave back — and then the train pulls away.

That's when it happens.

The stillness.

The silence.

The space they once occupied — now just air.

It's strange, how the response to it doesn't arrive with the goodbye, but with the sound of wheels clattering over tracks. Even if you were to run after the train, chasing with all your might, what would it change? Some departures aren't meant to be undone.

People board trains every day — toward new cities, new dreams, new versions of themselves. And sometimes, they don't take you with them. Not out of cruelty, but necessity. They see something ahead. A life. A chance. A purpose. And while you may not understand their reasons, that's the thing about life — it unfolds even when we don't have the full picture.

Our Pieces That Remain

Each person who walks into your life is like a fellow traveller. They arrive at your platform at just the right time. Others get off early, leaving behind only memories and a seat you'll keep glancing at long after they're gone.

Remember that their station, their stop was never your destination. They were part of the journey — not the whole of it.

You learn to carry people in your heart, even if they're no longer in your compartment. You learn that every pause had a purpose, and every presence is a lesson.

Your life is a train racing forward, making unexpected stops along the way. You can't control the speed. You can't always choose who gets on or off. Sometimes, it races so fast, you barely get to say goodbye.

All you can do is keep moving, even towards the unknown. And one day, at the next platform, someone else will join — right on time, maybe to stay forever.

Heartbreaks and Departures

When someone leaves midway,
and even after promises to stay,
You could chase them, but it's far too late,
Some doors close — that's just fate.
They leave for dreams you may not see,
To the path unknown,
You let them be!

Like a departing train, when the engine moans,
And you find yourself suddenly alone.
They came like dawn, warm and bright,
Shared your seat through day and night.
reminiscence of talks and greatest glees
when they separate,
You let them be!

Laughed through storms, calmed your fears,
Then left in silence, no souvenirs.
Sometimes you're left on the platform cold,
Watching stories quietly unfold.
and sometimes you're the one who leaves.
so with heavy heart and quiet sleeve.
You let them be!

But grace still lingers in the ache,
In every bend the life take.

Our Pieces That Remain

Life doesn't pause or hesitate —
It moves ahead, won't wait.
Live the moments then set them free,
To anyone you once loved,
You let them be!

Chapter 25

Sometimes, our emotions get so intense and tangled that we don't even recognize ourselves. It's like we're speaking a language we can't translate, and no matter how hard we try, we can't seem to make others understand. In the midst of this confusion, we end up feeling alone, even when we're surrounded by people who care. Until we figure it out for ourselves, the disconnect feels like a quiet isolation that's hard to escape.

As the silence stretches, we long for connection, for someone to hear us, to see the storm within and not shy away. But until we understand ourselves, how can we expect others to?

When Words Fall Short

He had the foreign tone
Unknown words, unknown voice
Small with expressing eyes
Talking,
Yet failed to reach
Heart to heart
the people around, frowning each
with a sense of neglect
and unbothered to his speech.
Cried, smiled, frustrated then scared
But no one who saw him seemed to care.
Which language to speak?
How many doors to push open to creak
for a human sound to pass through
the gentle hearts of a few?
Sitting amongst the yelling folks,
While the burning thoughts silently smokes
At times the words fails to preach
What a simple gesture could teach.
And yet some choose to look away
Fast, and Unconcerned
Closed eyes
during the day.
How will he then reach his home,
No one to direct
The boy from a land unknown.

Jyoti Srivastav

Isolated, Struggling,
Alone in the walk
Just in search of someone to talk.

More than Words

This might be a short book, but the experiences packed into these pages run deep and wide. Every poem in here comes from something real — memories, emotions, and lessons that life insisted I learn, sometimes the hard way.

A few of these pieces were inspired by prompts from close friends — “Here and Now,” “Attachments,” “Smile” — thank you for pushing me to write beyond my comfort zone and for asking questions that made me reflect more deeply.

I’ve been writing since school, for all kinds of reasons — to make sense of what I was feeling, to hold on to moments, or sometimes just to let them go. “Brightness of the Dark” began its first version during my early college days, and many of the poems here were shaped by my personal experiences since 2021. The rest followed naturally, whenever words found their way to me, and finally these words have found a way to you too.

A huge thanks to my friends, who constantly asked, “Have you written anything new lately?” — you didn’t let me stop. And to my sister, for always being there in the background with silent encouragement. And most of all, thank you to the readers, for picking this book up and sticking with it till the end.

Jyoti Srivastav

These 25 poems were written straight from the heart. I chose them carefully, hoping they'll offer something meaningful – a little comfort, a little perspective, or just enough light to help you turn – *to the next page* in your own life.

Thank you.
