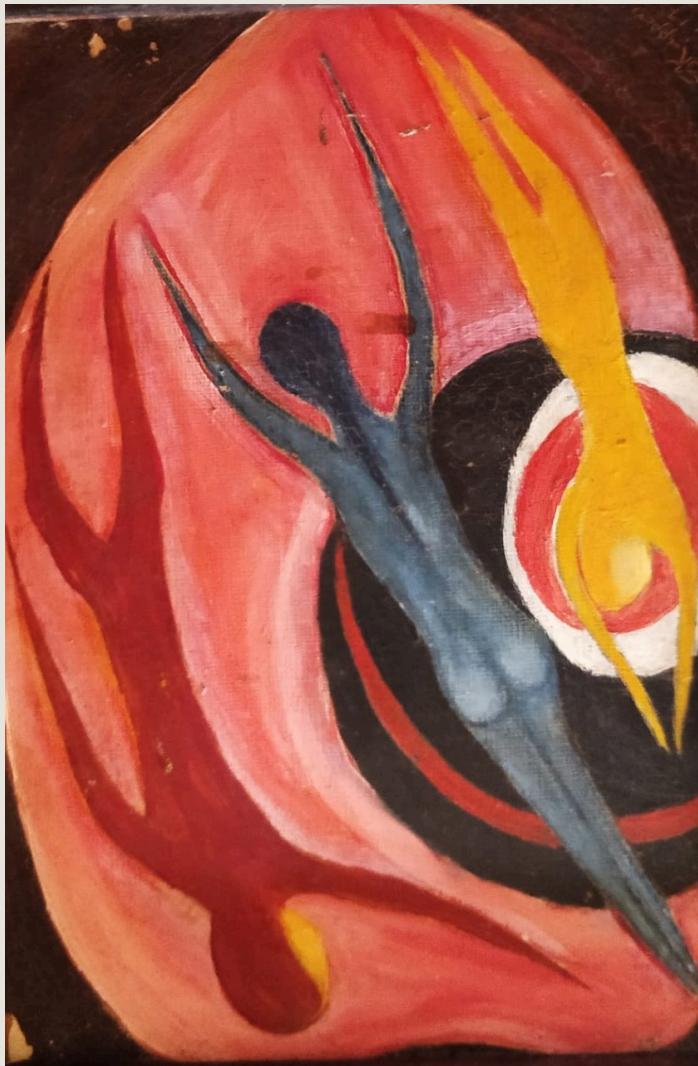


# The Journey is All Supreme



A Chronicle of Soul-  
Searching, Struggle,  
and Ceaseless Discovery

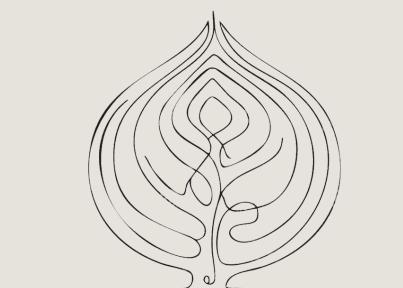
David Selvaraj



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*A Chronicle of Soul-Searching,  
Struggle, and Ceaseless Discovery*

David Selvaraj



# The Journey is All Supreme

*A Chronicle of Soul-Searching, Struggle,  
and Ceaseless Discovery*

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Cover Art: Painting by S. Kappen  
Compiled and Edited by: Mercy Kappen

# Contents

## Foreword

1. The Interplay.....	9
2. Dance and the Dancer.....	10
3. I AM.....	12
4. Radiant Glow.....	15
5. The Voyage.....	17
6. Psalm of the Ravine.....	18
7. Fragments.....	19
8. The Burden of Being.....	20
9. Enabler.....	21
10. Ceaseless Discovery.....	22
11. Victims of Culture.....	23
12. Radiant Ascent.....	24
13. Inspiration.....	25
14. The Journey.....	26
15. Magic of the Rain.....	27
16. Splendour and Grace.....	28
17. God of Profit.....	29
18. Paradise Almost Lost.....	30
19. A Weaver's Prayer.....	31
20. Imprints.....	32
21. On Becoming.....	33





# Foreword

It is with sincere appreciation that I introduce the powerful collection of poetry, *The Journey is All-Supreme*, by David Selvaraj. It invites the reader into a profound and turbulent dance of existence. The title itself, drawn from the poem "The Journey," acts as the book's core idea: that life's meaning is found not in arrival, but in the ceaseless discovery and enduring movement between life's extremes.

## Cosmic Interplay and The Divine

This collection boldly explores a landscape of fundamental contrasts. The opening poem, "The Interplay," celebrates the harmonious, enlivening interplay of cosmic forces. Here the universe's order (Planets, Yin and Yang) stands in awe of the "fierce radiance of love". This theme quickly evolves in "The Dance." In it the divine figure shifts from a destructive, consuming force of fire to a graceful, serene, and nurturing Creator, ultimately beckoning the observer to join the rhythm and realize that "the Dancer, and the dance were You, Lord". Later, "Splendour and Grace" revisits this duality by expressing profound gratitude to "HIM who is also HER", acknowledging the divine in both masculine and feminine forms.

## Social Critique and Spiritual Struggle

The focus then sharpens to critique the human condition. In "I AM," the divine presence is filled with sorrow, anger, and determination upon surveying an Earth savaged by human greed and 'development'. This intense rage initially seeks to purge creation, but it is eventually calmed—not by a grand power, but by the feeblest of fingers and the simple, innocent request of a child to launch a kite. This image anchors the collection in hope, suggesting that salvation lies in vulnerability and simple human connection. The social commentary deepens in "A Weaver's Prayer," which starkly contrasts the innocent faith of a child with the tragic reality of poverty and injustice, ending with the profound sorrow that "Jesus wept".

## The Journey and Resilience

Through these cosmic and social trials, a path toward resilience emerges. Poems like "The Voyage" explore feelings of betrayal and being tossed out, yet conclude with a focus on cycles of creation and renewal. The ravine of life, explored in "Psalm of the Ravine" and "Fragments," is initially dark and lonely. However, it transforms into a place that provides the perspective needed to gaze upon the "grandeur of the mountains". This vision is sustained by invigorating "Inspiration", which is felt in the powerful forces of nature—the cloud, the fire, the breeze—and is ultimately "enfleshed in you".

*The Journey is All-Supreme* is a testament to resilience, a raw confrontation with global and personal demons. It is also a poetic affirmation that by accepting the full spectrum of the journey—the light and the darkness, the dance and the ravine—we find our ultimate purpose. The collection culminates with "Imprints," a recognition that all of life's experiences, both virtuous and vicious, leave their indelible mark. The poems gathered in this collection are a profound, decades-long chronicle of one person's soul-searching. To have unearthed these poems, written over three decades by the author, and to be able to present them now as a coherent collection is an immense joy. On the occasion of his 70th birthday, I offer this volume as a heartfelt gift—a testament to a lifetime of deep observation, relentless questioning, and unwavering commitment to the supreme journey itself.

Mercy Kappen  
(Fellow Traveller)



# 1. The Interplay

The Planets  
In their orbit  
They blush  
And gleam,  
Mystified  
Yet envious  
Of the splash  
Of colours,  
The fierce radiance  
Of love.

Yin and Yang  
Seemed in awe  
Of the swirling light  
Of the unending,  
Enlivening interplay.

The lights of Deepavali  
Faded  
In the background,  
As the chakras,  
The sparklers,  
And the 'Vanam'  
All together,  
In unison,  
Lent power  
To the festival—  
A festival of victory,  
Victory of light over darkness.

The all-embracing  
Yin  
Permitted  
All,  
Within and beyond,  
To come  
And join  
In the mystery  
Of many colours.



## 2. Dance and the Dancer

Lord,  
I came to the dance.  
Dazed by its splendour,  
mesmerized by the Dancer.  
Uplifted, humbled, and crushed.

Lord,  
I stayed with the dance.  
In awe and in fear,  
I sat still, captivated.  
The fire in his eyes—  
the beat of the drums.  
He stamped, he thundered,  
he roared, spitting out fire,  
destroying, consuming, destroying.  
By his presence, by his dance,  
the demons, the many demons, fell.

But Lord, I stayed with the dance.  
Petrified,  
fighting back the bile,  
I stayed with the dance.

And then,  
as if satiated by the destruction,  
the Dancer emerged,  
a new Avatar.  
Loving, caressing, serene,  
graceful—ah, so graceful,  
creating with every flick of her fingers.



The embodiment of love,  
drawing one and all to her bosom,  
caressing, nurturing, caring.  
And I swayed to her rhythm,  
engulfed by her love.  
Soothed by the calm,  
lost in wonder and in praise,  
I felt a nudge—it was the Dancer  
beckoning, beckoning, beckoning me  
to join in the dance.

As if in a dream,  
one hesitant foot followed the other,  
faltering at first,  
confident with each subsequent step.  
But move I did,  
for choice I had none.  
With the beat of the drum,  
the scales fell off.

My entire being awakened.  
Moving in a frenzy,  
keeping pace with the Dancer.  
For it was then that I realized  
the rhythm,  
the Dancer,  
and the dance  
were You, Lord.  
The Creator and Creation  
merging as one,  
inviting me to the Dance—  
BEHOLD, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW.



### 3. I AM

From the nadir of the cosmos, I AM arose.  
In the twinkling of an eye,  
hundreds of human years had gone by.

Surveying the globe,  
the penetrating eyes turned red—  
in sorrow, anger, and determination.  
The earth lay savaged by drought and deforestation,  
but the humans continued their gang rape, unsatiated.  
Holes in the ozone layer big enough to swallow the earth.

I AM glared at the humans,  
riding on metallic bees,  
several in the cause of "saving" souls and the Earth.  
Creatures covered in foam floated on their watery grave,  
blissfully unaware of the obnoxious stench.

The waters, ceaseless in their mission,  
cleansed the effluence of the "Modern Day Temples"  
in which I AM refused to Dwell.  
In the name of I AM, "the crusades" continued unabated.  
With religious fervour,  
Presidents knelt before altars,  
seeking Divine sanction to annihilate.

"This is the worst distortion of myself," cried, I AM.  
"This demon must be exorcised."  
Aroused, and preparing to purge creation,  
I AM heard the choruses:  
Hum Honge Kaama Yaab!  
'Inquilab Zindabad!'  
'Kohi Nahi Hatega Baand Nahi Banega!'  
'Hum Honge Kama Yaab!'

It was the Remnant, the periphery,  
who wrote the lyrics and the score.  
The sound swelled up to the heavens.  
Calm, I AM stood riveted.  
Other voices, carried by the WIND:  
"How long, O Lord?"  
"I have been up to the mountain top  
and there I had a dream."  
"Not one man, one vote, but one man, one value."  
"Personal is Political."

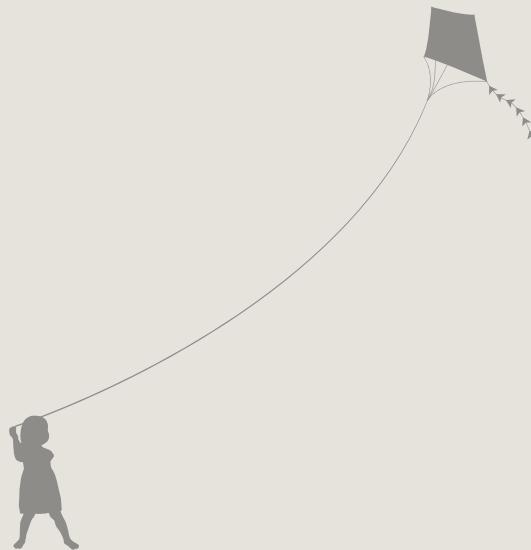
Nurtured by the hope of these voices,  
I AM, firm in resolve, began to believe in themself.  
This time the pupils swam in moistness.  
Suddenly, and before the eyes, fell those who sang  
and those who "dreamt with open eyes."  
Felled by assassins' bullets, one after the other they fell,

The earth quaked, as I AM stomped  
over White Houses and Cathedrals,  
Corporate offices and Satellite centers.  
The dance had begun. There was no stopping.  
Negating the earlier cry, I AM screamed:  
**"IT IS NOT FINISHED!"**  
Down came the Kremlin, South Block,  
and the Tokyo Stock Exchange.  
Nostrils flared, eyes spitting fire,  
I AM ran amok until...



They felt the feeblest of fingers  
clasping "the mighty arm."  
It was a child, in the debris.  
As the volcanoes spewed deadly lava,  
I AM changed the rhythm of the Dance.  
"Help me launch the kite,"  
the child, with a colourful kite, invited the Dancer.

Rebuked and chastised,  
I AM learned to fly a kite,  
this time the salty flow down the cheeks was visible.  
As the kite fluttered, the colours remained vivid.  
Moist, vulnerable palms led the "mighty arm,"  
together searching...



## 4. Radiant Glow

Claws  
dripping in blood,  
they continued  
gleefully to feed on  
each other's entrails,  
periodically gloating  
over their victories.

Relentlessly bleary-eyed,  
amid the din  
and the clamour,  
from dust to dawn  
and again.

Drowning the din,  
blending with the clamour,  
the commercials  
peddled their wares:  
PRIDE and ENVY.

"PEACE ON EARTH."  
Confused,  
the beasts in the ring  
continued.  
It was for Peace  
they battered and  
ripped each other apart.

The Demonic One  
baited the other.  
In the name of understanding,  
the demon tormented  
the Chaste One.

Fear of being consumed  
prevented the demon  
and the chaste one  
from looking at the glow.

Adorned in her Truth,  
the Chaste One condemned  
the demon of debauchery,  
betrayal, and insanity.

The Demonic One sat—  
nay, crouched—  
and glared.  
The Chaste One,  
in the name of her truth,  
confessed and called  
on the Divine  
as her ultimate witness.

"PEACE ON EARTH."  
This time it was not  
the commercial.  
The choir of the periphery  
and in their midst,  
a Radiant Glow.  
Their toil was  
a labour of peace.  
The Periphery continued  
chastising  
without intending to.  
The Radiant Glow scorched  
both the Chaste  
and the Demonic

Beaten but chastised,  
the Demon, in a whimper,  
said to the Chaste One:  
"Blood is not fun.  
I tried to stop...  
I failed.

And the crowds  
around the ring  
cheered, even feared,  
as the fighters  
lay exhausted  
from their fight for peace.

Betrayed and enraged,  
the chaste one cried:  
"Not enough,  
you insane demon!  
God will judge you!"

The glow reddened,  
and the fire  
consumed the demon.  
Only ashes remained.

In triumph,  
the chaste one stood  
stupefied.  
Tears rolled down,  
making a pattern  
on the ashes.



The Glow remained aloof,  
and the angelic voices whispered:  
"Joy to the world,  
the Demon is slain."

## 5. The Voyage

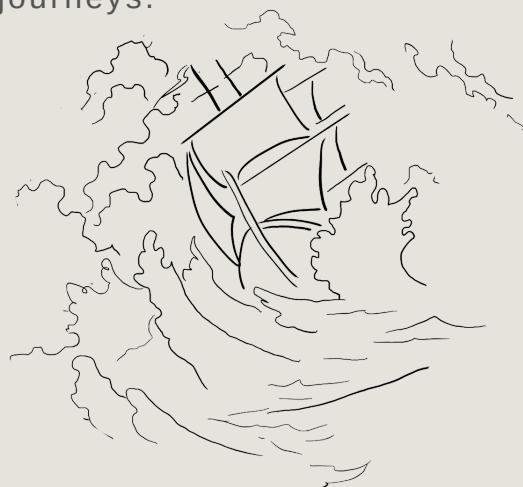
Tossed out of the boat  
and into the storm.  
Clinging on to the boat,  
which had weathered many a storm,  
I was tossed out, beaten and weary.

I came to rest,  
conscious of the raging winds,  
but yearning for the timber of the boat.

I came to be told: "You do not deserve her."  
Refusing to budge,  
I pleaded, I panicked.  
But mercilessly I was tossed out,  
with a promise: "I'll pray for you."  
I was chilled by the coldness of the promise.

Refusing to kick, I realized  
that in tossing me out,  
the place in the boat was prepared for  
another.

One day,  
in a land of mystery and magic,  
in the glow of dusk, a boat was built.  
It sailed many oceans, on many journeys.  
It weathered many a storm,  
until the craftsman doomed it  
and built another boat.



## 6. Psalm of the Ravine

My father urged and prompted,  
The text Psalm 23.  
I wondered why.  
It dawned on me:  
the valley of the shadow of death  
was an everyday experience.

The ravine of life  
gives me perspective  
to gaze upon the grandeur of the mountains.

As I look to the hills  
I recognize this is where my help comes from,  
I am able to continue in the ravine.

I am surprising myself  
in asking if you would receive  
my symbols of yesterday and today,  
a token of my frailty,  
my diminishing sense of romance,  
but certainly  
a symbol of consistency  
in an ever-changing world.



## 7. Fragments

In an attempt to heal myself,  
I once again plunge into a ravine.  
It is dark, but not strange.  
Lonely, but hopeful.

Other such ravines—  
dark, but always a light;  
a microscopic illumination  
which grows larger and bigger  
until you are finally engulfed by it.

This ravine of ours  
is fraught with memories,  
and we must let the dead find their own peace,  
respecting that past part of us.



## 8. The Burden of Being

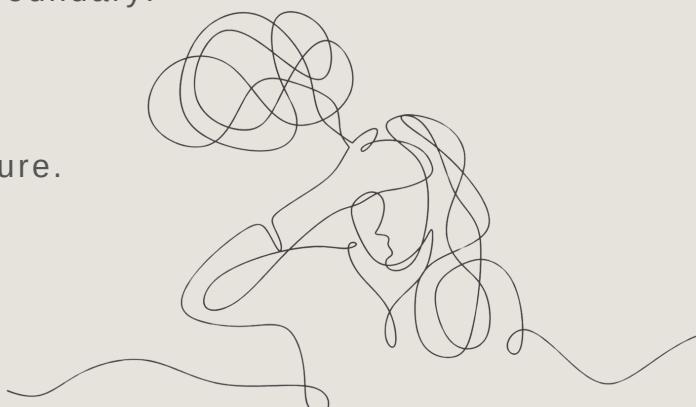
Overworked, I ask,.  
Why?  
I mistake capacity for worth  
Taking on too much.  
And why this self-affliction?  
Materialism's ghost—  
The fear of lack.  
But deeper still...  
'A Saviour' complex—  
To find self-proof in others' need.

I am overworked.  
Why does this cycle bind me?  
The Erosion of the Collective  
The failure of the team  
to shoulder shared weight.

But why is their burden mine?  
The Dissonance of the Human Contract  
A mismatch of assigned role and actual ability.

I am exhausted.  
Is it the Spiritual Inertia—  
My own inability to draw the boundary.  
My own internal resistance  
to radical self-liberation.  
The chains are not of iron,  
but of my own ego's architecture.

I simply want to live



## 9. A Ceaseless Discovery

Life, a passion—  
A ceaseless discovery.  
Together  
On a camel's back,  
Traversing arid desert sands,  
With the sun on your back,  
And love in your heart.

Swaying  
To the gentle breezes,  
The gods rode  
At a camel's pace,  
Bronzed bodies  
Glistening in the sun.

One with the forces,  
Passionate in thought,  
The gods swirled around.  
His countenance  
Reflected the swelling,  
As he continued to gaze—  
“The face that launched  
A thousand ships”  
Beamed with the sun's rays.

Her bosom swelling,  
She arose.  
The roughness  
Of the camel's hide,  
The scent  
Of burning desert sands,  
Aided the urgency  
Of the gods.

Repeatedly, passionately,  
They discovered the  
Mystery and wonder of life—  
A life of passion,  
Visible in the flesh  
And through the Journey.

Thank God for camels  
Who enable us discover  
Life and the compulsion  
of Journey.



## 10. The Journey

She sails with dignity,  
battered but with dignity.  
She sails with sophistication:  
not of technology, but integrity.

She sails to destinies unknown.  
She sails because of the sailors.  
She sails despite the sailors.

She sails mysteriously.  
She sails magically,  
possessed, provoked.  
She sails knowingly.  
She sails with the colours  
of the rainbow.  
She sails, knowing  
that the journey is all-supreme.



## 11. Victims of Culture

As vagabonds, we travel,  
a tireless, turning quest to sojourn...  
where the path, unbound, may lead,  
for the journey is all-supreme.

The wheel in furious,  
relentless friction with the earth,  
a spirit grinding, against the dust of ages—  
oblivious to the common grime,  
feeling only the transient warmth of the now,  
the sheer presence of the universe  
pressed upon the soul.  
Daring the void.

Without the compass-guide of fixed pole,  
or the tether of the dogma, a deep,  
universal yearning persists,  
ignoring the world's prying stares  
that seek, in vain, to cage Beauty.  
Lovers of Beauty, Victims of Culture.



## 12. Radiant Ascent

She rose before the sun;  
she fled to worship.

We fell silent  
in her radiant presence.

In awe, we waited,  
waiting to be consumed.

The splash of waves against the rock  
a further CALL to worship.

Awed, we mounted the surge;  
high, high, higher.

Uncaring for the spray,  
carried by the passion and fury  
of the waves in worship.

We sped into the dusk,  
brimming with feverish expectation,  
engulfed by her subtle majesty.



## 13. Inspiration

Inspiration,  
a cloud descending  
softly blankets me.

Inspiration,  
a consuming fire sharpens  
and sets me ablaze.

Inspiration,  
a gentle breeze that elevates me.

Inspiration,  
a perfect rainbow that bursts  
and brightens me.

Inspiration,  
the quiet dusk  
that deepens and mellows me.

Inspiration,  
like a first journey  
into the wide unknown, enlivens me.

Inspiration, enfleshed in you,  
invigorates me.

Be then my inspiration  
as we continue this journey—  
for inspiration, like the night, mystifies us.



## 14. Labour Rooted in Love

The passion of lovers ,  
the commitment of workers  
The fruit borne speaks volumes  
for the tree rooted in love  
Who will count the scores,  
nay hundreds of fruits,  
plucked, tasted and savoured?

Love, solidarity  
Joining hands  
Believing only in the struggle  
We gently, reverentially offer  
the fruits of our love and toil.

...

But will they last for eternity?  
Guided by the unseen hand  
the best we can do is offer our spirits  
To be carried by the WIND

This we do with workers the world over,  
today and each May Day



## 15. Magic of the Rain

The fragrance  
of the first few drops  
filled my nostrils  
and drew me  
to my window.

Interspersed  
with the pitter-patter  
of the now increasing downpour  
I heard the thunder  
and remained at my window,  
watching,  
waiting,  
and gazing at  
the gathering grey clouds  
and the magic of the rain.

Now, with the rain,  
as I stand by my window,  
I am transported in time.  
Not so long ago,  
to another window.  
Watching the rain,  
feeling its freshness.  
Caring, caressing, and loving,  
by the window  
with the magic of the rain.

Will that moment return  
to my window today?  
Will the memory nest  
its peace on my heart  
in silence,  
in reverence,  
in awe  
of the magic of the rain?



## 16. Splendour and Grace

The week is gone,  
Glorious,  
Full of splendor and grace.  
Spiced with fear and anticipation,  
We devoured each moment.

Memories,  
All of splendour and grace,  
Overflowing.  
Conscious of the beauty,  
Conscious of the grace,  
I turn to HIM who is also HER,  
Awed by Their splendour and grace.

My head bowed,  
My face lifted to the skies,  
I taste the saltiness  
As dampness touches my cheek,  
My gratitude finds expression  
Because of Their splendour and grace.

"Thank you for the light,  
Thank you for the now",  
I say to Them:  
Your spirit protected me,  
Your grace enveloped me,  
Your power renewed and refreshed me.

The week is gone,  
Glorious,  
Full of memories  
Of splendour and grace.  
But will there be another?



## 17. God of Profit

Life's identity Is determined  
By cold codes and formulas—

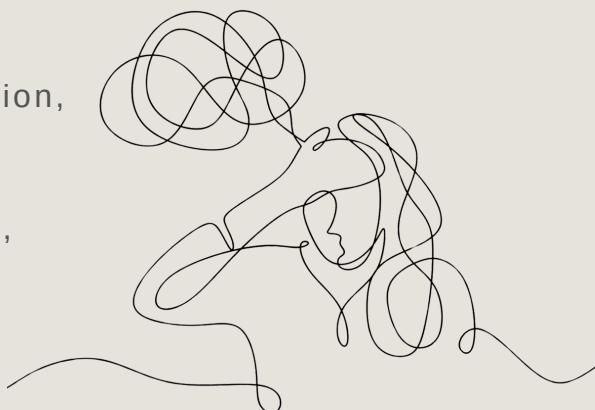
Where precision and Objectivity Watch  
the kingdom of Productivity, Where the  
God of Profit  
Reigns supreme—

Riddled with confusion, I squirm,  
For I am only human,  
And this my only crime.

The future's ambiguities,  
Coupled with torment and envy,  
And impotence growing deep inside.  
I pour out my confusion—  
A pure folly.

If 'Analysis'  
Be folly, so be it— a  
But the cold, dispassionate kind  
Is not my cup.

For as I walk  
Through the valley of confusion,  
With envy and guilt,  
My self-imposed tormentors,  
Analysis, and analysis alone,  
is my staff.



## 18. Paradise Almost Lost

In the deep garden's peace,  
The first humans communed,  
And paradise was born.

They shed their fear, unmasked,  
Feeding on fruit,  
And on the nectar of each other.

In opening the gates of Paradise,  
The humans demonized themselves.  
The ritual of love turned sour  
In a repeated dance of death.  
“Perhaps,” said one shadow-human  
to the other,  
“The problem lies with  
this ‘devouring’  
For in it burns the raw passion  
Of both life and death.”

“But” confessed the confused,  
Reflective one,  
“We have surely lost paradise.”  
“Yes,” the other replied,  
“But did not someone write,  
‘Paradise Regained’?”

“Yes, but when?”  
“Shhh,” the first whispered back,  
Weary, sheepish.  
They shimmered there,  
yearning to be human,  
To be touched,  
In search of that lost Paradise.

The palms sway gently,  
Responding to the silent  
breeze.

The plant has flowered now.  
The bud, full, waits only  
To burst forth.

The air, so sweet,  
Tickles your cheek,  
A bounty and a grace  
That reminds you of her.

In anticipation,  
I let myself be filled  
With images:  
Provocative, penetrating,  
pregnant.  
Memories,  
Unbelievable,  
Painful, impossible.



## 19. A Weaver's Prayer

Eyes wrinkled,  
Palms together,  
On a lyrical note:  
"Thank you, God,  
for the food we eat.  
Thank you, God,  
for the birds that sing.  
Thank you, God,  
for everything,"

Out of the mouth of  
Babes and infants,  
Every morning.

The spirit is  
Awakened.  
Ah, echoes  
North and East,  
West and South.  
Ah, the lyrics,  
The melody, and  
The posture—  
Taking my name  
Not in vain,  
Not a pretence,  
No gain.  
Ah, sweet child,  
I have come.

For this, that, and more,  
For everything,  
Thank you and thank you—  
For land and soil  
Despite the poisoning.  
For women, children, and men  
Who cannot eat with me—  
Farmers and peasants.  
Why do they kill them?  
And again,  
Thank you for everything,  
And Jesus wept.



## 20. Imprints

Decades deep,  
Everywhere, always.  
The rising sun—  
His glory, his radiance—  
A bursting faith.  
Passion heightened  
As he bursts through,  
Dispelling darkness,  
Ushering in light.  
Imprints,  
Everywhere, always.

Not an academic discussion.  
Not reification.  
Not resurrection.  
An experience—  
A lived experience, not talk—  
Leaving its Imprints,  
Everywhere, always.

Enhancing passion,  
Compassionate wisdom,  
A fierce challenge to purify,  
Exorcising with a fury.  
But always, leaving imprints,  
Everywhere, always.

Ram Shankar or Ustad—  
A stillness in the raga.  
Tagore, Kappen, Gandhi—  
A commitment to perceive  
The unifying character in people.

Imprints,  
Everywhere, always.  
On muddy pools,  
Under shady trees,  
In the cool of the valley,  
Under the blue of the skies  
—  
Imprints,  
Singing to you,  
Screaming to you,  
Teasing you,  
Consoling you.

Imprints, sometimes  
Vicious, uncaring of impact,  
Sometimes violent,  
Caring only for self,  
Sometimes vile,  
Influenced by perception,  
Often unintended,  
But destructive to the core.

Yes, these too are imprints.

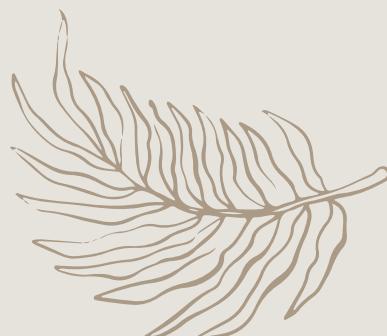


## 21. On Becoming

The Palms Sway,  
a slow response to the soft,  
gentle breeze.  
A testament to root and reach,  
To the silent wisdom of the Soil.  
We honour the deep cradle that holds us.  
The plant has flowered.  
The bud, now full and waiting,  
Knows only the moment before it bursts forth,  
A perfect pledge of growth,  
A brief, brilliant life delivered  
From the dark persistence of the Seed.  
We thank the slow, fierce force of becoming.

The breath that rises, the breath that returns,  
A constant, fluid flow with the heavens.  
The easy, endless current of the sky.  
The sacred pause before the wave,  
I let myself be filled—  
A vessel held beneath the great flow.  
A hidden fire that forges and refines.

All held, all accepted, all consecrated.  
The ceaseless, thankful cycling of the All.  
The palms still sway, and the world is still given.





## About the Author

**David Selvaraj** is an educationist and advocate for social justice in India. As the Founder and Executive Trustee of Visthar, he has dedicated decades to community-based advocacy for the rights of the marginalized, providing ethical leadership training, and engaging in organizational development across Asia and Europe. His professional journey is deeply rooted in social, ethical, and ecological issues.

This collection of poetry offers a unique and personal window into the philosophical and spiritual reflections that underpin his life's mission. Drawing on his rich background in Theology and Development Studies, Selvaraj's poetry serves as a powerful, contemplative expression of his commitment to human rights, his unwavering search for justice, and his sustained meditation on the complexities of the modern world.





