

Lyrical Poems



The Island Sun

*I have sailed the golden ocean
And crossed the silver bars,
I have reached the sun of knowledge
The earth-self's midnight star.*

*Its fields of flaming vision,
Its mountains of bare night,
Its peaks of fiery rapture,
Its air of absolute light,*

*Its seas of self-oblivion,
Its vales of Titan rest
Became my soul's dominion,
The Island of the Blest.*

*Alone with God and silence,
Familiar it lived in Time's
Life was. His fugue of music,
Thought was Time's ardent rhyme.*

*The lights were still around me
When I came back to earth
Bringing the immortal's knowledge
Into man's case of birth.*

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Sri Aurobindo

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One Day¹

The Little More

One day, and all the half-dead is done,
One day, and all the unborn begun;
A little path and the great goal,
A touch that brings the divine whole.

Hill after hill was climbed and now,
Behold, the last tremendous brow
And the great rock that none has trod:
A step, and all is sky and God.

In Horis Aeternum ²

A far sail on the unchangeable monotone of a slow slumbering sea,
A world of power hushed into symbols of hue, silent unendingly;
Over its head like a gold ball the sun tossed by the gods in their play
Follows its curve, — a blazing eye of Time watching the motionless day.

Here or elsewhere, — poised on the unreachable abrupt snow-solitary ascent
Earth aspiring lifts to the illimitable Light, then ceases broken and spent,
Or on the glowing expanse, arid, fiery and austere, of the desert's hungry soul, —
A breath, a cry, a glimmer from Eternity's face, in a fragment the mystic Whole.

Moment-mere, yet with all eternity packed, lone, fixed, intense,
Out of the ring of these hours that dance and die, caught by the spirit in sense,
In the greatness of a man, in music's outspread wings, in a touch, in a smile,
in a sound,
Something that waits, something that wanders and settles not, a Nothing that
was all and is found.

Trance³

A naked and silver-pointed star
 Floating near the halo of the moon;
A storm-rack, the pale sky's fringe and bar,
 Over waters stilling into swoon.

My mind is awake in stirless trance,
 Hushed my heart, a burden of delight;
Dispelled is the senses' flicker-dance,
 Mute the body aureate with light.

O star of creation pure and free,
 Halo-moon of ecstasy unknown,
Storm-breath of the soul-change yet to be,
 Ocean-self enraptured and alone!

The Bird of Fire ⁴

Gold-white wings a throb in the vastness, the bird of flame went glimmering
over a sunfire curve to the haze of the west,
Skimming, a messenger sail, the sapphire-summer waste of a soundless
wayless burning sea.
Now in the eve of the waning world the colour and splendour returning drift
through a blue-flicker air back to my breast,
Flame and shimmer staining the rapture-white foam-vest of the waters
of Eternity.

Gold-white wings of the miraculous bird of fire, late and slow have you come
from the Timeless. Angel, here unto me
Bringst thou for travailing earth a spirit silent and free or His crimson
passion of love divine, —
White-ray-jar of the spuming rose-red wine drawn from the vats brimming with
light-blaze, the vats of ecstasy,
Pressed by the sudden and violent feet of the Dancer in Time from his
sun-grape fruit of a deathless vine?

White-rose-altar the eternal Silence built, make now my nature wide, an intimate
guest of His solitude,
But golden above it the body of One in her diamond sphere with Her halo
of star-bloom and passion-ray!
Rich and red is thy breast, O bird, like blood of a soul climbing the hard crag-teeth
world, wounded and nude,

A ruby of flame-petalled love in the silver-gold altar-vase of moon-edged
night and rising day.

O Flame who art Time's last boon of the sacrifice, offering-flower held by the
finite's gods to the Infinite,
O marvel bird with the burning wings of light and the unbarred lids that
look beyond all space,
One strange leap of thy mystic stress breaking the barriers of mind and life,
arrives at its luminous term thy flight;
Invading the secret clasp of the Silence and crimson Fire thou frontest eyes
in a timeless Face.

Shiva⁵

The Inconscient Creator

A face on the cold dire mountain peaks
 Grand and still; its lines white and austere
Match with the unmeasured snowy streaks
 Cutting heaven, implacable and sheer.

Above it a mountain of matted hair
 Aeon-coiled on that deathless and lone head
In its solitude huge of lifeless air
 Round, above illimitably spread.

A moon-ray on the forehead, blue and pale,
 Stretched afar its finger of chill light
Illumining emptiness. Stern and male
 Mask of peace indifferent in might!

But out from some Infinite born now came
 Over giant snows and the still face
A quiver and colour of crimson flame,
 Fire-point in immensities of space.

Light-spear-tips revealed the mighty shape,
 Tore the secret veil of the heart's hold;
In that diamond heart the fires undrape,
 Living core, a brazier of gold.

This was the closed mute and burning source
 Whence were formed the worlds and their star-dance;
Life sprang a self-rapt inconscient Force,
 Love, a blazing seed, from that flame-trance.

The Life Heavens ⁶

A life of intensities wide, immune
 Floats behind the earth and her life-fret,
A magic of realms mastered by spell and rune,
 Grandiose, blissful, coloured, increate.

A music there wanders mortal ear
 Hears not, seizing, intimate, remote,
Wide-winged in soul-spaces, fire-clear,
 Heaping note on enrapturing new note.

Forms deathless there triumph, hues divine
 Thrill with nets of glory the moved air;
Each sense is an ecstasy, love the sign
 Of one outblaze of godhead that two share.

The peace of the senses, the senses' stir
 On one harp are joined mysteries; pain
Transmuted is ravishment's minister,
 A high note and a fiery refrain.

All things are a harmony faultless, pure;
 Grief is not nor stain-wound of desire;
The heart-beats are a cadence bright and sure
 Of Joy's quick steps, too invincible to tire.

A Will there, a Force, a magician Mind
 Moves, and builds at once its delight-norms,
The marvels it seeks for surprised, outlined,
 Hued, alive, a cosmos of fair forms,

Sounds, colours, joy-flamings. Life lies here
 Dreaming, bound to the heavens of its goal,
In the clasp of a Power that enthrals to sheer
 Bliss and beauty body and rapt soul.

My spirit sank drowned in the wonder surge:
 Screened, withdrawn was the greatness it had sought;
Lost was the storm-stress and the warrior urge,
 Lost the titan winging of the thought.

It lay at ease in a sweetness of heaven-sense
 Delivered from grief, with no need left to aspire,
Free, self-dispersed in voluptuous innocence,
 Lulled and borne into roseate cloud-fire.

But suddenly there soared a dateless cry,
 Deep as Night, imperishable as Time;
It seemed Death's dire appeal to Eternity,
 Earth's outcry to the limitless Sublime.

“O high seeker of immortality,
 Is there not, ineffable, a bliss
Too vast for these finite harmonies,
 Too divine for the moment’s unsure kiss?

“Arms taking to a voiceless supreme delight,
 Life that meets the Eternal with close breast,
An unvalled mind dissolved in the Infinite,
 Force one with unimaginable rest?

“I, Earth, have a deeper power than Heaven;
 My lonely sorrow surpasses its rose-joys,
A red and bitter seed of the raptures seven; —
 My dumbness fills with echoes of a far Voice.

“By me the last finite, yearning, strives
 To reach the last infinity’s unknown,
The Eternal is broken into fleeting lives
 And Godhead pent in the mire and the stone.”

Dissolving the kingdoms of happy ease
 Rocked and split and faded their dream-chime.
All vanished; ungrasped eternities
 Sole survived and Timelessness seized Time.

Earth's heart was felt beating below me still,
 Veiled, immense, unthinkable above
My consciousness climbed like a topless hill,
 Crossed seas of Light to epiphanies of Love.

Symbol Moon ⁷

Once again thou hast climbed, O moon, like a white fire on the glimmering edge,
Floating up, floating up from the haunted verge of a foam-tremulous sea,
Mystic-horned here crossing the grey-hued listless nights and days,
Spirit-silver craft from the ports of eternity.

Overhead with thy plunging and swaying prow thou fleetest, O ship of the gods,
Glorifying the clouds with thy halo, but our hearts with a rose-red rapture
shed from the secret breasts of love;
Almost thou seemest the very bliss that floats in opaline air over heaven's
golden roads,
Embodied here to capture our human lives like a nectar face of light in the
doubtful blue above.

Dumbly blithe, shuddering, the air is filled from thy cup of pale mysterious wine:
Gleam quivers to longing gleam; and the faery torches lit for Night's mysteries
are set in her niches stark and deep;
The unconscious gulfs stir and are vaguely thrilled, while their unheard voices cry
to the Wonder-light new-seen
Till descending its ray shall unlock with a wizard rod of fire the dumb
recesses of sleep.

Bright and alone in a white-foam-glinted delicate dim-blue ocean of sky,
Ever thou runst and thou floatest as a magic drifting bowl
Flung by the hand of a drunken god in the river of Time goes tossing by,

O icon and chalice of spiritual light whose spots are like Nature's shadow
stains on a white and immaculate soul.

How like one frail and hunted thou com'st, O white moon, at my lonely call from
thy deep sky-covert heights,
A voyager carrying through the myriad-isled archipelago of the
spear-pointed questioning stars
The circle of the occult argent Yes of the Invisible to the dim query of the
yearning witness lights
That burn in the dense vault of Matter's waking mind — innumerable,
solitary and sparse.

A disk of a greater Ray that shall come, a white-fire rapture and girdling
rose of love,
Timelessly thou driftest, O soundless silver boat that set out from
the far Unknown,
Moon-crystal of silver or gold of some spirit joy spun by Time in his dense
aeonic groove,
A messenger and bearer of an unembodied beauty and unseized bliss
advancing over our life's wan sea — significant, bright and alone.

The World Game ⁸

(The Ishwara to the Ishwari)

In god-years yet unmeasured by a man's thought or by the earth's dance
or the moon's spin

I have guarded the law of the Invisible for the sake of thy smile, O sweet;
While lives followed innumerable winged lives, as if birds crossing a wide sea,
I have watched on the path of the centuries for the light of thy running feet.

The earth's dancing with the sun in his fire-robcs, was it not thou circling
my flame-soul,
The gazings of the moon in its nectar-joy were my look questing for
thee through Space?

The world's haste and the racing of the tense mind and the long gallop of fleet years
Were my speed to arrive through the flux of things and to neighbor
at last thy face.

The earth's seeking is mine and the immense scope of the slow aeons my heart's way;
For I follow a secret and sublime Will and the steps of thy Mother-might.
In the dim brute and the peering of man's brain and the calm sight in a god's eyes
It is I questing in Life's broken ways for thy laughter and love and light.

When Time moved not nor yet Space was unrolled wide, for thy game of
the worlds I gave
Myself to thy delightful hands of power to govern me and move and drive;

To earth's dumbness I fell for thy desire's sport weaving my spirit stuff
In a million pattern-shapes of souls made with me alive.

The worlds are only a playfield of Thou-I and a hued masque of the Two-One,
I am in thee as thou art in me, O Love; we are closer than heart and breast;
From thee I leaped forth struck to a spirit spark, I mount back in the soul's fire;
To our motion the stars whirl in the swing of Time, our oneness is Nature's rest.

When Light first from the unconscious Immense burst to create nebula and sun
'Twas the meeting of our hands through the empty Night that enkindled
the fateful blaze;
The huge systems abandoned their inert trance and this green crater of life rose
That we might look on each other form on form from the depths of a living gaze.

The Mind travelled in its ranges tier on tier with its wide-eyed or its rapt thought,
My thought toiling laboured to know all myself in thee to our atoms and
widths and deeps,
My all yearned to thy all to be held close, to the heart heart and to self self,
As a sea with a sea joins or limbs with limbs, and as waking's delight
with sleep's.

When mind pinnacled is lost in thy Light-Vasts and the man drowns in the wide god,
Thy Truth shall ungirdle its golden flames and thy diamond whiteness blaze;
My souls lumined shall discover their joy-self, they shall clasp all in the near One,
And the sorrow of the heart shall turn to bliss and thy sweetness possess
earth's days.

Then shall Life be thy arms drawing thy own clasped to thy breast's rapture or
calm peace,
With thy joy for the spirit's immortal flame and thy peace for its deathless base.
Our eyes meeting the long love shut in deep eyes and our beings held fast and one,
I shall know that the game was well worth the toil whose end is
thy divine embrace.

Trance of Waiting⁹

Lone on my summits of calm I have brooded with voices around me,
Murmurs of silence that steep mind in a luminous sleep,
Whispers from things beyond thought in the Secrecy flame-white for ever,
Unscanned heights that reply seek from the inconscient deep.
Distant below me the ocean of life with its passionate surges
Pales like a pool that is stirred by the wings of a shadowy bird.
Thought has flown back from its wheelings and stoopings, the nerve-beat of living
Stills; my spirit at peace bathes in a mighty release.
Wisdom supernal looks down on me, Knowledge mind cannot measure
Light that no vision can render garments the silence with splendour.
Filled with a rapturous Presence the crowded spaces of being
Tremble with the Fire that knows, thrill with the might of repose.
Earth is now girdled with trance and Heaven is put round her for vesture.
Wings that are brilliant with fate sleep at Eternity's gate.
Time waits, vacant, the Lightning that kindles, the Word that transfigures;
Space is a stillness of God building his earthly abode.
All waits hushed for the fiat to come and the tread of the Eternal;
Passion of a bliss yet to be sweeps from Infinity's sea.

Jivanmukta ¹⁰

There is a silence greater than any known
To earth's dumb spirit, motionless in the soul
That has become Eternity's foothold,
Touched by the infinitudes for ever.

A Splendour is here, refused to the earthward sight,
That floods some deep flame-covered all-seeing eye;
Revealed it wakens when God's stillness
Heavens the ocean of moveless Nature.

A Power descends no Fate can perturb or vanquish,
Calmer than mountains, wider than marching waters,
A single might of luminous quiet
Tirelessly bearing the worlds and ages.

A Bliss surrounds with ecstasy everlasting,
An absolute high-seated immortal rapture
Possesses, sealing love to oneness
In the grasp of the All-beautiful, All-beloved.

He who from Time's dull motion escapes and thrills
Rapt thoughtless, wordless into the Eternal's breast,
Unrolls the form and sign of being,
Seated above in the omniscient Silence.

Although consenting here to a mortal body,
He is the Undying; limit and bond he knows not;
For him the aeons are a playground,
Life and its deeds are his splendid shadow.

Only to bring God's forces to waiting Nature,
To help with wide-winged Peace her tormented labour
And heal with joy her ancient sorrow,
Casting down light on the unconscious darkness,

He acts and lives. Vain things are mind's smaller motives
To one whose soul enjoys for its high possession
Infinity and the sempiternal
All is his guide and beloved and refuge.

Thought the Paraclete ¹²

As some bright archangel in vision flies
Plunged in dream-caught spirit immensities,
Past the long green crests of the seas of life,
Past the orange skies of the mystic mind
Flew my thought self-lost in the vasts of God.
Sleepless wide great glimmering wings of wind
Bore the gold-red seeking of feet that trod
Space and Time's mute vanishing ends. The face
Lusted, pale-blue-lined of the hippogriff,
Eremitic, sole, daring the bourneless ways,
Over world-bare summits of timeless being
Gleamed; the deep twilights of the world-abys
Failed below. Sun-realms of supernal seeing,
Crimson-white mooned oceans of pauseless bliss
Drew its vague heart-yearning with voices sweet.
Hungering large-souled to surprise the unconned
Secrets white-fire-veiled of the last Beyond,
Crossing power-swept silences rapture-stunned,
Climbing high far ethers eternal-sunned,
Thought the great-winged wanderer paraclete
Disappeared slow-singing a flame-word rune.
Self was left, lone, limitless, nude, immune.

Rose of God ¹³

Rose of God, vermilion stain on the sapphires of heaven,
Rose of Bliss, fire-sweet, seven-tinged with the ecstasies seven!
Leap up in our heart of humanhood, O miracle, O flame,
Passion-flower of the Nameless, bud of the mystical Name.

Rose of God, great wisdom-bloom on the summits of being,
Rose of Light, immaculate core of the ultimate seeing!
Live in the mind of our earthhood; O golden Mystery, flower,
Sun on the head of the Timeless, guest of the marvellous Hour.

Rose of God, damask force of Infinity, red icon of might,
Rose of Power with thy diamond halo piercing the night!
Ablaze in the will of the mortal, design the wonder of thy plan,
Image of Immortality, outbreak of the Godhead in man.

Rose of God, smitten purple with the incarnate divine Desire,
Rose of Life, crowded with petals, colour's lyre!
Transform the body of the mortal like a sweet and magical rhyme;
Bridge our earthhood and heavenhood, make deathless the children of Time.

Rose of God like a blush of rapture on Eternity's face,
Rose of Love, ruby depth of all being, fire-passion of Grace!
Arise from the heart of the yearning that sobs in Nature's abyss:
Make earth the home of the Wonderful and life Beatitude's kiss.

Who art thou that camest ¹⁴

Who art thou that camest
 Bearing the occult Name,
Wings of regal darkness,
 Eyes of an unborn flame?

Like the august uprising
 Of a forgotten sun
Out of the caverned midnight
 Fire-trails of wonder run.

Captured the heart renouncing
 Tautness of passion-worn strings
Allows the wide-wayed sweetness
 Of free supernal things.

A God's Labour ¹⁵

I have gathered my dreams in a silver air
 Between the gold and the blue
And wrapped them softly and left them there,
 My jewelled dreams of you.

I had hoped to build a rainbow bridge
 Marrying the soil to the sky
And sow in this dancing planet midge
 The moods of infinity.

But too bright were our heavens, too far away,
 Too frail their ethereal stuff;
Too splendid and sudden our light could not stay;
 The roots were not deep enough.

He who would bring the heavens here
 Must descend himself into clay
And the burden of earthly nature bear
 And tread the dolorous way.

Coercing my godhead I have come down
 Here on the sordid earth,
Ignorant, labouring, human grown
 Twixt the gates of death and birth.

I have been digging deep and long
Mid a horror of filth and mire
A bed for the golden river's song,
A home for the deathless fire.

I have laboured and suffered in Matter's night
To bring the fire to man;
But the hate of hell and human spite
Are my meed since the world began.

For man's mind is the dupe of his animal self;
Hoping its lusts to win,
He harbours within him a grisly Elf
Enamoured of sorrow and sin.

The grey Elf shudders from heaven's flame
And from all things glad and pure;
Only by pleasure and passion and pain
His drama can endure.

All around is darkness and strife;
For the lamps that men call suns
Are but halfway gleams on this stumbling life
Cast by the Undying Ones.

Man lights his little torches of hope
That lead to a failing edge;
A fragment of Truth is his widest scope,
An inn his pilgrimage.

The Truth of truths men fear and deny,
The Light of lights they refuse;
To ignorant gods they lift their cry
Or a demon altar choose.

All that was found must again be sought,
Each enemy slain revives,
Each battle for ever is fought and refought
Through vistas of fruitless lives.

My gaping wounds are a thousand and one
And the Titan kings assail,
But I dare not rest till my task is done
And wrought the eternal will.

How they mock and sneer, both devils and men!
“Thy hope is Chimera’s head
Painting the sky with its fiery stain;
Thou shalt fall and thy work lie dead.

“Who art thou that babblest of heavenly ease
And joy and golden room
To us who are waifs on inconscient seas
And bound to life’s iron doom?”

“This earth is ours, a field of Night
For our petty flickering fires.
How shall it brook the sacred Light
Or suffer a god’s desires?”

“Come, let us slay him and end his course!
Then shall our hearts have release
From the burden and call of his glory and force
And the curb of his wide white peace.”

But the god is there in my mortal breast
Who wrestles with error and fate
And tramples a road through mire and waste
For the nameless Immaculate.

A voice cried, “Go where none have gone!
Dig deeper, deeper yet
Till thou reach the grim foundation stone
And knock at the keyless gate.”

I saw that a falsehood was planted deep
At the very root of things
Where the grey Sphinx guards God's riddle sleep
On the Dragon's outspread wings.

I left the surface gauds of mind
And life's unsatisfied seas
And plunged through the body's alleys blind
To the nether mysteries.

I have delved through the dumb Earth's dreadful heart
And heard her black mass' bell.
I have seen the source whence her agonies part
And the inner reason of hell.

Above me the dragon murmurs moan
And the goblin voices flit;
I have pierced the Void where Thought was born,
I have walked in the bottomless pit.

On a desperate stair my feet have trod
Armoured with boundless peace,
Bringing the fires of the splendour of God
Into the human abyss.

He who I am was with me still;
All veils are breaking now.
I have heard His voice and borne His will
On my vast untroubled brow.

The gulf twixt the depths and the heights is bridged
And the golden waters pour
Down the sapphire mountain rainbow-ridged
And glimmer from shore to shore.

Heaven's fire is lit in the breast of the earth
And the undying suns here burn;
Through a wonder cleft in the bounds of birth
The incarnate spirits yearn

Like flames to the kingdoms of Truth and Bliss:
Down a gold-red stairway wend
The radiant children of Paradise
Clarioning darkness' end.

A little more and the new life's doors
Shall be carved in silver light
With its aureate roof and mosaic floors
In a great world bare and bright.

I shall leave my dreams in their argent air,
For in a raiment of gold and blue
There shall move on the earth embodied and fair
The living truth of you.

Musa Spiritus ¹⁶

O Word concealed in the upper fire,
 Thou who hast lingered through centuries,
Descend from thy rapt white desire,
 Plunging through gold eternities.

Into the gulfs of our nature leap,
 Voice of the spaces, call of the Light!
Break the seals of Matter's sleep,
 Break the trance of the unseen height.

In the uncertain glow of human mind,
 Its waste of unharmonied thronging thoughts,
Carve thy epic mountain-lined
 Crowded with deep prophetic grots.

Let thy hue-winged lyrics hover like birds
 Over the swirl of the heart's sea.
Touch into sight with thy fire-words
 The blind indwelling deity.

O Muse of the Silence, the wideness make
 In the unplumbed stillness that hears thy voice;
In the vast mute heavens of the spirit awake
 Where thy eagles of Power flame and rejoice.

Out, out with the mind and its candle flares,
Light, light the suns that never die.
For my ear the cry of the seraph stars
And the forms of the Gods for my naked eye!

Let the little troubled life-god within
Cast his veils from the still soul,
His tiger-stripes of virtue and sin,
His clamour and glamour and thole and dole;

All make tranquil, all make free.
Let my heart-beats measure the footsteps of God
As He comes from His timeless infinity
To build in their rapture His burning abode.

Weave from my life His poem of days,
His calm pure dawns and His noons of force.
My acts for the grooves of His chariot-race,
My thoughts for the tramp of His great steeds' course!

The Blue Bird ¹⁷

I am the bird of God in His blue;
Divinely high and clear
I sing the notes of the sweet and the true
For the god's and the seraph's ear.

I rise like a fire from the mortal's earth
Into a griefless sky
And drop in the suffering soil of his birth
Fire-seeds of ecstasy.

My pinions soar beyond Time and Space
Into unfading Light;
I bring the bliss of the Eternal's face
And the boon of the Spirit's sight.

I measure the worlds with my ruby eyes;
I have perched on Wisdom's tree
Thronged with the blossoms of Paradise
By the streams of Eternity.

Nothing is hid from my burning heart;
My mind is shoreless and still;
My song is rapture's mystic art,
My flight immortal will.

Bride of the Fire¹⁸

Bride of the Fire, clasp me now close, —
 Bride of the Fire!
I have shed the bloom of the earthly rose,
 I have slain desire.

Beauty of the Light, surround my life, —
 Beauty of the Light!
I have sacrificed longing and parted from grief,
 I can bear thy delight.

Image of ecstasy, thrill and enlance, —
 Image of bliss!
I would see only thy marvellous face,
 Feel only thy kiss.

Voice of Infinity, sound in my heart, —
 Call of the One!
Stamp there thy radiance, never to part,
 O living Sun.

One¹⁹

The mind of a man
 And the mind in a stone.
But the Mind of minds
 Sits bright and alone.

The life of a tree,
 The life in a clod,
To the Life of all life
 That men call God.

The heart of a beast
 And a seraph's heart, —
But the Heart of all hearts
 Throbs ever apart.

A body beloved
 And a body slain.
Yet both were the bodies
 Of One in their pain.

In a mounting as of sea-tides ²⁰

In a mounting as of sea-tides, in a rippling as of invisible waters,
On a cry in me my soul is uplifted, in a passion of my nature
My heart climbs up towards thee, O unimaginable Wonder and Resplendence,
In a striving for the caress of thy Light and for the embrace of thy Presence.

If once given were but a touch of thy feet on the thrilled bosom of my longing,
But a glance of thy eyes mingling with mine in the recesses and the silence,
Such a rapture would envelop me, such a fire of transfiguring effulgence,
I could never again be as a man upon this earth, but one immortal.

For my mind would be dissolved in a sun-glory of God-vision and of knowledge,
And my heart would be made suddenly more pure and illumined and self-tranquil,
And my nerves and my body would transmute into an ethereal divineness,
A fit vesture for the godhead thou buildst in me, for the immortal thy adorer.

O thou Life of my life and the unseen heart of its ecstasy and its beating,
O Face that was disclosed in the beginning of the worlds amid the immenseness,
Let thy Flame-wisdom leap down upon the coilings of our python inconscience,
Let the Love-wine be poured out in thy chalice, let me be drunk with it for ever.

I shall meet thee in the ocean of thy stillness, in the ether of thy splendour,
Thy Force shall be in my veins like the ichor in the Unaging who are deathless;
My soul shall be as one breath with thy soul and thy infinity around thee,
And shall quiver with the vision of thy beauty and the marvel of thy sweetness.

Krishna ²¹

(Cretics)

O immense Light and thou, O spirit-wide boundless Space,
Whom have you clasped and hid, deathless limbs, gloried face?
Vainly lie Space and Time, "Void are we, there is none."
Vainly strive Self and World crying "I, I alone."
One is there, Self of self, Soul of Space, Fount of Time,
Heart of hearts, Mind of minds, He alone sits, sublime.
Oh no void Absolute self-absorbed, splendid, mute,
Hands that clasp hold and red lips that kiss blow His flute.
All He loves, all He moves, all are His, all are He;
Many limbs sate His whims, bear His sweet ecstasy.
Two in One, Two who know difference rich in sense,
Two to clasp, One to be, this His strange mystery.

Flame-Wind ²²

A flame-wind ran from the gold of the east,
Leaped on my soul with the breath of a sevenfold noon.
Wings of the angel, gallop of the beast!
Mind and body on fire, but the heart in swoon.

O flame, thou bringest the strength of the noon,
But where are the voices of morn and the stillness of eve?
Where the pale-blue wine of the moon?
Mind and life are in flower, but the heart must grieve.

Gold in the mind and the life-flame's red
Make of the heavens a splendour, the earth a blaze,
But the white and rose of the heart are dead.
Flame-wind, pass! I will wait for Love in the silent ways.

The Island Sun ²⁴

I have sailed the golden ocean
And crossed the silver bar;
I have reached the Sun of knowledge,
The earth-self's midnight star.

Its fields of flaming vision,
Its mountains of bare might,
Its peaks of fiery rapture,
Its air of absolute light,

Its seas of self-oblivion,
Its vales of Titan rest,
Became my soul's dominion,
Its Island of the Blest.

Alone with God and silence,
Timeless it lived in Time;
Life was His fugue of music,
Thought was Truth's ardent rhyme.

The Light was still around me
When I came back to earth
Bringing the Immortal's knowledge
Into man's cave of birth.

Despair on the Staircase ²⁵

Mute stands she, lonely on the topmost stair,
An image of magnificent despair;
The grandeur of a sorrowful surmise
Wakes in the largeness of her glorious eyes.
In her beauty's dumb significant pose I find
The tragedy of her mysterious mind.
Yet is she stately, grandiose, full of grace.
A musing mask is her immobile face.
Her tail is up like an unconquered flag;
Its dignity knows not the right to wag.
An animal creature wonderfully human,
A charm and miracle of fur-footed Brahman,
Whether she is spirit, woman or a cat,
Is now the problem I am wondering at.

The Dwarf Napoleon ²⁶

(Hitler. October 1939)

Behold, by Maya's fantasy of will
A violent miracle takes sudden birth,
The real grows one with the incredible.
In the control of her magician wand
The small achieves things great, the base things grand.
This puny creature would bestride the earth
Even as the immense colossus of the past.
Napoleon's mind was swift and bold and vast,
His heart was calm and stormy like the sea,
His will dynamic in its grip and clasp.
His eye could hold a world within its grasp
And see the great and small things sovereignly.
A movement of gigantic depth and scope
He seized and gave coherence to its hope.
Far other this creature of a nether clay,
Void of all grandeur, like a gnome at play,
Iron and mud his nature's mingled stuff,
A little limited visionary brain
Cunning and skilful in its narrow vein,
A sentimental egoist poor and rough,
Whose heart was never sweet and fresh and young,
A headlong spirit driven by hopes and fears,

Intense neurotic with his shouts and tears,
Violent and cruel, devil, child and brute,
This screaming orator with his strident tongue,
This prophet of a scanty fixed idea,
Plays now the leader of our human march;
His might shall build the future's triumph arch.
Now is the world for his eating a ripe fruit.
His shadow falls from London to Corea.
Cities and nations crumble in his course.
A terror holds the peoples in its grip:
World-destiny waits upon that foaming lip.
A Titan Power upholds this pigmy man,
The crude dwarf instrument of a mighty Force.
Hater of the free spirit's joy and light,
Made only of strength and skill and giant might,
A Will to trample humanity into clay
And unify earth beneath one iron sway,
Insists upon its fierce enormous plan.
Trampling man's mind and will into one mould
Docile and facile in a dreadful hold,
It cries its demon slogans to the crowd.
But if its tenebrous empire were allowed,
That mastery would prepare the dismal hour
When the Inconscient shall regain its right,
And man who emerged as Nature's conscious power,
Shall sink into the deep original night

Sharing like all her forms that went before
The doom of the mammoth and the dinosaur.
It is the shadow of the Titan's robe
That looms across the panic-stricken globe.
In his high villa on the fatal hill
Alone he listens to that sovereign Voice,
Dictator of his action's sudden choice,
The tiger leap of a demoniac skill.
An energy his body cannot invest, —
Too small and human for that dreadful guest,
A tortured channel, not a happy vessel, —
Drives him to think and act and cry and wrestle.
Thus driven he must stride on conquering all,
Threatening and clamouring, brutal, invincible,
Until he meets upon his storm-swept road
A greater devil — or thunderstroke of God.

The Children of Wotan²⁷

1940

“Where is the end of your armoured march, O children of Wotan?
Earth shudders with fear at your tread, the death-flame laughs in your eyes.”
“We have seen the sign of Thor and the hammer of new creation,
A seed of blood on the soil, a flower of blood in the skies.
We march to make of earth a hell and call it heaven.
The heart of mankind we have smitten with the whip of the sorrows seven;
The Mother of God lies bleeding in our black and gold sunrise.”

“I hear the cry of a broken world, O children of Wotan.”
“Question the volcano when it burns, chide the fire and bitumen!
Suffering is the food of our strength and torture the bliss of our entrails.
We are pitiless, mighty and glad, the gods fear our laughter inhuman.
Our hearts are heroic and hard; we wear the belt of Orion:
Our will has the edge of the thunderbolt, our acts the claws of the lion.
We rejoice in the pain we create as a man in the kiss of a woman.”

“Have you seen your fate in the scales of God, O children of Wotan,
And the tail of the Dragon lashing the foam in far-off seas?”
“We mock at God, we have silenced the mutter of priests at his altar.
Our leader is master of Fate, medium of her mysteries.
We have made the mind a cypher, we have strangled Thought with a cord;
Dead now are pity and honour, strength only is Nature’s lord.
We build a new world-order; our bombs shout Wotan’s peace.

“We are the javelins of Destiny, we are the children of Wotan,
We are the human Titans, the supermen dreamed by the sage.
A cross of the beast and demoniac with the godhead of power and will,
We were born in humanity’s sunset, to the Night is our pilgrimage.
On the bodies of perishing nations, mid the cry of the cataclysm coming,
To a presto of bomb and shell and the aeroplane’s fatal humming,
We march, lit by Truth’s death-pyre, to the world’s satanic age.”

Ocean Oneness²⁸

Silence is round me, wideness ineffable;
White birds on the ocean diving and wandering;
A soundless sea on a voiceless heaven,
Azure on azure, is mutely gazing.

Identified with silence and boundlessness
My spirit widens clasping the universe
Till all that seemed becomes the Real,
One in a mighty and single vastness.

Someone broods there nameless and bodiless,
Conscious and lonely, deathless and infinite,
And, sole in a still eternal rapture,
Gathers all things to his heart for ever.

The River ²⁹

Wild river in thy cataract far-rumoured and rash rapids to sea hasting,
Far now is that birth-place mid abrupt mountains and slow dreaming of lone valleys
Where only with blue heavens was rapt converse or green orchards with fruit leaning
Stood imaged in thy waves and, content, listened to thy rhapsody's long murmur.

Vast now in a wide press and a dense hurry and mass movement of thronged waters
Loud-thundering, fast-galloping, might, speed is the stern message of thy spirit,
Proud violence, stark claim and the dire cry of the heart's hunger on God's barriers
Self-hurled, and a void lust of unknown distance, and pace reckless and free grandeur.

Calm yet shall release thee; an immense peace and a large streaming of white silence,
Broad plains shall be thine, greenness surround thee, and wharved cities and
life's labour
Long thou wilt befriend, human delight help with the waves' coolness, with
ships' furrows
Thrill, — last become, self losing, a sea-motion and joy boundless and blue laughter.

Journey's End³⁰

The day ends lost in a stretch of even,
A long road trod — and the little farther.
 Now the waste-land, now the silence;
A blank dark wall, and behind it heaven.

The Dream Boat ³¹

Who was it that came to me in a boat made of dream-fire,
With his flame brow and his sun-gold body?
Melted was the silence into a sweet secret murmur,
“Do you come now? is the heart’s fire ready?”

Hidden in the recesses of the heart something shuddered.
It recalled all that the life’s joy cherished,
Imaged the felicity it must leave lost for ever,
And the boat passed and the gold god vanished.

Now within the hollowness of the world’s breast inhabits —
For the love died and the old joy ended —
Void of a felicity that has fled, gone for ever,
And the gold god and the dream boat come not.

Soul in the Ignorance ³²

Soul in the Ignorance, wake from its stupor.
Flake of the world-fire, spark of Divinity,
Lift up thy mind and thy heart into glory.
Sun in the darkness, recover thy lustre.

One, universal, ensphering creation,
Wheeling no more with inconscient Nature,
Feel thyself God-born, know thyself deathless.
Timeless return to thy immortal existence.

The Witness and the Wheel ³³

Who art thou in the heart comrade of man who sitst
August, watching his works, watching his joys and griefs,
Unmoved, careless of pain, careless of death and fate?
Witness, what hast thou seen watching this great blind world
Moving helpless in Time, whirled on the Wheel in Space,
That yet thou with thy vast Will biddest toil our hearts,
Mystic, — for without thee nothing can last in Time?
We too, when from the urge ceaseless of Nature turn
Our souls, far from the breast casting her tool, desire,
Grow like thee. In the front Nature still drives in vain
The blind trail of our acts, passions and thoughts and hopes;
Unmoved, calm, we look on, careless of death and fate,
Of grief careless and joy, — signs of a surface script
Without value or sense, steps of an aimless world.
Something watches behind, Spirit or Self or Soul,
Viewing Space and its toil, waiting the end of Time.
Witness, who then art thou, one with thee who am I,
Nameless, watching the Wheel whirl across Time and Space?

Descent³⁴

All my cells thrill swept by a surge of splendour,
Soul and body stir with a mighty rapture,
Light and still more light like an ocean billows
Over me, round me.

Rigid, stonelike, fixed like a hill or statue,
Vast my body feels and upbears the world's weight;
Dire the large descent of the Godhead enters
Limbs that are mortal.

Voiceless, thronged, Infinity crowds upon me;
Presses down a glory of power eternal;
Mind and heart grow one with the cosmic wideness;
Stilled are earth's murmurs.

Swiftly, swiftly crossing the golden spaces
Knowledge leaps, a torrent of rapid lightnings;
Thoughts that left the Ineffable's flaming mansions,
Blaze in my spirit.

Slow the heart-beats' rhythm like a giant hammer's;
Missioned voices drive to me from God's doorway
Words that live not save upon Nature's summits,
Ecstasy's chariots.

All the world is changed to a single oneness;
Souls undying, infinite forces, meeting,
Join in God-dance weaving a seamless Nature,
Rhythm of the Deathless.

Mind and heart and body, one harp of being,
Cry that anthem, finding the notes eternal, —
Light and might and bliss and immortal wisdom
Clasping for ever.

The Lost Boat ³⁵

At the way's end when the shore raised up its dim line and remote lights
from the port glimmered,
Then a cloud darkened the sky's brink and the wind's scream was the shrill laugh
of a loosed demon
And the huge passion of storm leaped with its bright stabs and the long crashing
of death's thunder;
As if haled by an unseen hand fled the boat lost on the wide homeless forlorn ocean.

Is it Chance smites? is it Fate's irony? dead workings or blind purpose of
brute Nature?
Or man's own deeds that return back on his doomed head with a stark justice,
a fixed vengeance?
Or a dread Will from behind Life that regards pain and salutes death with
a hard laughter?
Is it God's might or a Force rules in this dense jungle of events, deeds and our
thought's strivings?

Yet perhaps sank not the bright lives and their glad venturings foiled, drowned
in the grey ocean,
But with long wandering they reached an unknown shore and a strange sun
and a new azure,
Amid bright splendour of beast glories and birds' music and deep hues,
an enriched Nature

And a new life that could draw near to divine meanings and touched close
the concealed purpose.

In a chance happening, fate's whims and the blind workings or dead drive
of a brute Nature,
In her dire Titan caprice, strength that to death drifts and to doom, hidden
a Will labours.

Not with one moment of sharp close or the slow fall of a dim curtain the play ceases:
Yet is there Time to be crossed, lives to be lived out, the unplayed acts of
the soul's drama.

Renewal ³⁶

When the heart tires and the throb stills recalling
 Things that were once and again can be never,
When the bow falls and the drawn string is broken,
 Hands that were clasped, yet for ever are parted,

When the soul passes to new births and bodies,
 Lands never seen and meetings with new faces,
Is the bow raised and the fall'n arrow fitted,
 Acts that were vain rewedded to the Fate-curve?

To the lives sundered can Time bring rejoining,
 Love that was slain be reborn with the body?
In the mind null, from the heart's chords rejected,
 Lost to the sense, but the spirit remembers!

Soul's Scene³⁷

The clouds lain on forlorn spaces of sky, weary and lolling,
Watch grey waves of a lost sea wander sad, reckless and rolling,
A bare anguish of bleak beaches made mournful with the breath of
the Northwind
And a huddle of melancholy hills in the distance.

The blank hour in some vast mood of a Soul lonely in Nature
On earth's face puts a mask pregnantly carved, cut to misfeature,
And man's heart and his stilled mind react hushed in a spiritual passion
Imitating the contours of her desolate waiting.

Impassible she waits long for the sun's gold and the azure,
The sea's song with its slow happy refrain's splashes of pleasure, —
As man's soul in its depths waits the outbreaking of the light and the godhead
And the bliss that God felt when he created his image.

Ascent ³⁸

(1)

The Silence

Into the Silence, into the Silence,
Arise, O Spirit immortal,
Away from the turning Wheel, breaking the magical Circle.
Ascend, single and deathless:
Care no more for the whispers and the shoutings in the darkness,
Pass from the sphere of the grey and the little,
Leaving the cry and the struggle,
Into the Silence for ever.

Vast and immobile, formless and marvellous,
Higher than Heaven, wider than the universe,
In a pure glory of being,
In a bright stillness of self-seeing,
Communing with a boundlessness voiceless and intimate,
Make thy knowledge too high for thought, thy joy too deep for emotion;
At rest in the unchanging Light, mute with the wordless self-vision,
Spirit, pass out of thyself; Soul, escape from the clutch of Nature.
All thou hast seen cast from thee, O Witness.
Turn to the Alone and the Absolute, turn to the Eternal:
Be only eternity, peace and silence,

O world-transcending nameless Oneness,
Spirit immortal.

(2)

Beyond the Silence

Out from the Silence, out from the Silence,
Carrying with thee the ineffable Substance,
Carrying with thee the splendour and wideness,
Ascend, O Spirit immortal.
Assigning to Time its endless meaning,
Blissful enter into the clasp of the Timeless.
Awake in the living Eternal, taken to the bosom of love of the Infinite,
Live self-found in his endless completeness,
Drowned in his joy and his sweetness,
Thy heart close to the heart of the Godhead for ever.

Vast, God-possessing, embraced by the Wonderful,
Lifted by the All-Beautiful into his infinite beauty,
Love shall envelop thee endless and fathomless,
Joy unimaginable, ecstasy illimitable,
Knowledge omnipotent, Might omniscient,
Light without darkness, Truth that is dateless.
One with the Transcendent, calm, universal,
Single and free, yet innumerably living,

All in thyself and thyself in all dwelling,
Act in the world with thy being beyond it.
Soul, exceed life's boundaries; Spirit, surpass the universe.
Outclimbing the summits of Nature,
Transcending and uplifting the soul of the finite,
Rise with the world in thy bosom,
O Word gathered into the heart of the Ineffable.
One with the Eternal, live in his infinity,
Drowned in the Absolute, found in the Godhead,
Swan of the supreme and spaceless ether wandering winged
through the universe,
Spirit immortal.

The Tiger and the Deer³⁹

Brilliant, crouching, slouching, what crept through the green heart of the forest,
Gleaming eyes and mighty chest and soft soundless paws of grandeur and murder?
The wind slipped through the leaves as if afraid lest its voice and the noise of its
steps perturb the pitiless Splendour,
Hardly daring to breathe. But the great beast crouched and crept, and crept
and crouched a last time, noiseless, fatal,
Till suddenly death leaped on the beautiful wild deer as it drank
Unsuspecting at the great pool in the forest's coolness and shadow,
And it fell and, torn, died remembering its mate left sole in the deep woodland, —
Destroyed, the mild harmless beauty by the strong cruel beauty in Nature.
But a day may yet come when the tiger crouches and leaps no more in the
dangerous heart of the forest,
As the mammoth shakes no more the plains of Asia;
Still then shall the beautiful wild deer drink from the coolness of great pools
in the leaves' shadow.
The mighty perish in their might;
The slain survive the slayer.

The Mother of God ⁴⁰

A conscious and eternal Power is here
Behind unhappiness and mortal birth
And the error of Thought and blundering trudge of Time.
The mother of God, his sister and his spouse,
Daughter of his wisdom, of his strength the mate,
She has leapt from the Transcendent's secret breast
To build her rainbow worlds of mind and life.
Between the superconscient absolute Light
And the Inconscient's vast unthinking toil,
In the rolling and routine of Matter's sleep
And the somnambulist motion of the stars
She forces on the cold unwilling Void
Her adventure of life, the passionate dreams of her heart.
Amid the work of darker Powers she is here
To heal the evils and mistakes of Space
And change the tragedy of the ignorant world
Into a Divine Comedy of joy
And the laughter and the rapture of God's bliss.
The Mother of God is mother of our souls;
We are the partners of his birth in Time,
Inheritors we share his eternity.

The End? ⁴¹

Is this the end of all that we have been,
And all we did or dreamed, —
A name unremembered and a form undone, —
Is this the end?

A body rotting under a slab of stone
Or turned to ash in fire,
A mind dissolved, lost its forgotten thoughts, —
Is this the end?

Our little hours that were and are no more,
Our passions once so high
Dying mocked by the still earth and calm sunshine, —
Is this the end?

Our yearnings for the human Godward climb
Passing to other hearts
Deceived, while sinks towards death and hell the world, —
Is this the end?

Fallen is the harp; shattered it lies and mute;
Is the unseen player dead?
Because the tree is felled where the bird sang,
Must the song too hush?

One in the mind who planned and willed and thought,
 Worked to reshape earth's fate,
One in the heart who loved and yearned and hoped,
 Does he too end?

The Immortal in the mortal is his Name;
 An artist Godhead here
Ever remoulds himself in diviner shapes,
 Unwilling to cease

Till all is done for which the stars were made,
 Till the heart discovers God
And soul knows itself. And even then
 There is no end.

Silence is all ⁴²

1

Silence is all, say the sages.
Silence watches the work of the ages;
In the book of Silence the cosmic Scribe has written his cosmic pages:
Silence is all, say the sages.

2

What then of the word, O speaker?
What then of the thought, O thinker?
Thought is the wine of the soul and the word is the beaker;
Life is the banquet-table as the soul of the sage is the drinker.

3

What of the wine, O mortal?
I am drunk with the wine as I sit at Wisdom's portal,
Waiting for the Light beyond thought and the Word immortal.
Long I sit in vain at Wisdom's portal.

4

How shalt thou know the Word when it comes, O seeker?
How shalt thou know the Light when it breaks, O witness?
I shall hear the voice of the God within me and grow wiser and meeker;
I shall be the tree that takes in the light as its food, I shall drink its
nectar of sweetness.

Notes on the Text

Sri Aurobindo once wrote that he wanted his short poems published in two separate books, one of sonnets and one of “(mainly) lyrical poems”.

This book contains all of Sri Aurobindo’s short poems, other than sonnets, composed between 1930 and 1950, with the exception of poems written solely as metrical experiments, nonsense poems written as parodies of surrealist verse, and incomplete or fragmentary poems. Most of the poems included are “lyrical” in the technical sense: they are short and express the writer’s personal thoughts and feelings. Unlike most other examples of the genre, however, their lyricism is spiritual and psychic. Along with the later sonnets and the epic *Savitri*, they represent Sri Aurobindo’s highest achievement in spiritual or yogic poetry.

Twenty-eight of the forty-two poems in this book were published by Sri Aurobindo during his lifetime in the following volumes: *Six Poems* (1934), *Poems* (1941), *On Quantitative Metre* (1942), and *Poems Past and Present* (1946). The other fourteen poems are taken from his manuscripts from the same period. Most of them were revised more than once, but some exist only in a single handwritten draft.

The editors have arranged the poems by date of composition. If this is not known, other factors, such as location of manuscript and style of handwriting, have been evaluated to determine chronological position.

1. One Day. Circa 1932. Sri Aurobindo wrote the first draft of this poem in the notebook, which Nolini Kanta Gupta uncovered and sent to him in 1932. This draft was lightly revised and later included in *Poems Past and Present*. There is one handwritten and one typed manuscript.

2. In Horis Aeternum. 19 April 1932. Sri Aurobindo began this poem while corresponding with Arjava (J. A. Chadwick, a British disciple) about English prosody. He wrote the first stanza in a letter to Arjava and the full poem in a subsequent letter (*Letters on Poetry and Art*, pp. 231 – 34). There are two handwritten and two typed manuscripts. One of the typed manuscripts is dated “19.4.32”.

3. Trance. 16 October 1933. There are two handwritten manuscripts and one typed manuscript, which is dated “16.10.33”. In the same letter in which Sri Aurobindo wrote about the composition of “The Bird of Fire” (see below), he noted that “Trance” was written “at one sitting — it took only a few minutes”.

4. The Bird of Fire. 17 October 1933. No handwritten manuscripts of this poem survive. There are three typed manuscripts, two of which are dated 17 October 1933. In a letter written shortly afterwards, Sri Aurobindo said that “Bird of Fire” was “written on two consecutive days — and afterwards revised”. He also wrote that this poem and “Trance” (see above) were completed the same day.

5. Shiva. 6 November 1933. There are two handwritten manuscripts and one typed manuscript, which is dated “6.11.33”.

6. The Life Heavens. 15 November 1933. There are four handwritten and three typed manuscripts. The typed manuscripts are dated “15.11.33”.

7. Symbol Moon. Circa 1934. Three handwritten and two typed manuscripts. On 7 August 1934, Sri Aurobindo asked his secretary to type the first drafts of “Symbol Moon”, “The World Game”, “Transformation” and “The Other Earths” from the notebook in which he wrote these and other poems.

8. The World Game. Circa 1934. Three handwritten and two typed manuscripts.

9. Trance of Waiting. Circa 1934. The first draft of this poem was written around the same time as “Jivanmukta”, which is dated 1934. Two handwritten manuscripts precede the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work in 1942.

10. Jivanmukta. 13 April 1934. There are four handwritten and two typed manuscripts. The typed manuscripts are dated “13.4.34”. The poem was published in the *Calcutta Review* in June 1934.

11. Moon of Two Hemispheres. July 1934. Like “Thought the Paraclete”, this poem originated in an attempt to duplicate a Bengali metre proposed by Dilip Kumar Roy. Replying to Dilip, Sri Aurobindo began: “After two days of wrestling I have to admit that I am beaten by your last metre. I have written something, but it is a fake.” He then wrote out the first stanza of the poem, pointing out where he had failed to meet Dilip’s specifications. He closed by saying: “I have some idea of adding a second stanza”, though “it may never take birth at all” (*Letters on Poetry and Art*, pp. 235 – 36). He did write a second stanza later. The poem was published in the “Sri Aurobindo Number” (volume 2, number 5) of the Calcutta fortnightly journal *Onward* in August 1934. There are four handwritten and two typed manuscripts of this poem.

12. Thought the Paraclete. 31 December 1934 (this is the date on a typed manuscript; the handwritten manuscripts were probably written in June 1934). This poem originated as a

metrical experiment, in which Sri Aurobindo tried to match a Bengali metrical model submitted to him by his disciple Dilip Kumar Roy. There are at least three handwritten and two typed manuscripts of this poem. A printed text was produced sometime before 1941, but apparently was never published.

13. Rose of God. 29 – 30 December 1934. There is one handwritten and one typed manuscript of this poem. The typed manuscript is dated 31 December 1934; however Sri Aurobindo wrote in a letter to a disciple that “Rose of God” was ready “on the 30th having been written on that and the previous day”. On 31 December, he wrote to his secretary that the just-typed “Rose of God” could be “circulated first as a sort of New Year invocation”. On 2 March 1935, his secretary wrote to him saying that the editor of a quarterly journal had asked for a poem to be published, and asking whether “Rose of God” could be sent. Sri Aurobindo replied: “I feel squeamish about publishing the ‘Rose of God’ in a magazine or newspaper. It seems to me the wrong place altogether.”

14. Who art thou that camest. No title in the manuscript. Circa 1934 – 36. One handwritten manuscript, written in a notebook used otherwise for *Savitri*.

15. A God’s Labour. 1935 – 36. A late draft of this poem is dated as follows: “31.7.35 / Last 4 stanzas 1.1.36”. There are four handwritten and two typed manuscripts.

16. Musa Spiritus. 1935. An early draft of this poem occurs between drafts of “A God’s Labour” and “The Blue Bird” (see below). Sri Aurobindo wrote the date “31.7.35” at the end of a later draft. There are two handwritten manuscripts and one typed manuscript of this poem.

17. The Blue Bird. 1935. The first draft of this poem is dated 11 November 1935. There are two handwritten and two typed manuscripts.

- 18. Bride of the Fire.** 1935. The first draft of this poem is dated 11 November 1935. There are two handwritten and two typed manuscripts.
- 19. One.** 14 March 1936. One handwritten manuscript, written on a sheet of a small “Bloc-Memo” pad.
- 20. In a mounting as of sea-tides.** No title in the manuscript. Circa 1936 – 37. One handwritten manuscript.
- 21. Krishna.** Circa 1936 – 37. One handwritten manuscript.
- 22. Flame-Wind.** 1937. A handwritten draft of this poem is dated 1937. This draft is entitled “Dream Symbols”. Three other handwritten manuscripts precede the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work in 1942.
- 23. The Cosmic Man.** 15 September 1938. One handwritten manuscript.
- 24. The Island Sun.** 13 October 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts.
- 25. Despair on the Staircase.** October 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts.
- 26. The Dwarf Napoleon.** 16 October 1939. Three handwritten manuscripts.
- 27. The Children of Wotan.** 30 August 1940. Two handwritten manuscripts.
- 28. Ocean Oneness.** 1942. Two handwritten manuscripts, both entitled “Brahman”, precede the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work.
- 29. The River.** 1942. Three handwritten manuscripts precede the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work.

- 30. Journey's End.** 1942. Two handwritten manuscripts precede the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work.
- 31. The Dream Boat.** 1942. A single handwritten manuscript precedes the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work.
- 32. Soul in the Ignorance.** 1942. A single handwritten manuscript precedes the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work.
- 33. The Witness and the Wheel.** 1942. A single handwritten manuscript precedes the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work.
- 34. Descent.** 1942. A single handwritten manuscript precedes the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work.
- 35. The Lost Boat.** 1942. Two handwritten manuscripts precede the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work.
- 36. Renewal.** 1942. A single handwritten manuscript precedes the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work.
- 37. Soul's Scene.** 1942. Three handwritten manuscripts precede the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work.
- 38. Ascent.** 1942. Two handwritten manuscripts precede the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work.
- 39. The Tiger and the Deer.** 1942. A single handwritten manuscript precedes the *On Quantitative Metre* revision work.

40. The Mother of God. One handwritten manuscript, undated, but in the handwriting of the mid 1940s.

41. The End? 3 June 1945. One handwritten manuscript.

42. Silence is all. No title in the manuscript. 14 January 1947. (The manuscript is dated “January 14, 1946”, but this is probably a slip, as the rest of the contents of the notebook in which the poem is written are from 1947.) One handwritten manuscript.

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