

# Reminiscence

by Dilip Mohapatra (June 2014)

When you look into the mirror  
and a stranger stares back at you  
you try to look beyond his shoulders.

You see a little boy and a girl playing house  
their baby doll swinging in the cradle  
and she offering him a tiny cup  
of make believe tea.

You see them in their school uniforms  
with their bulging rucksacks  
together on a bicycle along a country road  
their exuberance echoing and resounding  
in the wild shrubs and the empty streets.

You see them exchanging garlands  
  
and taking the seven rounds around the sacred fire  
and the vows 'till death does us part'  
packing their scant belongings in a hold-all  
and with a treasury chest filled with infinite love  
they set off to start their adventure together.

You see them lost in each other  
oblivious of everyone and everything else  
their hearts beating in unison  
with the falling raindrops

their eyes fluttering in harmony  
with the butterflies in the springs  
their sighs resonating with the  
hot winds of the simmering summers  
their locked lips in ignition  
liquefying the icy cold winters.

You see them holding in their laps  
their reflections  
fruits of their passion.  
You see them pushing the prams in the parks  
singing campfire songs  
attending the parents' day meetings.  
You see the lines on their foreheads deepening  
their soft hands developing callouses  
their hair thinning down  
and crow's feet in the corners of their eyes.

You see them on the rear seat of their limo  
  
being driven by a liveried chauffeur to social gatherings  
and community events  
and see them walking on the red carpets  
being ushered to their seats  
and people hanging on every word they speak.

You see them on the two corners of the sofa  
  
she watching a soap serial on the TV  
and he lost in a Pablo Neruda collection.  
The birds on *neem* trees in the lawn are silent  
the loony moon looms down menacingly.

He asks hesitatingly for a cup of tea

and she gets up to oblige

and soon goes back to her reverie

while he takes a sip of the tea that she had forgotten to pour.

Then you again look into the mirror

and still find the stranger staring at you

and looking beyond your shoulders.

---

Dilip Mohapatra, a Navy Veteran started writing poems in the seventies and his recent poems have appeared in various literary journals like *Muse India*, *Helix Magazine*, *Chiaroscuro Magazine*, *BlazeVOX*, etc. His poems have also found place in the *World Poetry Yearbook 2013*. His latest collection of poems, *A Pinch of Sun and other poems* is currently under publication by Authorspress, New Delhi. He did his Masters in Physics at Ravenshaw College, Cuttack. Post Navy, he held senior leadership positions with the Tata and Suzlon groups of companies. Currently he is the Chief Mentor and Strategic Advisor to KIIT University, Bhubaneswar. He lives with his wife in Pune.

To comment on this poem, please click [here](#).

To help New English Review continue to publish original and thought provoking poetry such as this, please click [here](#).