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***Kinetic of Life.* Malabika Mukerjee**

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**Reviewed By:**

**Aju Mukhopadhyay**

Malabika Mukerjee in her debut collection of poems (said to be Collection of Thought and Realization), *Kinetic of Life*, has divided the poems in four groups: Realization of Life, Contemporary Poems, In Love of Life and Science & Poetry. Life and its different aspects are the main theme of this book. An academician in the stream of science, Malabika is romantic in temperament. She has a rational and devotional bent of mind coupled with her scientific studies. The combination of such mindset has given special flavour to her poems. Spontaneous rhyme and rhythm in most of the poems help the readers ride smoothly in their journey through the book.

In my recent books of poems I have arranged the poems in groups as conceived by me to help readers understand the common thread in poems belonging to a particular group. I am happy to note that many contemporary poets have been doing the same now in different ways. This self selection and categorization of the poems help readers in their drive through their collection.

The first group of poems is subtitled by her as “The Realization of Life” or how she understands life. Here come the paths of life which she traverses, “Only a never ending path of hope and aspiration /He wades through that, no ultimate destination.” (Life /Life 3) In “Songs of My Soul” (Life 10) she tells us that all types of emotions carry her through the path of life. The same understanding of life continues in “Either this side or that side” (Humdrum Tale /Life12). She finds life as a bundle of joy sometimes and sometimes a disgusting cloy. It’s a mixture of feelings; ups and downs. On the whole life is “Nothing but a pile of infinite nothingness”, (Me, Yesterday and Today / Life 16). She declares and repeats it in another poem, “And then I woke up to watch /Waning of my wonderful dream . . . /Nothing prevails, only an infinite nothingness.” (Memory, Dream, Delusion /Life 44) This indecision and nothingness she surmounts suddenly in “Saga of an Octogenarian” (Life 17):

Each and everyday I praised omnipotent Almighty  
And welcomed roses and thorns with equal humility . . . .  
Even today I think the world is wonderful  
Even today struggling is my strength  
And I’m not scared of you, O mighty death.

“Imprison the Words” (Life 19) is a cute tiny poem. Similar is the end poem of this group; “Grief Knows no Boundary” (Life 20): Pathos spreads unshaped here from heart to heart like music unheard.

In the second group, “Contemporary Poems” she brings to the fore her understanding of the happenings of the present time. Humour and Satire with Pathos play their roles here. This solid

material world is what it is. There is no scope of romance here. One is tempted to call a spade a spade.

In “Slum Dog and Top Dog” (Life 24) she has introduced delicious hot-dog too using the word dog like a pun in association with other words to make it humorous.

In “Orphan Time” she brings to our notice how the magic world of software has brought us face to face with loneliness devoid of human relationship from the very childhood.

Tiny tots are surrounded by microchips and microtech

Beauties and wonders of nature to them are just fake . . . .

Orphan Time /Life 26

In the contemporary world, specially in India, “There is so much dirt and filth all around /Even the luster of diamond is hardly found /But corruption and malpractice safe and sound. (Miracle /Life 29) In “Golf And Ha-DU-DU” (Life 36) she paints an image of a boastful man, vainglorious.

And here is her advice to the retired person, “Hey! My dear, you are retired . . . /The gate-man may shut the gate on your face. /Your one-time friends may pose too busy /You are the only one in the world idle and lazy . . . . /Better to the mountains or meadows you go (Don’t go to the King’s Door /Life 39)

Poems under the heading “In Love & Life” are mostly love poems, actual or fictitious. This seems to be the most creative part of the book. There is no tangible presence of any person here but the association with a lover is clear who has either abandoned his or her love or has been fading in some forlorn land. There is inherent beauty in these poems which is a mixture of romance and devotion even with a mystic touch sometimes;

There was no one in the room

But He was there in full bloom

The room spoke for him, I assume

He was very much there to illumine . . . .

The Room Spoke /Life 48

I am tempted to compare this with few lines from my poem,

The lamp was burning golden-brown

In my dark room steadily, alone

No one was there around

Flowers bloomed of a mystic hue

Aju /Burning Lamp /Ear 10

The unseen lover seems to be close to the poet’s heart (Memory, Dream, Delusion /Life 44).

Sometimes the lover comes as a gift from the God and the poet is ever devoted to this gift for which she isn’t able to pay her attention to God himself, “My life is tied with this cordless cord /I adore your gift, forgive me, my Lord!” (Your Special Gift /Life 45)

The poet waits for her lover for ever: “But I will wait to hear from you /The oathful of religious citing, /The citing that spread fragrance of rose” (Longing /Life 51). But the lover is ever fading;

Those two eyes of you like river in the morning . . . .

and you were drifted away

from one shore to another!

Did you Reach Destination? /Life 52

And “Keeping track was nothing but a deceiving mirage”

Wishful Thinking /Life 54

Adieu is a parting word. The titled poem as such evokes sadness. It is a bit dramatic too.

Just before crossing the door  
To me he told, "I'm going, be bold . . . .  
I gave him a rose  
But the door I could not close . . .  
But to say 'adieu' is tearful always.  
Adieu / Life 53

Sometimes the lover is neither a person nor an ever elusive God but a poem!  
My song, my joy, my life, my quest  
'poetry' my beloved, my soul mate, the best  
Walking Hand in Hand with You /Life 49

Similarly in "I am fatigued, I am exhausted /Shouldn't I write a poem again?" (Never Too Late /Life 50) the poet pines for it, her beloved poem, like her evasive lover or even the God.

In the last chapter titled, "Science and Poetry" the poet favours the general welfare of man and nature rather than science when it creates a situation high and dry. The poet stands for better environment.

Shorn of leaves due mainly to draught a banyan tree stands facing death, killing many other living things which depend on its health (I am a Banyan Tree /Life 58). Oppressed Nature shouts against manmade disasters in "Nature Speaks" (Life 60): "My natural vivacity is looted /by your ruthless civilization /Return back that Freshness."

Cycling is environment friendly movement devoid of emission of any poisonous gas so the poet sings the glory of cycle in her "Come Back Cycle" (Life 62-63). It has many advantages but for that one cannot ignore the traffic rules which even a pedestrian has to follow. March of science which is not always beneficial for humanity, is decried in "Encounter" (Life 66). Like a true humanist the poet becomes a vociferous opponent of killing female foetus in "Girl Child from Mother's Womb (Life 68). Creating artificial life and cells scientifically may be disastrous for humanity which may create creatures like Frankenstein with chances of coming back as boomerang. She puts thousand questions against "a lap-top designed DNA /merged in a conidium" (A Question to your Lap-Top /Life 69)

There was a prophetic warning that due to the advancement of Planet-X at incredible speed it could collide with planet Earth and destroy it in 2012. Poet questions NASA, the great US institution, "Why not launch a powerful rocket /And change path of dreadful X-planet?" (Two Thousand Twelve /Life 71)

With humour and satire, love and romance written in rightful attitude in lyrical veins Malabika Mukerjee seems to be a promising poet leaving an indelible mark in some of her poems. Without any particular bent she moves freely, sometimes undecided, leaving things to take shape in their own course. Her poems have not acquired any particular form but with natural rhythm and often rhyming they are pleasant to read and nice to hear. In spite of all goodness in it I haven't liked the title of the book.

### Works Cited:

Mukhopadhyay Aju. *Time Whispers in my Ear*. Lucknow: OnlineGatha. 2015