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## Writing Sample

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"A moth in Universe", "Not a dream really", "Dancing in doom", "Salt", "Jail", "Change", "My father", "Give me my son back", "An anti-State Orgasm", "Penis", "I was living a lie", "Hello", "Two Fires", "Is it Israel or Kashmir", "In my bu/astard English", "Sharing a room with Shakespeare", "Toilet", "Negotiating", and "Where is the good place?"

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Subodh SARKAR

A moth in Universe

After a walk for thousands of years  
Today I suddenly understood  
That man is an ant  
Eaten by an ant.

After holocaust, nuclear explosion, and gene- mapping  
I realized, trust me, I realized  
Man is a caterpillar.

After love and love-making, malice and joy  
I accepted the truth  
That Man is but a moth in the universe  
With a burden of another universe on its little head.

*Not a dream really*

*I have a dream after three nights in computer rooms  
My love and I, at office time, sit naked under a palm tree.*

*We lie naked, we embrace, we press, and we intertwine  
Newsmen rushed to us. We walked away to the deep woods*

*We are the last man and woman on earth  
Who have no heirs to own the rivers and butterflies*

*We find an abandoned café deeper down the woods  
Where there is no computer, no telephone, and no jungle casino.*

*I find other men and women without clothes coming in  
Joining us for coffee. Is it a beginning or an end?*

*Dancing in doom*

*Where have you been?  
Where water is sad  
Where every song is a wail  
The dearest being is a dog.*

*Where no one takes you home*

No one gives you phone number  
No one reads you a poem  
No one offers you tea

Where have you been?  
Where a smile is a cry  
Where a kiss a rue  
And a killer is a local hero.

I never knew  
Water could be so sad  
There was a valley of lilies  
Now a basin of atomic ash.

We all took a chance  
To write poetry—  
Alphabets dancing in doom  
Still we need one more poem.

Salt

Salt and sorrow, two sisters  
Without them no JOY is a joy.

Melancholy is my daughter  
She cleans my veins from toxins.

While poets fated to be poets  
To clean up the filth of human history.

Love is the last legal alien to joy  
Before we all vanish to nowhere.

Jail

Jail is a good place for writers, home is not.  
We made false attempts to unlock eternity.

But in jail you cannot have sex  
You can masturbate as did Gandhi.

You can write a secret book and smuggle it out  
To another country, as did Galileo.

*A great man is not great until he is in jail  
But you can jail a poet and not his poem.*

*I met a happy murderer and a melancholy whore  
They planned an autobiography of a river from jail.*

*They had no going home syndrome  
They thought jail was good and home was not.*

*Every State has a policy about the sanctity of jail  
Happy to have bad people within and worse people without.*

### Change

We gutted down libraries to ashes  
We burnt up bridges  
We blew up police stations.

We destroyed towns and cities and metros  
We blew up the churches and the statues of Lenin  
We killed kings we killed queens  
And assassinated presidents  
We killed rebels and rebels' whore

We blew up super fast trains  
We high jacked airplanes to forbidden cities  
We organized genocide for a better tomorrow.

We changed tomorrows we changed governments  
We exchanged wise men with madmen  
We signed so many deals, so many ceasefires.

But tell me; is there any tomorrow to come?  
Is there any peace in my city?  
Only a few rich homes are complacent  
Did any change bring about any change in the world?  
The poor is poorer and the rich richer.

### My father

My father was a refugee my mother was a refugee  
But I was born free in India.  
My father ran away from his home with my mother  
My sisters, my brothers.  
My father ran away

From the village he loved  
My father ran away from the river  
He lived by  
My father ran away from the school  
Where he taught.  
In India he had no passport  
He was a legal alien  
He had a ration card  
But his visa was his language  
He migrated from Bengal to Bengal.

He died of cancer at 55 in Krishnagar, Dst. Nodia, W.Bengal, India.  
But he believed he died long before  
When he was running, running and running  
His young wife running with me in her womb  
I wonder I ran so much before I was born  
Bengal to Bengal  
India to India  
And finally from India to Commonwealth.  
It never gave him, my father a single coin  
Is commonwealth a name of a hospital?  
Or a military check post? I have no idea  
Can you tell me, Sir?

Give me my son back

The Mother asking the police, the police asking Naldamayanty  
Damayanti asking the Home ministry  
The Home speaking to Sovereignty  
The sovereignty asking the jungle  
The jungle speaking to Totem  
The totem asking the God  
GIVE ME MY SON BACK.

But now God doesn't speak any longer  
It is A.K 47 that speaks.  
Allah doesn't do anything now  
All is done and set by hidden landmines.  
Soon after we built police stations on earth  
Shepherds came to be sheltered in 14 floor-apartments  
Rivers began to die one by one  
If the jail doors are not thrown open within 36 hrs  
We will blow up widow's only son's head  
You know God doesn't speak any more  
It is A.K.47 that speaks.

But who do you think you are?

They are brothers of yours as much  
As they are my blood  
Still I want to say  
Hunger is not my mother tongue  
Murder is not my mother tongue  
Koran is not my mother tongue either.

I wanted to survive  
Between fog and blasphemy  
I wanted to survive  
Between pen and suicide  
I wanted to survive  
Between treachery and sacrifice.  
I wanted to survive  
Between Hareram and nuclear hoax.

He who has been abducted  
His hands are chained to a tree  
His one leg tethered to a huge penis of God  
In front of his mouth  
One hanging dish of rice  
His stomach is the hungry basin of the Mediterranean  
But he cannot eat  
He feels he will vomit his first rice.

Not the kidnapped son  
But three other boys, same age, are made to appear  
Before the mother  
Fair, dark and very dark  
All the three faces are covered in black  
The mother said, take away the covers  
But one human voice spoke from the sky  
Let the state lay down their arms, and then we can uncover them  
The mother said why my son's face is kept secret  
What has he done?  
But the voice from the sky said  
If the state doesn't stop war we cannot show you their faces.

Is this son yours? No  
Is this boy yours? No  
Is it yours? No  
Then WHICH ONE IS YOURS?  
If none of the three boys is your son  
Then you had no son at all  
The mother didn't become you.  
Here is your son's hand, take it  
Here is his shirt. The State cannot return more  
Than this of a son.

Tens of thousands of mothers are sitting all over  
In Cuba's jungles

In the caves of Tibet  
In China's monasteries  
In Russia's metro coaches  
In America's restaurants  
They are all over from Kalinga down to Bidarva  
Mom, tell me please  
How does he look?  
Fair, dark, very dark?  
Or tall and handsome?

Before it is light  
Before the cocks call

Mom is saying  
Give me my son back  
At noon, Mom is waiting with a dish of rice  
Between rice and a glass of water  
Mom cries out  
Give me my son back.  
But neither before the sundown  
Nor after  
No son has ever returned.

An anti-State Orgasm

I love your hairs when you let them loose down on my face  
I love them as they touch my chest  
Wooing my thighs.

I love your underarm obscene eternity,  
Cut green like a lawn on a valley  
They are the first grass of earth.

I love your pubic hairs protecting your way  
As I mouth them  
Your hairs get moist and my mouth perfumed.

If I run away from you right now  
You will catch me, hold me, and force me down on your valley  
You will slowly strangle me to be your slave again.

Penis

P for penis, penis is power.

Penis is atom

Penis is head

Penis is war

Penis is vagina

the spring came with monsoon, the monsoon came with summer

The summer came with slow-moving trucks littered with dead bodies, the dead spoke in a vulture's voice, the gods said, hey, listen, nights will remain nights like Africans as Africans, adivasis as adivasis fighting for food and fucking democracy like Brahmins.

P for Penis and penis is power.

Penis is Mephistopheles

Penis is Mahatma Gandhi

Penis is nuclear puberty

Civilization came with syphilis, syphilis brought penicillin, penicillin gave us life but AIDS laughed toothily feminists created homosexuals and homosexuals created sex –machines.

Christianity began with a murder of an innocent guy and a release of two murderers.

The moon is controlled by penis

Democracy is controlled by penis

Feminism is controlled by penis

A mosque is controlled by penis

But a parliament is let loose by penis

I came to a river, the river went dry. I came to a bird in a deep jungle where every hungry man and woman had an AK 47, the bird sang me a song of holocaust, I came to a whore in a temple, the whore had a chastity belt after circumcision, I came to my mother, she told me you came so late, my son you are not my biological son any more, I am waiting for an U.F.O to lift me up from this dirty place.

P for pennies penis is power.

Penis is anti-god

Penis is 9/11

Penis is sovereignty

Penis is Fidel Castro.

Yea yea oh, the mosquito fucked an elephant, yea yea oh. Penis is the peninsula of desires. Never ever neglect your penis, clean it up every day with holy water, and worship it every day like millions of Indian women worshipping the penis of Lord Siva under every raining tree. The most beautiful thing in the world is my Father's penis which I have never seen.



I was living a lie

I was living a lie  
I was living a home of errors  
living a bedroom of cracks  
and a toilet of lilies and laughter.

I was living a lie  
in one pocket I touch Jesus  
in another a condom  
I mixed up my home and hotel.

It became a bomb when I spoke  
I never knew the nuts of privacy  
I never knew how to crack  
every nut is a story, every nut a secret.

As soon as I spoke my secret out  
I became a person I thought I would never become  
I knew she was hurt, she was hurt  
shocked .Angry. Sad

It was all me, yes it was all me  
Why did I lie?  
The rock of my destiny rolled down the hill  
why did I betray my life into a late night talk?

Who said, I was living a lie?  
Tiger Woods.  
Do we have guts to say so?  
Oh! God, still we believe, we do not lie.

Hello

the voice that gives me joy the voice that gives me anger the voice that gives me fear the voice  
that gives me a voice to speak.  
the voice that unsettles me the voice that pains me the voice that arouses me the voice that  
warms me the voice that that that that at the dead of the night from the other end of infinity  
said , hello.

that finally takes my voice away.

Tagore, Me and a prostitute

I met her at McDonald; she sat at my table to eat  
I was reading a poem like a thief eats his dinner

She measured me and said can you read it out to me?  
Awed and embarrassed I did.

She told me she has to take the flight to New York tonight  
It is five hrs delayed can you read me another poem?  
I read a Tagore poem from my memory as my own  
a tear rolled down her flashy cheek and dropped into coffee

You smoke? She asked, come with me to the zone?  
She told me she has three nights to stay in New York  
Then two nights in Moscow, then one night in Berlin  
Then she will be back home in her village for a weekend.  
She said, after 9/11, she has clients everywhere.

I rued to come to Gate no 21 to take my flight to Kolkata  
Why didn't I apologize it was Tagore's poem, not my own?

#### Two Fires

Here, every child is scared to play  
here, every squirrel has a bullet-proof home  
here, every old man wants to commit suicide  
there is no difference between a soldier and a man  
No difference between the killer and the killed  
Both are poor, both are hungry both are tortured.

Poets of India, can you walk between two fires?

Is it Israel or Kashmir?

It is time for us to cry like a Sufi  
But we have no tears.

Wells of agony have gone dry  
And why is there a rain of frogs?

It is time for us to forgive  
Who have done us wrong?

But we have no strength to wave it  
We need sleep but we have no eyes.

Is it time for us to pray?  
But there is no god, they all have fled.

There is a mobile phone in a dead man's fist  
It has been ringing in a bird's voice, hello, hello

Either you attend the call  
Or you shoot the mobile to pieces.

In my bu/astard English

I am not a bustard; my father was not a bustard  
But my English is.

So, I shout four-letter word in Bustard English  
Give me my quota to eat, drink and dance.

My friends who couldn't cope with English, got lost  
My friends who spoke English beautifully, survived.

I am not a bustard; my father was not a bustard  
But my English is.

In my bustard English I provoke you to  
Seven deadly temptations.

Temptation no 1:  
Democracy is prejudice  
Temptation no2:  
Marriage is a lie  
Temptation no3:  
Hindu Goddesses had silicon breasts.  
Temptation no 4:  
Christianity is a hoax.

I take a pause to list out three other temptations.

In my bustard English I proclaimed  
If democracy is good,  
Why there is no drinking water for the poor  
Who voted you to power?

My temptation no 2 said  
Marriage is a lie  
Why all husbands pretend as great husbands  
With a fantasy of fucking other women?

I take another pause to make a gesture of gross humanity  
To tell the world that we are

The twilight children of one geography  
And not of another.  
To tell the world that we are  
The babies of one language  
And not of another.  
We have now more bustards than before.

Shall I proceed with the list of three other temptations?

But I am not a bustard my father was not a bustard  
But my English is.  
I am not to blame  
But it is you who created the Commonwealth  
For the bustards like me.

Sharing a room with Shakespeare

You have ashes from inferno  
Fie! My dear, go to the basin  
And wash it away.

Some professors told me  
You are the best from the Renaissance  
Also, you're a gay.

I never shared a room with a man  
Who can talk to Hamlet?  
And can sleep with a spy?

Nothing is fair nothing is foul  
After a bottle of whisky  
When I go tipsy, and you go high.

Toilet

Toilet is the joy of the loneliest man  
He is to fight his enemy, if he can.

Toilet is the joy of a thrown dictator  
He can cry for the woman he never cried for.

Toilet is not just for shit, shower and loo  
But it is a room of philosophy to hold on to.

Negotiating

Negotiating a woman

Is like speaking in a language you hardly know.

Negotiating a woman

Is like a metamorphosis of an order into a chaos.

Negotiating a woman

Is like crossing a foreign border with a burnt up visa.

Where is the good place?

When he got up from his nap, my three year old son said:

Papa, will you take me to a good place?

Surprised, I looked at the three year old

At three year old eyes, three year old lips

At trickling drops of sweat.

I said go, get the zoo.

The lion`s gotten hungry, the tiger`s chased the deer

He said no; take me to a good place.

He went to the next room, cried a bit

Came back with a tattered Karl Marx calendar and said

We will take this grandpa too, by train, by boat

Hey Papa, Papa, won`t we go to a good place?

When I took him to Victoria, he said No, this is no good

When I took him to the Ganga, he said, it`s only a river

When I gave him ice cream, he walked along whining.

Disgusted, I took him home around eight and saw

Tattered Karl Marx lying abandoned on the floor.

I told my son: listen this grandpa said

He would take us to a good place too

That Sunday there was no train, no boat.

Quiet for a moment, who knows what

He began whining again

I gave him a ball, gave him a robot, gave him a ship

Right when I was about to give him a spanking

He asked me the all time big question:

Hey Papa, Tomorrow, will you take me to a good place?

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