

Raagas of Love

*A Poetic Symphony of Love
Across Lifetimes*

Rikhia Basu



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Dedicated to

The raagas that found us across lifetimes...

Unending Love

I seem to have loved you in numberless forms, numberless times...

In life after life, in age after age, forever.

My spellbound heart has made and remade the necklace of songs,

That you take as a gift, wear round your neck in your many forms,

In life after life, in age after age, forever.

Whenever I hear old chronicles of love, its age-old pain,

Its ancient tale of being apart or together.

As I stare on and on into the past, in the end you emerge,

Clad in the light of a pole-star piercing the darkness of time:

You become an image of what is remembered forever.

You and I have floated here on the stream that brings from the fount.

At the heart of time, love of one for another.

We have played alongside millions of lovers, shared in the same

Shy sweetness of meeting, the same distressful tears of farewell-

Old love but in shapes that renew and renew forever.

Today it is heaped at your feet, it has found its end in you
The love of all man's days both past and forever:
Universal joy, universal sorrow, universal life.
The memories of all loves merging with this one love of
ours—
And the songs of every poet past and forever.

- **Rabindranath Tagore**
tr. William Radice from *Ananta Prem, Manasi* (1890).

Preface

Raagas of Love is a collection of poems that explores the many shades of love—longing, loss, transformation, and quiet certainty.

Inspired by the deep sentiments portrayed by Indian *raagas*, each poem weaves a delicate tapestry of emotions—fleeting, yet timeless. These verses tell stories of those who dared to love deeply and fully...journeying across lifetimes—through silence, into memory, and sometimes, back again.

With journalling pages after each section, this book invites you to feel and remember your own *raagas*—transforming the experience from a monologue into a reflective conversation.

As you hold my first book in your hands, I am filled with quiet gratitude. If even one poem rekindles a memory you thought you had forgotten—welcome. We have known each other in another life.

Let us walk this bridge of poems together.

Let us dance—or share a cup of tea.

Let us remember.

Acknowledgements

This book would have never come into being, had my path not crossed with some beautiful souls.

To every person who has shared a moment of love with me or entrusted me with their stories—thank you. These poems are shaped by your echoes.

To my timeless refuge in the arts—thank you for always being there, for loving me, and for being my eternal companion.

And finally, to the *raagas* that painted these poems into reality—across lifetimes—I remain forever grateful.

With love,

Rikhia

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Raaga I. Lalit

Quiet beginnings—tender and full of promise.

First Love

In a house that exists
no more,
with books scattered
across the floor,
a terracotta mural,
a mother's sweet fragrance,
a lake—
now only a name...

a tram ride,
an old song,
a lingering glance...

in unspoken words,
and letters never sent...

you return to me,
each time
I stretch out my arms,
to feel the rain.





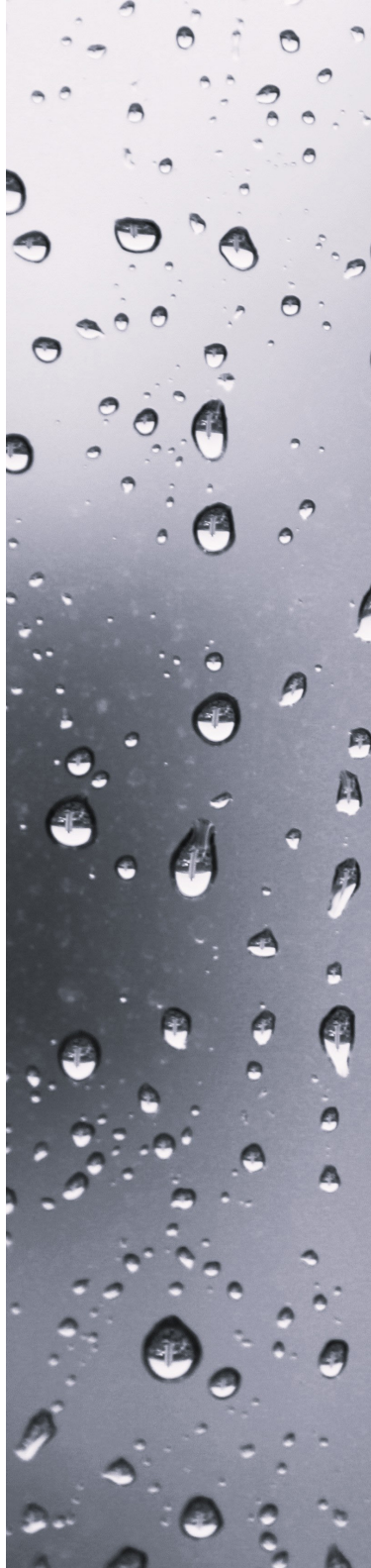
What I Meant to Say

So what if my lips murmured,
“*It’s raining...*”
my heart just wanted
to walk beside you—
soaking in your presence.

And when I exclaimed,
“*Such a lovely day...*”
I meant—
I longed to spend it
just with you.

I said nothing—
but our hearts
spoke
in echo.

And when I came to say,
“*Goodbye...*”
the answer
was already there—
in your eyes.





That Feeling Called Dance

You've laughed with me
in joyful steps,
and held me close
in loving embrace,
in movements
etched with grace.

In every swirl,
every rhythm set ablaze,
you've shaped me
into all
I've ever longed
to be.

With you,
I'm unbound.
I'm free.
If this isn't love,
then what else would be?

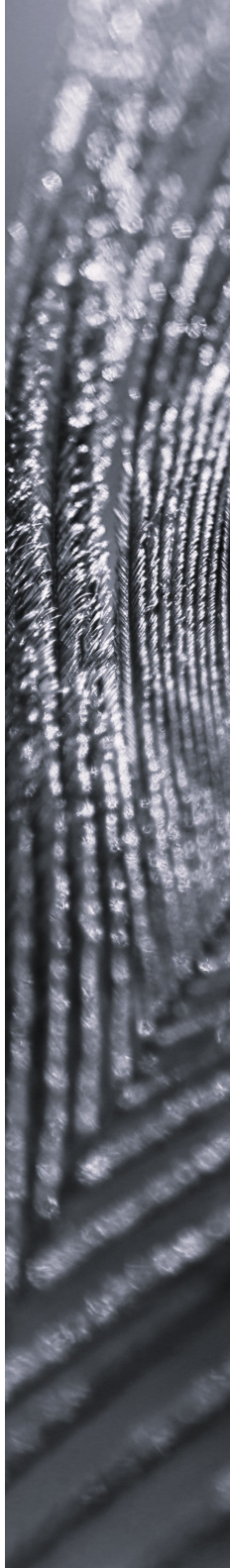


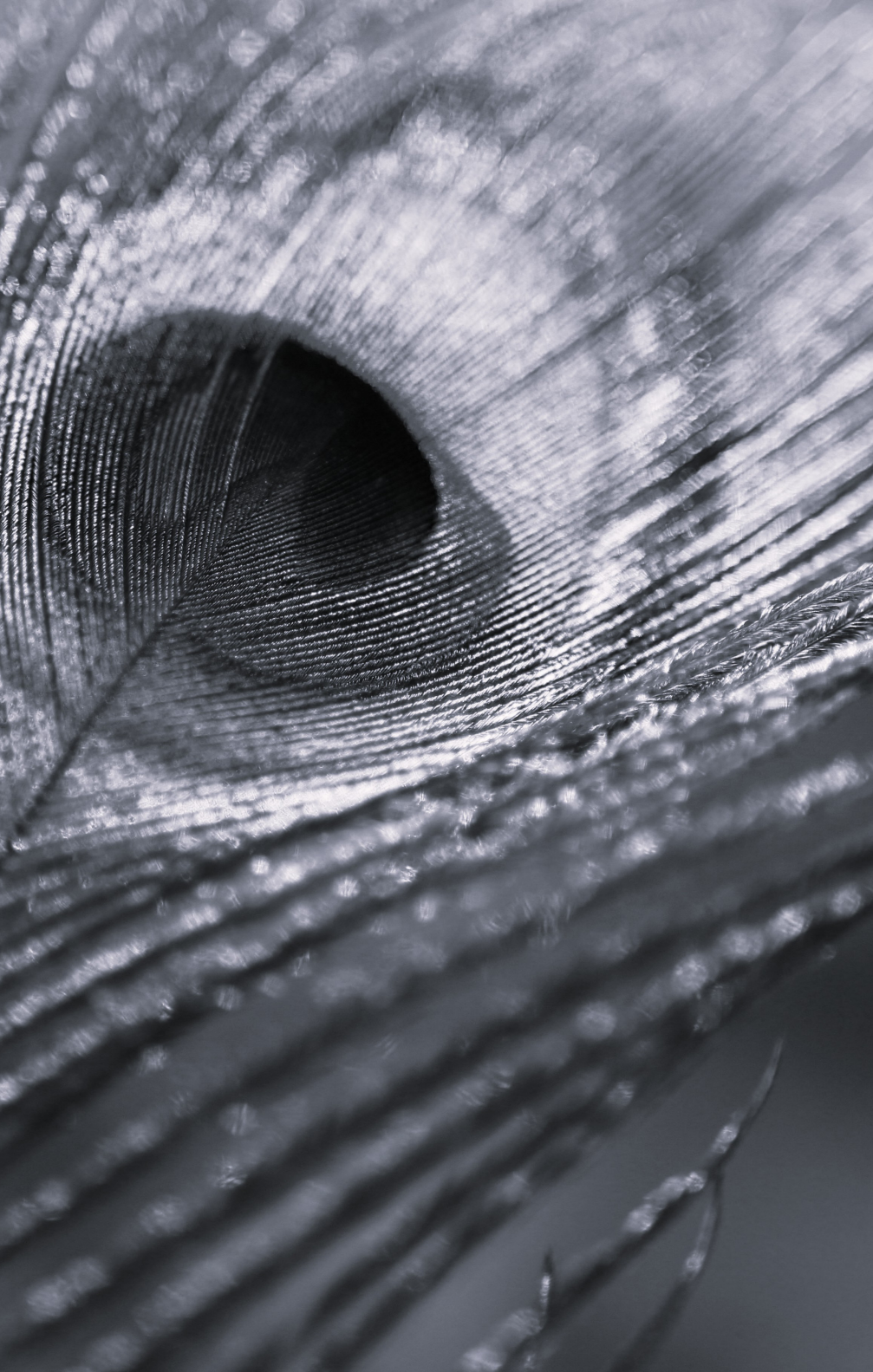


Four Peacocks and a River

I sat by the river
one violet night—
four peacocks emerged
from the forest,
to drink
the starry waters.

I kept looking at them,
and they looked back
at me...
Dreamily, I asked aloud—
*“Did I send the night to you,
Or you the night to me?”*

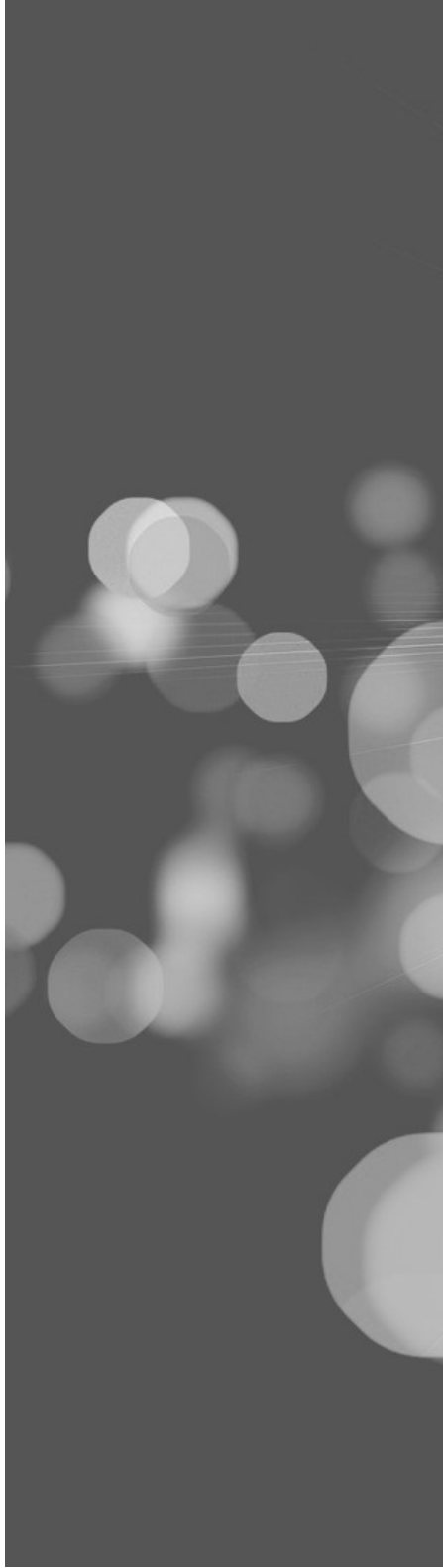




Polaris

It was never about the journey,
nor the destination—
only the quiet certainty
that you exist,
shining bright,
and always will.

The Pole Star
of my existence—
You.





Under a Thousand Suns

Tucked away
in a distant land,
sweltering beneath
a thousand suns,
I found
a new friend
today.

Yesterday,
I didn't even know
she existed.

Strange, I tell you—
how I like her,
and she likes me.

I think we also like
some of the same things,
and the same people...

People I thought
I'd long forgotten,
now return—
tucked deep
in her eyes.





Your Raaga of First Stirrings

Your memories, reflections and echoes—

Those tender beginnings that you still carry...

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Raaga II. Vrindavani Sarang

Passion, desire and the fearless vulnerability of love.

The Secret Kiss

You'd never know—
I kissed you
by kissing
the teacup rim
your lips
had touched.

I could never say it.
So I drank
the silence
instead.





A Rainbow of Love

They told him
whom to live with—
whom to love,
lifelong.

They said,
he should love her—
not you,
or me,
or him,
or them.

But he loved you,
and her,
and him,
and me,
and them.

His heart chose
to love differently—
in life's
unscripted little
moments.





Waking Up with You

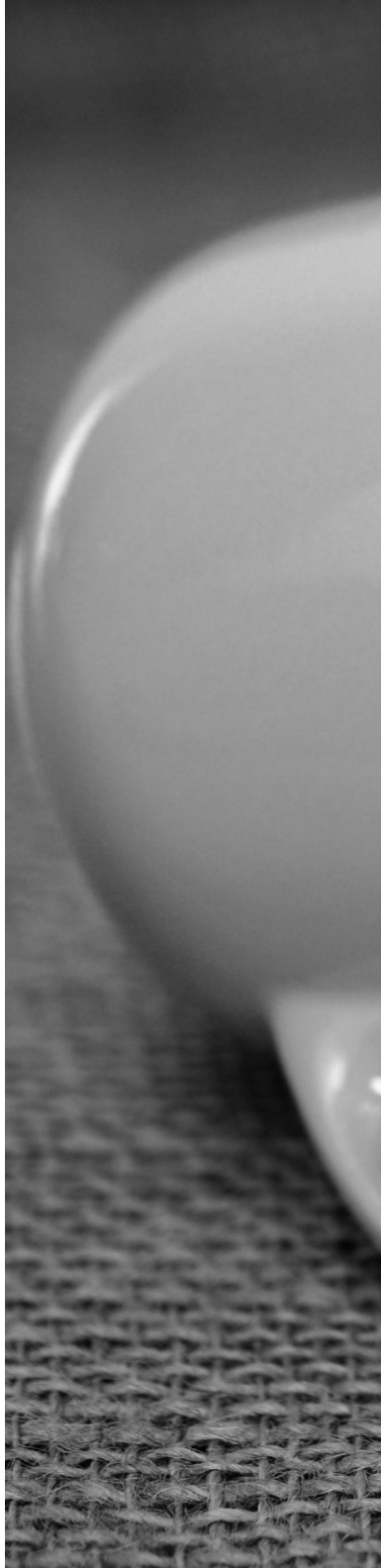
After that beautiful night,
I want to wake up
beside you.

I want you to see me—
unkempt,
eyes bare of kohl,
lips unpainted,
hair unbrushed—
wrinkles and blemishes
visible,
in morning light.

Hold me close,
when I tell you
of all the things
I once believed
were unlovable.

And let me
know you fully—
listening,
as you speak
of all the quiet things
that make you,
You.

Let us wake
together—
vulnerable,
and whole.





The Night on the Bridge

We tangoed all night,
locked in the fire of rhythm—
fierce, yet full of grace,
swirling the night away
on the bridge.

Arm in arm,
we surrendered
to the night—
spinning the darkness
into stars of gold.

You made me laugh—
you made me cry—
with each sudden plunge,
each swift twirl,
our hearts colliding
in reckless radiance,
our bodies speaking
a language
only the river understood.

A night that never faded—
in it, I have lived in you,
every day.





Love Uncaged

Two seagulls rose—
wings wide across an endless sky—
free from
names that bind,
and frames that wound,
simply in love.

I searched for us
in their fearless flight,
longing for a love
that frees—
yet always returns
in every birth.

Breathless

In that one moment,
time stopped.
In the blink of an eye,
I found myself
locked
in your arms
so tight—
I forgot
to breathe...

For the first time
in a long time,
I felt myself
become
a complete woman.

Cell to cell,
soul to soul,
still—
breathless—
alive—
in your
fierce embrace.





Your Raaga of Longing

Your memories, reflections and echoes—

What does the heart ache for, still? What did it silence?

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Raaga III. Kirwani

The pain of separation, and emotional fragmentation.

The Shooting Star

I saw you
make a quick wish.
My lips barely moved.

You turned—
a question in your eyes:
had I wished
for you?

That night
I asked for
the ordinary—
nothing bold.

The star vanished,
its trail left ablaze.

We blamed it
on fate—
our fate—
forever so.



One Night Stand

We spent the whole night
speaking of ordinary things—
though all we felt
was love.

The night stood still,
rooted in silence.

And fear—
of love—
ripped us
apart.





A Moment of Love

It was but a moment—
yet one that paused
eternity.

You took my hand
as we crossed the river,
steadying me,
lest I falter,
lest I drift.

And still,
you lied.
Perhaps so—
I'd never look back...
or find my way
home,
again.





Empathy

Before I slid into your shoes,
I forgot to take off mine.

I didn't feel
where it pinched,
or wonder
why it didn't—
at all.





The Phoenix

Will you miss me,
when silence stretches long?
Will you ache
for one more chance,
one more dawn?

Or—
will we wait,
until time lets go its hold—
and, like the Phoenix,
rise once more—
from ash,
from flame,
from all we left untold—
and stronger,
than ever before?



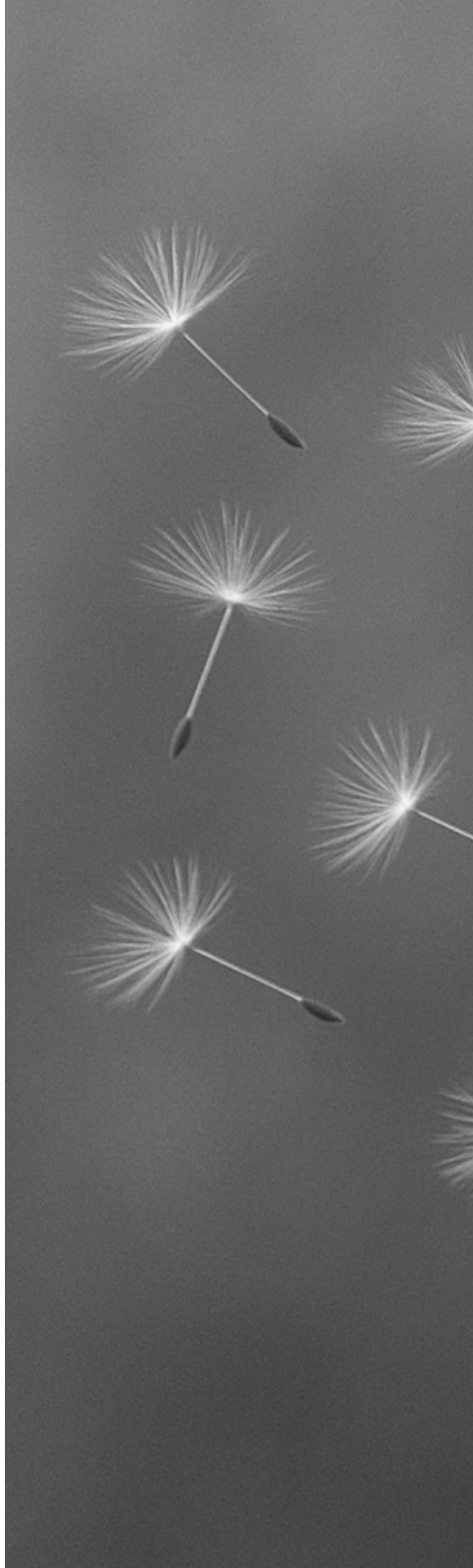


A Love Lost

I waited for you
to call me,
and you waited
to hear what the world
had to say.

My heart held on
with trembling hope...

And while the world lay busy,
love—
quietly—
lost its way.





The Storm of Silence

You saw a teacup—
I saw alchemy:
a drop of gold
staring back at me.

You saw the smoke—
mistook it for fire,
too fierce,
too wild,
beyond your reach.

And yet—
I was reborn
with every sip.

If only
we had lingered
long enough
to tame
the storm of silence.





Your Raaga of Fragmentation

Your memories, reflections and echoes—

Those broken pieces—and the beautiful shapes they took...

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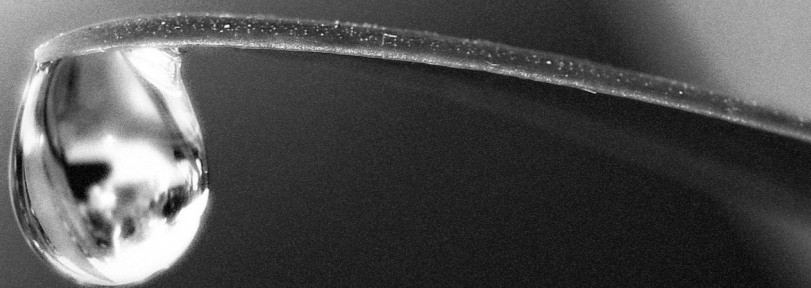
Raaga IV. Malkauns

Serene reflections and selfrealisation.

Belonging

If you ask for my secrets,
believing I belong to you—
then you do not know me
yet.

I'd rather choose
to leave—
not because
you asked,
but because
I do not
belong.



What's in a Name?

You were unnerved—
"But we don't have a name."
I laughed softly.
*"We don't need one—
we loved still."*

Sometimes,
that's what love is—
moments.
One,
or many.
Unrestrained.
Reckless.
Raw.
Burning through the dark,
or softened with care,
until silence
swallows it whole.

Moments—
untamed,
unnamed,
never again.





Unspoken

I kept asking—
“Do you love me?”
And you never replied.

You kept asking—
“Did you eat?”
Did you sleep?
How was your day?”

You stayed awake
when I was sick,
and your eyes brimmed
each time
I cried.

That’s how I knew.





The Moment I Let Go

In a single day,
I stopped
looking back—
stopped
feeding love—
stopped
missing you.

If it were this simple,
if it had only ever been me,
then why did fear
hold me
so long?





Remembering You

I do not miss you
anymore—
but I remember you,
in little words said,
or left unspoken...
in a cup of coffee,
with a little heart
drawn in foam,
a walk across nowhere
on hot summer evenings,
or in a tumultuous
nor'wester storm.

I miss myself
in those moments—
not you,
but I remember you,
each and every time
I miss being
in limitless love.





Your Raaga of Introspection

Your memories, reflections and echoes—

Quiet moments that left you stronger...and more aware.

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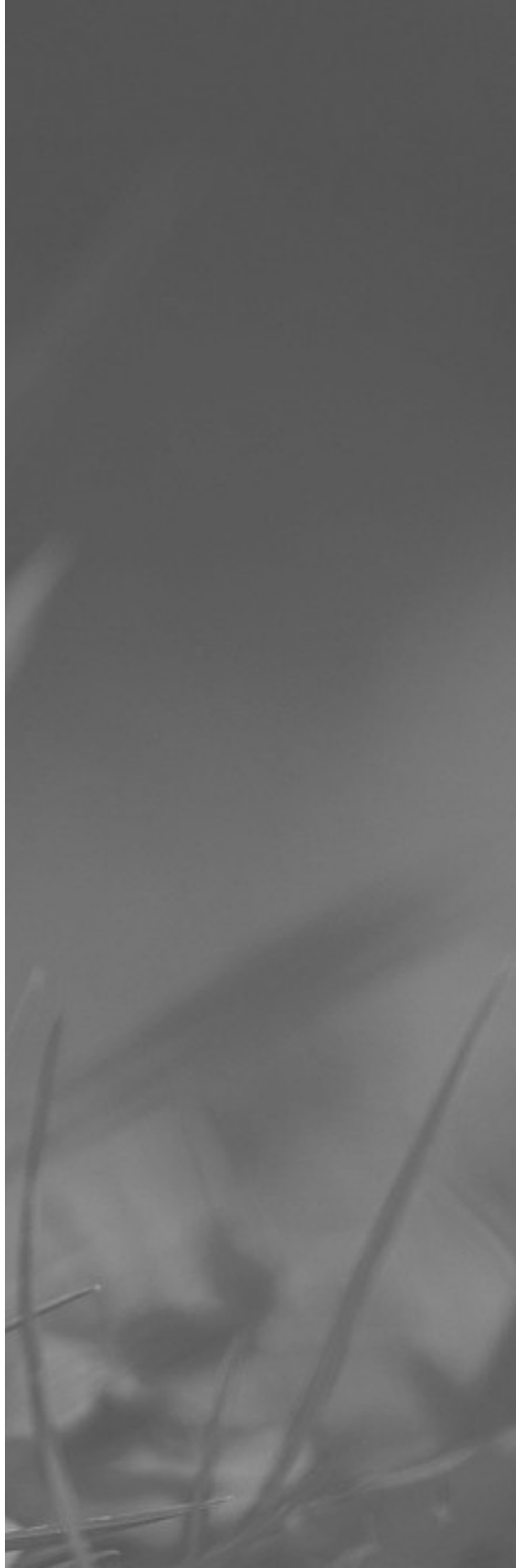
Raaga V. Paraj

*Transitions, timeless connections and
the eternal return of love.*

Soulmates

I've known you
in lives before.
How long ago—
I cannot say,
nor how many times
more
our souls
are destined
to touch.

All I know is this—
in your eyes,
I'm fated to drown
in every birth.





The Physics of Love

Nothing is ever added anew,
nor does it perish
from this earth—
or so the book once read.

Hence,
when death comes silently,
and takes you away from me,
or calls my name out first,
know this—
I shall remain
with you,
as long as
a single speck
of this universe
lasts.





In Another Life, Would You Know Me?

What if we had never met—
would a voice inside tell you,
I exist?

Would I reach you
in your dreams?

Would you turn to see—
without knowing why—
who just walked by
that crowded street?

Without knowing me,
would you still
love me—
as much?





The Forest in You

Towering—
deep—
eternal.
Like a forest,
I thought.

Then came others—
flowers in ephemeral bloom,
melodies of fleeting birds,
petals melting
in the rain.

Yet—
through storms,
through seasons,
through silence—
you remained.

Forever—
my shade.





The Return of Love

Love comes back
in other forms—
in butterflies
hidden among
withered leaves,
in a lost shoe
washed ashore
by the sea,
or reflections of trees
on a sunbathed
balcony floor,
on lazy summer afternoons.

It returns
in an old song,
in dusty staircases
of a long-forgotten house,
in the sudden waft
of familiar perfume—
and sometimes,
in an old lover's
new love.





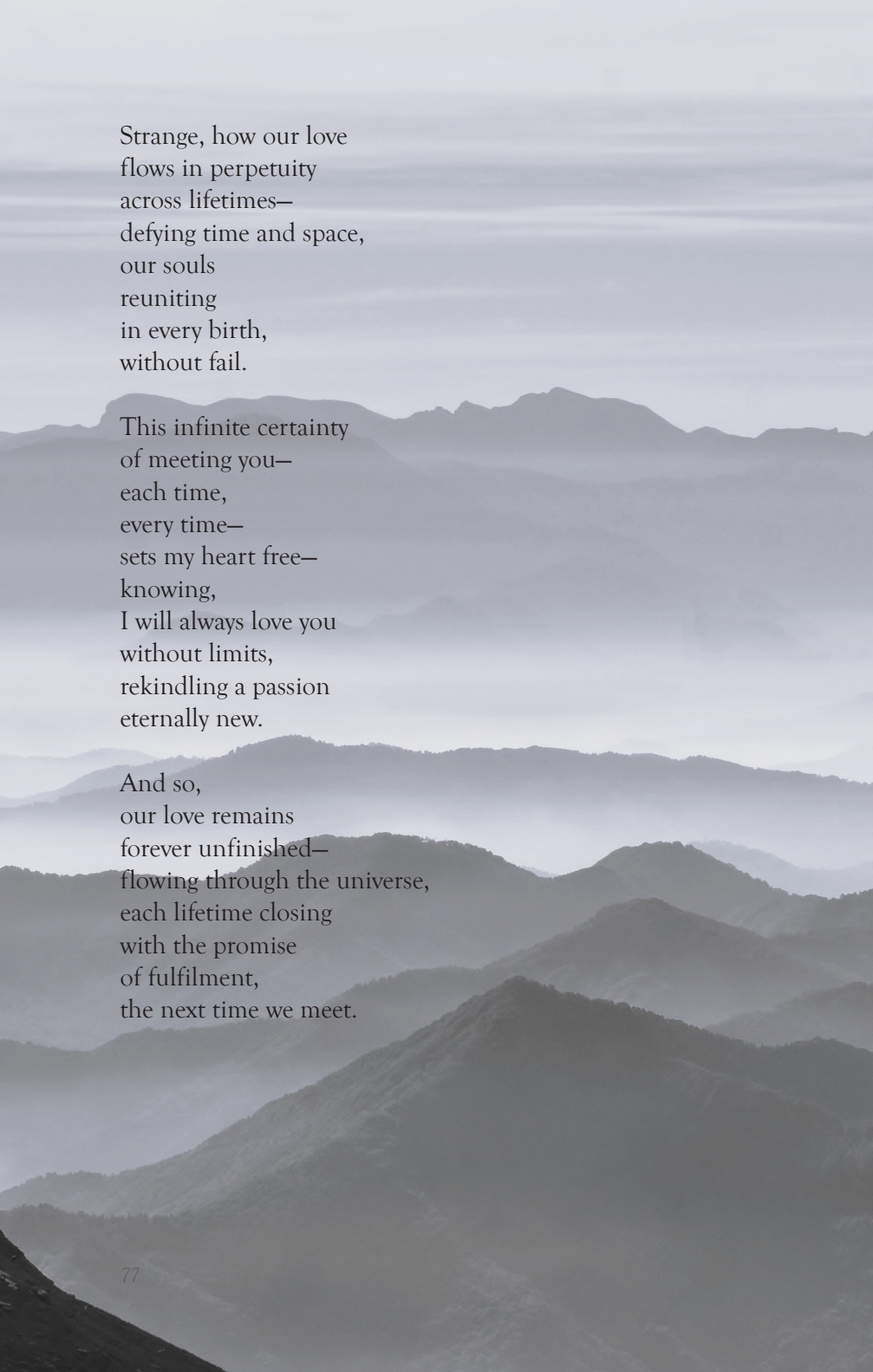
Again

It is a distant lifetime.
We meet in that house—
you are seated at a table,
in a room strewn with books
on shelves, lining walls
thick and white.
I see you waiting for me.
I walk over,
stand beside you—
so close,
we hear each other's hearts
racing.

You look through my eyes—
we make love
in fierce abandon,
as if
there were no tomorrow.
Little do we know—
we are destined
to meet
again.

Your eyes give you away,
in every birth.





Strange, how our love
flows in perpetuity
across lifetimes—
defying time and space,
our souls
reuniting
in every birth,
without fail.

This infinite certainty
of meeting you—
each time,
every time—
sets my heart free—
knowing,
I will always love you
without limits,
rekindling a passion
eternally new.

And so,
our love remains
forever unfinished—
flowing through the universe,
each lifetime closing
with the promise
of fulfilment,
the next time we meet.

Your Raaga of Return

Your memories, reflections and echoes—

Love that found its way back—unexpected, different, yet quietly familiar...

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Thank You

Dear Reader,

*Thank you for reading my raagas.
May you discover your own...*

Love,

Ri Khia