

***FROM INDIA TO MAURITIUS AND OTHER POEMS  
(FOR MY ANCESTORS)***

**By Vatsala Radhakeesoon**

O sail, sail Worried Ship!  
Farewell, farewell dear Motherland-  
land of divine knowledge and wise deities!  
“Go, go now” commands Supreme Destiny;  
With it I can no longer fight daily.

2 November 1834-We have reached Mauritius,  
Green, green is the island,  
Amidst the tropical blue sky sings the bright sun,  
but Colonization’s whip often makes its songs weep.

I work from dawn to dusk in the sugarcane fields  
owned by the White Masters, the British;  
My food and pay are scanty,  
My living conditions are shabby.

O God!  
After years and years of hardships,  
At last you have done some justice,  
Cruel Indian Immigration Law has been abolished.

Now I have my own plots of land,  
Sugarcane plantations smile at me,  
Hard, hard I will keep on working,  
My children will someday rule this country,

They will preserve their roots, their ethnicity;  
Free, free will Mauritius be in the Indian Ocean  
bearing the flag of Human Rights , Peace and Unity.

***PIETER BOTHE MOUNTAIN***

Pieter Bothe Mountain daily receives mail;  
To all the senders it thus narrates its tale:

Syantak was I,  
A milkman was I,  
Mama's, Papa's apple of the eye was I.

Hard, Hard did I work,  
From village to village did my honesty walk.

Tired, tired I felt one summer night,  
under a tree, far from home rested my daylight.

Fairies' songs and dances ended my sleep,  
For my bright future a promise I had to keep:  
"Tell no friend about us" said the fairy,  
"Your life will be Sales-Sales-Merry;"  
"Just tell it openly, your life will sing No-Mercy."

My sales reached beyond imagination,  
Now proudly moved my wedding procession;  
To my best friend, the secret I revealed,  
My life in an irreversible Rock was sealed.

Since then on this mountain top I rest,  
A human head -shaped rock just mourning for regrets.

Follow this advice my dear friends:  
Always keep secrets till your life ends,  
Value promises as words golden,  
And in life will shine No-Heart-broken.

***PAUL ET\* VIRGINIE***

In the Municipal Garden flowery,  
shines a statue greenish -grey lovely,  
My eyes rest on Paul et Virginie.

“N’aie pas peur...je me sens bien fort avec toi”-  
“Don’t be scared...I feel very strong with you”  
sings ,sings this line the inspirational statue.

Promptly I fly to De Saint-Pierre’s novel,  
Artistic, deep, cruel is this travel,  
Yet it glitters like precious jewel.

Background and Settings paint French colony,  
Paul and Virginie hugged friendship freely,  
Hid, Hid then a grey love story.

Paul’s intuition cried, “Sweetheart, Don’t Go,”  
Virginie’s duty said, ‘For us, I’ll go;’  
Then sailed Heiress for France hiding Sorrow.

Years had elapsed in aristocratic monotony,  
Fortune inherited, disinherited sparkled with dishonesty,  
Sailed, sailed then Ship on rough seas.

A shipwreck on northern shores,  
Paul's heart bled like open sore,  
Virginie virtuous had embraced Death's door.

Then only after a few months,  
When Life casted all dim reasons  
flew Paul pain-liberated to kiss Invisible- Union.

Youthful Paul, Youthful Virginie,  
Their love story bore tearful tragedy,  
But shines, shines Statue in Love's immortality.

\*et (from French): and

### ***THE MIND***

Run, run, O untamed Mind!  
Passion, Anger, Greed are the curtains blind;  
Enticement, Ego arouse the selfish Self unkind.

Hold on; hold on, O wild horse-rider!  
Check, pause, solve Inner Riddle's chatter;  
"Peace, poise", whispers Wise- Sole -Caretaker.

Listen, listen, O now obedient student!  
Unlearn, re-learn, be fervent;  
Make a pledge, a promise to Divine Government.

Welcome, welcome, O Mind – Sweet Friend of Mine!  
Emotions, thoughts, subconscious connect to The Divine;  
Now trained, now still, wrapped in AUM\* you shine.

\*AUM: According to the Vedas, the main name of God

### **Bio**

**Vatsala Radhakeesoon** was born in Mauritius in 1977. She has had a keen interest in poetry writing and reading since a very young age. Highly encouraged by her mother, a Hindi teacher, she kept on writing. Her poem ‘Loneliness’ was first published in the widely read local newspaper, L’Express in October 1995. Vatsala has participated in poetry conventions and creative writing workshops in Mauritius and U.S.A.

Her first poetry book ‘When Solitude Speaks’ was published on recommendation of the Ministry of Arts and Culture, Mauritius in 2013. That book consists of poems written between the ages of 14 to 35. Her works emphasize on emotional, social, historical and spiritual issues.

Vatsala Radhakeesoon graduated with a MBA degree from Management College of Southern Africa. She is self-employed, part-time marketing officer of Orbit (Mauritian magazine) and continues to write poems in various languages: English, Kreol, French and Hindi. She is currently working on her second poetry book in English.