

Recalling Refugee-Camp Time

We came to the safe side of India in one mid-night of forty eight
I woke up from the screams and shouts of many, declaring that they survived the night!
“We reached, Petrapole”, a border-station on the Indian side, which I heard
The joy was obvious for those who arrived tattered with almost nothing in their hand!

I do not recollect when the train took off again as I felt asleep in my mother’s lap
I woke in day time as my mother patted us all the three asking to wake up.
The place was Sealdah as I could hear and everyone rushed towards the gate
Mother was cautious and ordered us to be calm and silent not to join the crowd but to wait.

I think we were the last ones to get out of the train from its door
And my father found a place and asked mom to wait, isolated in a group of four.
My two sisters were hungry and thirsty; mom looked around as she had some knack
One elderly person promised to assist, took money from her but never was he back!

Father came quite late making us worrying for quite some time
But he brought food and water, which were all the necessities of prime
Mom gave us all as much as we could take
But she ate less and saved some for next time for our sake.

We were then in a camp. We enjoyed for a month with all kinds of stuff
Some were kind hearted eager to help, intelligent and sharp
Most of many did not though have the feeling for the neighbor
Some heartlessly looked for opportunities to grab and capture.

Inside the camp it was all for a loot
At any moment the stronger ones could put down their foot!
Strange though we survived through tolerance, patience and perseverance
Though here who lived up and prospered learnt the entire extant nuance!

Inside the camp in our freedom, we do not care to assess or ascertain
If we deserve before we desire, and yet within, our expectations we maintain.
The environment teaches us to be aggressive to fight and acquire
The path of time is rough, though the fitter ones often win and well they fair!
Yet friendship grew; some became so close that we started liking them most
Some faces reappear innocent and agile, the names are though lost
There is no contact for more than six decades now
The coordinates have changed and the context cannot be recalled anew!

Memorable times are never back; they by no means return; events are lost forever!
But the memories that time creates, make a dent in life for reasons whatsoever,
They show up often, and when their presence is felt in our moods of pensiveness or gale
We get drowned for moments in to the tranquil, recalling those that were so remarkable!