



SIYAHİ STORIES · 4 POEMS + 2 APHORISMS · SATIRE

The Spam Folder Ate My Uncle's Letter

A generation that outsourced its thinking to a chip, its mornings to an assistant, and – allegedly – a family letter to an algorithm that decided it looked like junk.

FOUR POEMS, TWO APHORISMS · ONE LONG SIGH · FROM THE SIYAHİ ARCHIVE

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Every generation thinks it invented decline. This one just has better documentation of it. Somewhere in Siyahi's newest pages is a single, devastating detail: a family letter, the old kind, on paper, gets lost in the mail – and when it finally turns up, digitised, it's sitting in someone's spam folder, correctly flagged by a machine that has never met the sender and doesn't care that it's family. That image is funny enough to build an entire essay around, so here's one, using four poems and two stray one-liners that all seem to be laughing at the same slow-motion collapse of attention, letter-writing, and dignity.

First, the general diagnosis: everyone's regressing at once

Before naming any specific symptom, the book states the overall condition plainly – adults are getting sillier while children are getting less childlike, as if the two groups quietly swapped homework.

Badonka bachpna badh raha hai,
Aur bchhon ki masumiyat ghat rahi hai...

Ajkal ki iss behat wyast duniya mein,
Chain ki nind kahi dum ghut rahi hai...

— adults are turning childish, and children are quietly losing their innocence. In this relentlessly busy modern world, peaceful sleep is suffocating somewhere, and nobody's quite sure where to find it. [Read “Badonka Bachpna” in the book →](#)

Filed here as Exhibit A: something has clearly gone sideways with the natural order of who's supposed to be acting their age.

II Which brings us to the crime scene itself

What follows is the single funniest, saddest stanza in the entire archive — a full inventory of a generation that has quietly handed off almost everything, including, apparently, its own uncle's mail.

आजची ही होतकरू पिढी,
आणि त्यांच्या अनेक रीतभाती...
चला ओळख तरी करून देतो,
बाकी काम कुठ फार आमच्या हाती...

आता नुसते मेल पाठवतो,
लिखाण तर आम्ही कधीच सोडलं...
मामाच जे पत्र हरवलं,
तेही आम्हाला स्पॅम मधे सापडलं!

अहो डोकं AI चालवेल,
आम्ही नुसती बोटं चालवतो...
सिरी आलाराम बडवते,
आणि अलेक्सा आमची दिवा मालवते!

बाहेरच खाऊन आमच्या, पोटात मात्र कायम कळा...
बातम्यांचा हा कागद, आज न चाळलेलाच बरा...

आम्ही धाकल्यांकडून ट्रेड शिकतो,
आणि थोरल्यांना अक्कल शिकवतो...
वाचनाचा धर्म सोडून, लोकांना पोंड cast ऐकवतो...

कपडे अगदी टाप टीप आमचे,
मुखाला नियमित मलम फासतो...
शारीरिक असो वा रोग मानसिक,
एखादा डॉक्टर हमखास तपासतो!

बाकी खाऊन पिऊन सुखी,
अगदी नावला पैसे साठवतो...
भक्तीची फार हौस नाही,
फक्त सणावारला देव आठवतो!

आमच्या छोट्या मोठ्या तक्रारी घेऊन मग,
आम्हीच आमची समजूत काढतो...
घरापासून लांब जाऊनच,
ह्या नात्यांमधला गंध वाढतो...

पाहता पाहता मग एक दिवस,
कालची पिढी आजची होते...
मागची आठवण काढता काढता,
नशीब पुढचे आयुष्य वाढते...

— this is today's ambitious generation, and here are a few of its customs. We only send email now — handwriting was abandoned long ago. Uncle's own lost letter turned up, eventually, correctly filed under spam. The head is outsourced to AI, we just supply the fingers; Siri handles the alarm, Alexa turns off the lights. We eat out constantly and pay for it in stomach aches, and today's newspaper is honestly better left unread. We learn trends from our juniors and dispense wisdom to our elders, having quietly given up reading for a podcast instead. Clothes impeccably ironed, face regularly moisturised, and a doctor on standby for anything physical or mental. Otherwise perfectly content, quietly saving in someone else's name, not terribly devout — God gets remembered strictly on festival days. We take our own small complaints and talk ourselves back down from them,

and only after moving far from home does the fragrance of these relationships actually start to grow. And then, almost without noticing, one day, yesterday's generation simply becomes today's – and while reminiscing about what came before, life, by sheer luck, just keeps extending forward. [Read “today’s generation” in the book →](#)

Somewhere in the middle of all that self-deprecating comedy, the poem quietly changes register – *ha nataymadhla gandh vadhto*, the fragrance of these relationships actually grows, but only once you've moved far enough away to miss them. The joke was real. So, underneath it, was the ache.

III

Even the poet isn't spared – here's a jab at anyone who quits mid-story

Satire works best when it's willing to turn on its own author, and this two-line poem does exactly that – a wry nudge, presumably self-directed, at the very human habit of abandoning things halfway.

Kahani toh adhuri hi hai aapki,
Kamaskam shayari toh puri kar lo janab!

– your story may well be unfinished, sir – but could you at least finish the poem? A small, affectionate kick aimed at anyone, including the writer, who gives up right before the ending. [Read “Kahani Toh Adhuri” in the book →](#)

Consider it a stray commercial break, or perhaps a footnote from the editor of this very archive, gently reminding a chronically distracted species that finishing things is still, occasionally, an option.

Don't lose the child in you... even if one isn't pregnant!

— a stray aphorism from the book's closing section, dropped in here because it belongs in this exact company: funny on first read, and quietly correcting Exhibit A above — maybe adults acting childish isn't the disease. Maybe losing the actual child in you, the curious and unembarrassed part, is.

IV

And after all that noise, one small poem accidentally says the wisest thing

Buried right in the middle of the satire is a genuinely sincere piece of advice, delivered so plainly it almost gets lost in the comedy around it — which might be exactly where the best advice usually hides.

Kab kya sunte ho,
ye maayne rakhta hai...

Kab kya bolte ho,
ye maayne rakhta hai...

Achha bura to kuch nahi,
sab uchit pal ka khel hai sarkar,
Ab ye yaad rakhte ho ya nahi,
Bas ye maayne rakhta hai!

— when you listen matters. When you speak matters. Nothing is inherently good or bad — it's entirely a question of timing. Whether you actually remember that or not — that, in the end, is the only thing that matters. [Read “Kab Kya Sunte Ho” in the book →](#)

Keep your houses clean, then you won't worry about the guests...!

— the closing aphorism, doing double duty: a literal housekeeping tip, and a wry rebuttal to an entire generation worried about being caught unprepared — by guests, by

algorithms, by their own uncle's mail.

Four poems and two throwaway lines, and together they add up to a portrait that's fonder than it first appears – a generation that outsources its thinking, its alarms, its lighting, and occasionally its family correspondence, but still finds a way to slip in something true about timing, memory, and the value of just finishing what you started. The spam folder ate the letter. The point of the letter, somehow, got through anyway.

The Diagnosis → The Crime Scene → The Self-Aware Jab → The Accidental Wisdom

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Siyahi by Saumitra S. Phatak

Original poems in Hindi, Marathi, and English.

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