

Old Love, Kolkata.

Dear Kolkata,

'City of joy' is that what they call you? But there is something in me which tells me, for me you will always be the city of memories, the winding lanes of solitude, the dark alley with woven dreams, the narrow lanes which smells of teenage romance.

Kolkata my city of memories.

Memories, my experience tells me, are neither pitch black sad nor bright white happy they dangle in between like a shade of grey cloud hovering above you always with a hope of a little rain. Rain of sorrow or of joy.

There is something in me which tells me that I will miss you. There is something in me which tells me, but you will stay the same.

Few years later stumbling across the globe finding a shelter, finding home when I will seek your refuge again, there is something in me which tells me you will stand with open hands embracing me again.

The smell of rows of old and new books and the sound of sellers screeching their voice I will find love in the streets of 'Boi para' again. Alarm clock? Well, who needs that in my city, I know I will once again wake up hearing the faint sound of horns in the street and chaotic voices in my house, people rushing in hurry. Now there is this thing about my city, no matter how fast we are, we are always late. Maybe it's because we have felt the need of trams in spite of having metro in this city. Maybe because my city has taught us that to treasure our dream and build new ones it's okay to slow down our pace and walk together.

One fine day when I will walk past the Howrah Bridge, stand and stare at the serenity of the Ganges, one fine day when I will sit far and see a group of happy friends engrossed in their 'adda' in a tea stall, one fine day when Maidan will seem a little too big and lonely, one fine day when I will stand alone in the middle of the rush and Esplanade will seem too overcrowded, one fine day when the narrow lanes of North Kolkata will make me feel the absence of fingers entangled to mine, one fine day sitting in the middle of Ganga in a ferry when the chilly winds instead of making me free will make me cold, I will understand I have grown old. Old as my city.

Old as the yellow taxi here which will remind me of comfort. Old as the stack of autumn leaves which will remind me of the falls and climbs of my life. Old as the lover who sits alone by the lake at Rabindra Sarobar having 'phuchka' in the memory of his beloved. Old as the school uniform with scribbled memories left unpressed, unattended, hanging in my cupboard. Old as gold.

Old as you my love, Kolkata.