

Mohini Chatterjee  
by WB Yeats

I asked if I should pray,  
But the Brahmin said,  
‘Pray for nothing, say  
Every night in bed,  
“I have been a king,  
I have been a slave,  
Nor is there anything,  
Fool, rascal, knave,  
That I have not been,  
And yet upon my breast  
A myriad heads have lain.” ’

That he might set at rest  
A boy’s turbulent days  
Mohini Chatterjee  
Spoke these, or words like these.  
I add in commentary,  
‘Old lovers yet may have  
All that time denied -  
Grave is heaped on grave  
That they be satisfied -  
Over the blackened earth  
The old troops parade,  
Birth is heaped on birth  
That such cannonade  
May thunder time away,  
Birth-hour and death-hour meet,  
Or, as great sages say,  
Men dance on deathless feet.’