

Can't Let Sweetheart Go**Translated by
Nawal Kishor Lodhi**

Can't let sweetheart go, it's for sure
Can't let sweetheart go, and for damn sure.

Can't let go as your arrival brings happiness
Can't let go as your departure renders sorrow
Scowling face will make you delayed, can't let go
Veiling face will make you delayed, can't let go
Will offer eatables to make you stay, can't let go
Will make you to have it with love, can't let go
Will offer you bed of roses, can't let go for sure.

Can't let sweetheart go, it's for sure
Can't let sweetheart go, and for damn sure.

Will prepare Madhuca-cake and so its crumble,
To offer in breakfast, can't let go
Will offer at noon the Fikār Chapati
And, so the Sorghum's one with Chutney
Will cook Mahērī made of maize and buttermilk
To be set out as dinner, can't let go
Don't mind mistakes, don't mind at all
If I fail to serve better, can't let go for sure.

Can't let sweetheart go, it's for sure
Can't let sweetheart go, and for damn sure.

(Note: The current poem is an English translation of a traditional Bundeli valedictory or farewell song, popularly known as “*Jaane Na Dehu Sajan Ko*”, sung with varying lyrics across localities while bidding farewell to their loved ones, particularly during the bride's departure in wedding ceremonies. It is often categorised under either Gaari or a Samdhi-Samdhan song. It has been passed down to generations solely through oral transmission, due to the non-availability of a separate Bundeli script. Moreover, generational memory gaps, varied pronunciations, and artistic creativity have further made it more difficult to give Hindi transcription and to unify the lyrics of the same. Therefore, the current English translation work is an attempt to document the cultural heritage of the Bundelkhand region.)

Bio-details

Nawal Kishor Lodhi was born in a village in Datia District, Madhya Pradesh, which comes under Bundelkhand region. He is currently a research scholar at Department of English and Modern European and Other Foreign Languages, School of Languages, Chhatrapati Shahu Ji Maharaj University, Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh, India. His current research interest includes cultural studies, specifically feminism and ecocriticism (including translation works). He can be reached via email at nawal2523@gmail.com or via call at +91 8800570162. (ORCID ID: 0009-0005-0443-2024).