

### Manohar Shetty, 'The Old Scholar'

My pupils contend I'm in denial  
of the new fangled, that I harbour  
A chip on my shoulder-I defer to  
That subtle electronic  
Allusion, but in my defence  
I reiterate those serial  
Windows and secondhand  
Encyclicals leave me  
Cold or have passed me by  
Like rain in another latitude.  
I regret there are no manuscripts left  
Handwritten with asterisked  
Annotations or with barely legible  
Scribblings in the margins that have  
Invoked my careful exegesis.  
I affirm that the aperçus on  
Personal histories and the doodle  
On the page to mark a pregnant  
Pause are now sadly missing.  
I note with regret the paradigm  
Shift to cold diskettes

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From memorably musty  
Notebooks or letters with franked  
Postmarks from distant lands  
Signed with that distinctive flourish  
Of elegant serifs in royal blue ink.  
I recall the frisson of discovery  
Of those crumbling but lucid  
Illustrations on a doomed future  
Peopled by machines and automatons  
Whose veracity my distinguished  
Colleagues would often dispute.  
I cannot invoke again that  
Singular pleasure in perusing  
A set of papers delicate as parchment  
With that one awry alphabet  
On a typewriter - now extinct  
As the dinosaur that stamped forever  
Its hallowed genesis, its undisputed  
Provenance. I bow sadly to my young  
Charges and their instant knowledge  
Borrowed with a simple click  
Of a button from a universe  
So ably charted and empirically

Established by my peers

And their prophetic wisdom.

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