

My mind is a tree of
growing dreams
It seems like it produces
more each day

- Cokbod Lodwogo
Picture by Anura Priyantha



Shall I compare thee, William Shakespeare

(To mark William Shakespeare's birth anniversary on April 23)

*Will there ever appear again
In this enormous world
Linked to English literature, a human soul who
Like a colossus strode the world's stage with
Innovative ideas profoundly literate, fully.
Armed to divinely discourse on every human trait, having
Mastered the clever usage of apt words and subtle phrase
So well preserved in his tomes, gifting
Humanity with ideas sparkling
As did this immortal Bard of Avon, who
Kindled new thoughts and visions in human minds
Eternally open to welcome ideas sublime,
Such was this ingenious dramatist and poet who in his
Pensive moods harnessed his rare forensic skills
Endowed with wit, humour and rhyme to
Ably cast in splendidly chosen words now
Researched and studied keenly in academes of fame that
Enrich fond memories of this eternally famous name.*

- ANDREW SCOTT

United

Me you, love
Hearts united as one

- BERTHOLAMUZE
NISANSALA DHARMASENA

Street Mother

Late in the evening,
Coming home after work,
While tasting the tea prepared for me,
Sitting on my comfortable chair,
Thoughts of you,
One after the other,
Floated into my mind.
The Street Mother,
Sits at a street corner,
Looking at the people,
Going up and down
Along the street,
Like busy bees
After work or ...,
Before their work;
Pleading with a helpless look,
Whether the passers by,
Listen or not...,
Or offer some help.
The way, once you asked,
Some tea power, a day,
And a loaf, another day,
Came through my thoughts
Being the breadwinner,
Of the cripple – her daughter.
The thoughts reminded me,
How your absence,
Once made me worry.
The street mother,
Reminds me the mum,
Who waits for me,
Sitting on the arm chair,
And looking at the path,
Through the window.
Till she sees my presence.
Mothers are noble,
And should be cared,
By their children.
But the Street Mother,
Old and feeble,
Still begs in the street,
From dawn to dusk,
And tells us a story,
Of one helpless mother,
Among the many,
Still not known.

- D M A S DHARMADASA

An ode to immortality

It is quite rare
In close proximity
Ready to charge you
At the slightest provocation
As the sagacious poet
Reciting poems
In a trance
Woven with depth
And varying layers of meaning
Wearing nonchalantly
A white Kurta
With eye-catching designs
And a pure-black trouser
Are there your poems
Loaded like missiles
Targeting their victims
Found its specific qualities
Of breath – taking accuracy
And piercing sharpness
By being a diasporic writer
Travelling the globe
Accumulating the heavy-load
Of heart-numbering and tantalizing
Array of experiences
Later finding its shape
As nostalgic memories
Transmuted as words
Parading with pomp and pageantry
Giving birth to written form
Ensuing it is collected
And safe-guarded

As a bulky book of wisdom
Later When you
Autographed your anthology
Which I bought
Without regret
Pricing its value
To multiply with the
Steep steps of time
Ensuring that I cherish
The lengthy and friendly
Conversation we had
I, seated next to you
Having a sumptuous dinner
Naturally, you being the host
Was quite effervescent
Spreading the gospel of goodwill
With cacophony of laughter
Making the feast
An event of merriment punctuated
With the stark realization
Of our imminent parting
Giving way to
A stabbing pain
Vowing to subside
The inflammable Joy
With a chilling prospect of
Impending winter of despair
On the event of
Our irrevocable farewell

- RANJAN AMARASINGHE

Whose help must I seek?

When Albert left this shore that day;
I too longed to go on his way
Empty handed I came that day.
Empty handed I must go away.
My belongings all I gave away;
My great hope my call to come I say.
On a stormy sea I paddle my canoe each day
Hoping to reach my heavenly goal without delay
Though the waves are raging white:
I paddle my canoe day and night
Alas! For 19 years a widow to be
Never thought I – this would happen to me
Now whose aid can I claim this hour?
None but the Great God who has such power
Lord it was my will that happened that time
Change it, change it, and make it Thine
Lord, just as Peter on that stormy night
I come to you with my sad plight
Your answer to me let me hear.
I am with you, do not fear

- NORMA PERERA