



Off to Kamla Nagar

They've opened a KFC in Kamla,
You tell me: I can't believe!
For the three months I've not been there,
Things have changed so much out there!
Did I think that the world would stay still,
And miss a Sri lankan who's left her care?
Shed some sad tears for me,
The way I do, and miss HER air?
Students come and students go,
She's seen them all and held them close.
Chicken buckets and chocolate swirls
Will feed another new batch of girls.
A Death by Chocolate, Jump up and Kiss Me,
A Devil's Chocolate Delight;
Oh! How I miss the unique names
And the nights full of delight.
The nights out here are warm and calm,
Food is good though names lack charm:
BUT I miss you, OM-SHIVA-RAM,
And long to walk there arm in arm....
G.C.Priyangwada Perera.

P.S- This is something written about our favourite hang out spot in Delhi: Kamla Nagar-a small town full of delight. That was where most Delhi University students shopped, ate, and had fun. The place was in walking distance from the North Campus and it was full of college students in shops and restaurants till the town closed down late in the night. But it was after I left Delhi that they opened the KFC, till then Kamla only had the Mc.Donald's. The restaurants had different dishes, drinks, cakes and ice cream with the most weird names one can think of as I have mentioned some. (all being the names of food. My poems are always being totally personal. Often the only sense of achievement since leaving Delhi and probably the only way I can repay what Delhi gave me and what Delhi means to me even now.

In this poem, the poet recalls happy university days and how she hangs around in the township of Kamla Nagar. The poem stands out for depiction of Kamla Nagar and the vital role it played or perhaps, still playing in the emotional lives of university students. The central motif of the poem is nostalgia. The poet has used a simple yet evocative diction.



Sheltering trees

Trees Oh! so full of life
Growing each day
Keeps the world alive
Shelter gives this living thing
From the falling rain
And the scorching sun
Detected our ancestors
From ancient times
Of trees being of value
For our human kind
There sometimes brazen
Black or grey branches
Offers fruits
To feed human or beasts hunger
That satisfies them in number
Leaves for clothing
Wood for housing
Herbs and roots
Cure the sick
Funeral pyres
To bury the dead
Coffins too to rest their heads
Cradles cots for wee ones
Oh! Without trees
We would have none

Let not the axe
Or heavy machines
Slay these down
If no cause at all
Human mind
Come make a plan
To plant a tree
I beg of thee

Precious trees
Let multiply
Whether with roots
Whether with seeds
Dig into the ground
And grow us trees
Dilrukshi De Silva

The poem is about the innumerable ways in which trees help flourish life on the earth. The poet has used a down-to-earth language and apt metaphors. However, there are lines which seem to lack poetic diction.



A daylight rape, and then ...

I witnessed
How the dozey steel monster
With all its might
Overpowered her
In dazzling broad daylight!
Oh! Poor little,
In her charming teens!
Outgrowing knolls on her torso
Outfit adorned with emerald designs
Of palms, shrubs and verdant undergrowth
Striking lustrous pelt swathed body
Torn into pieces;
Ripped off her clothes, in a jiffy;
Leaving a bleeding naked body
Lying motionless, breathless!
For sun, moon, stars and clouds
Up in celestial world to bemoan!
Alas! What could you and I do?
Except, heaving a sigh of relief!
Many a time, passers by witnessed
De jure Misdemeanor
No *de facto* mother would
Wilfully or mindfully behold

Time passed by, ostensibly fast
Awakened, one day, to a roaring
Each half nut, reminiscing moon
Milky matter, relishing palates
And the oil, lighting up shrines
Worthier than gold;
Cracked a joke
Amidst a deafening applause
Hurrah!!!!
Jayatissa K.Liyanage

The poem is about cutting down of coconut trees. The poet has skillfully used the metaphor of raping a maiden to highlight the fact that a coconut estate is of utmost importance to life. The poet has used a simple diction.

Reunion

A song of subtle music
Beautiful as of yore
A promise, yet unfulfilled
A story from yesterday
Tears well in my eyes,
Tears that waited so long
Wipe them away with
The dream we once saw
A glance so tender
A whisper, a soft kiss
A scent pure and sweet
A to-be-fairy tale
Is it you yourself
Mine-own-of-old days
In your eyes I can see
The girl-I-used-to be
Punya Samanthapali

In the poem, the poet skillfully depicts the changes that have been brought about by time. Over the years, time has changed everything from the fresh feeling of youth to the intimate relationship between once a girl and boy. The poem is noted for its short and sharp lines.



A wish from a withered heart

My beloved wife
You were then
A widow you're now
Yet you are the sweetheart
Who always moistens me
With the drops of tears
All the chirpy cherubs
Whom we brought up together
Have gone their own ways
Flapping the tiny wings
You are alone in the nest
Losing every support
No softness there
to warm you dear
bearing many a pain
you sigh-my heart weeps
Have a great desire
To be with you
As ere days we were
Yet this is a long journey
Which I finished so early
Waving my hand call thee too
From a distance lonely place
Yes-there is a room reserved
In this valley
Which is filled with
Peace and tranquillity
I know
How much defenceless are you!
In your aged life
Losing the warmth and every support,
My heart feels guilty
If I did any wrong for you
Please forgive me dear!
Suffering all night -
With a burning heart
Have a great desire
To come secretly
Into your solitary cell
And go back
Wiping your endless tears
In our own compound
Where fragrant flowers bloomed
Let me float and roam around
mingling with gentle breeze
when the veil of the dusk falls.

Inoka Samarawickrama
A translation of the poem *Miyagiya Samiyage Balaporottuva* (The hope of a dead husband)

Roshini Ketipearachchi

The poet has made a good attempt at translating the original Sinhala poem into English. But there are some places which sound un-English owing to the translator's attempt to translate Sinhala idiom into English.



Room service...

With a pretty little doll,
As the winter nights fall,
You make a familiar visit,
To this remote Chalet resort,
With a young lass as the companion,
At your beck and call,
Now sailing out of the room,
I escort to the car your satisfied soul.
An escapade at its end,
When you're about to depart,
A few dollars into my fingers,
With a friendly grin, you thrust in,
Indeed it lights up my heart,
One satisfied customer's joy,
For service well done.
A prayer for you,
Will always be at my lip,
Thank you sir,
For that generous tip,
Keeping away the wintry cold,
Your quenched fires,
Will keep the tabs on hold,,
Smiles may gather,
Hearts could turn light,
With a fire burning bright,
In a cozy fireplace at night,
And want for a few days,
Chased hopefully out of sight.
Nalaka Dassanayake

Using the narrative mode, the poet tells a story of a room boy being given a few dollars as a token of appreciation for the service well-done. The poet has used a simple diction.



A little angel

Awake in the night
Bringing me the sweet dreams
Stubbornly hovering
Around my heart
Oh! Is this love?
I feel your scent
You search my breaths
You, the little angel
Who wants to stay in my heart?
How are you?
The little angel
Who knows more about me
Than I know about myself...
Is this the love?
You're in a dream full of flowers and stars
Shining like a leading star
In my heart
Longing for me
Is this the love?
A..M..N. Amarakoon

The poem is about the indescribable nature of love. The poet has used a simple diction and apt metaphors.

