

# Our Lady of Lanka



Our Lady of Lanka!  
Our own special appellation for thee;  
Queen of this emerald isle  
Girded by the boundless sea.  
Protective guardian of our realm  
In times of strife and threats of war  
Bestowing peace on a nation  
That trusts in thy maternal power.  
Lady of Lanka we acclaim thee  
From Pedro's point to Dondra Head  
From North to South from East to West.  
The brightest blossoms we cull for thee  
Mother of our land, of a nation free.  
Nil manel, pink Nelum, velvety Araliya of subtle hues  
Sweet-smelling Sepalika, Wathusudu the fragrance of Pichcha too  
Hail! Mother of Lanka smile on this beautiful isle  
Accept our honour, praise and thanks  
And blossoms culled from the bowers of our isle.  
- *Jeannette Cabraal*

# Infancy rebounded

Lying on my back in a cradle one day,  
I saw two ill-shaped things wobbling away,  
I grabbed one and bit it,  
I thought it was something to eat  
But then I realised I had no teeth.  
I then rolled over and crawled about  
Next on my two tiny feet,  
I stood rooted to the ground,  
Not knowing what was next expected of me.  
Then to someone like a pregnant leech  
My mother was trying to teach  
"Run to me darling", she said  
"like Susantha Jayasinha"  
Father said, "No! "I want him to be like Lasith Malinga"  
I then grabbed something and took good aim,  
But the crash of glass from my window pane  
Brought me back to reality.  
I then heard my mother shriek  
I rolled over and fell out of bed  
And father said to me  
"You" - "son-of-a-gun",  
"See what you have done,  
You have damaged another's property".  
All this then, was only a dream  
- *Sheila Bandaranayake*

# A sprig of olive

The manger alight A solitary lamp Filled with hay As cows and lambs Munch some leaves Beside the Lord Then crooning babe Thoughts matter A gift in spirit The stem of olives Fresh and green	Bathed in dew Bunches of fruit Kept at feet A gift well thought The sprig of olives Brings that smile On a divine face As Jesus cried That Christmas day. - <i>Miran Perera</i>
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# Vengeance



The kingfisher sits on the high-tension wire  
Watching the wide trench below.  
He sees not the passers by  
Nor the children frolicking on the road.  
Meditating he is until his eyes  
Catches a glimpse of a floating fish  
Like a bullet, he flashes down  
The struggling fish is at his beak.  
Twisting and fidgeting to free himself  
Cursing his captor, the fish breathes his last.  
When once your mind is bent on vengeance  
Like the kingfisher above, you are.  
Waiting for a chance, you're marking the time  
And dashes at once when the time is ripe.  
Sweet vengeance, how sweet it is!  
Yet it's only till your revenge is complete.  
The aftermath, will not it be worse?  
Won't you realise the gravity of it?  
As our religious leaders had preached us,  
The best act is to forget and forgive.  
- *Lalitha Somathilaka*



# Three miserable words

Dark, black and ugly  
Words he described me  
Spread over my life  
Like oil on the sea...  
It covered starlit skies  
Which I liked to see  
And did not give me a chance  
To sing my painful plea...  
Dispersing and gathering  
It formed a dusty layer  
Which separates me  
From breezy mists  
And stands as a barrier  
I lost my sweet dreams  
Of a love that lasts longer  
And become a human machine  
Laughs which wrapped a weeper  
Dark, black and ugly  
He labelled me like that  
And tore my heart into pieces  
Now it is hard to get smart ....  
But I let him my hands  
To get stand and steady  
I knew I'll never fit  
For the space left by his sweet beauty...  
He ignores the pure heart  
Beneath my dark skin  
And still giving me the same label  
But I stand beside him ...  
- *Lakmali Dharmawansa*