

As I feel thy presence abound

When valleys rise before the sun
 Awake the green grass from asleep
 Crystal dew from heavens drop
 As I feel thy presence abound, my Lord....
 The mountain tops in purple shades
 When dawn smears her gentle breath
 In pristine white the daisies smile
 As I feel thy presence, my Lord....
 Thou art celestial in purity
 As the new-born rose of dawn.
 When thy breath touch my heart
 As I feel thy presence abound, my Lord....
 I see thy heavenly smile serene
 That lights up my surging heart
 And in wonder I gaze upon thy face
 As I feel thy presence abound, my Lord....
 Do thou know the pangs and sighs
 My heart is laden with?
 But Heaven knows its smothered strain
 As I feel thy presence abound, my Lord....

-Princess

The end is near

Is fading away
 Leaving only the twilight
 Now the star flowers are faintly blooming
 The queen of the night, the moon.
 Being unhappy,
 Shows her half face
 To the humans on earth
 She has not been happy
 With the things that happen on earth.
 She observes her closest companion
 While journeying
 She expresses her grave concern
 For the escalating violence
 That may sweep mankind from earth.
 She asks, "Has love totally disappeared?"
 The ruthless ambition
 That has set the inescapable rat race
 In all avenues of life,
 Has created global tension.
 My dear friends with human origin
 Where are we going?
 To the mass grave?
 The words that reach you
 In these free verses
 Are the tears I shed for you
 I fear that the end is near.
 Unless man changes his course.
 That sacred thing called love
 Is just a fashionable word today
 Love "is" when ego is not
 The only solution for all human problems
 Is LOVE! The eternal fragrance!

- N. Widanagama

An eulogy to a noble friend

Time: A sort of long distance runner, engaged
 With a singular purpose
 In a marathon run
 And I lag behind
 Carrying a heavy load
 Of heart-warming
 And fulfilling
 Reflections of fond memories
 As age has mellowed me
 To seek a new and profound meaning
 Of our strongly built friendship
 In a foreign soil
 Forgetting feelings of
 Any animosity
 Flared-up with
 Our myopic convictions
 Seeking supremacy
 Of our different ethnicity
 Partying to African drum-beat
 Intoxicated with
 A liberal spirit of bonhomie
 Joyous evenings then were memorable
 Extending till
 The wee hours of the night
 Dazzled by the enchantment,
 Of the enticing and enigmatic
 Company of young African damsels
 Making inroads without much effort
 To our lonesome hearts
 Now, I am contended
 Earning laurels and
 Much over-valued respect

As a virtuous family-man
 Still I yearn for your precious company
 Not knowing your whereabouts
 Though I can recollect
 That you too returned home
 Ages ago,
 Now I wish for a speedy re-union
 And with dividends of peace
 Perhaps, we can meet again
 In equal terms
 In our beloved tear-shaped island home
 Embracing with a conviction
 That both of us are members
 Of a universal human race
 Shunning all kinds of malignant fetters
 Of discrimination
 Thus let me sincerely welcome you today
 To my humble home
 Uplifting our spirits to high heaven
 With heartfelt cheers
 Of my family members
 And I can call you again
 With a pulsating heart
 Simply eulogising you
 As a noble friend
 As I owe much to you
 Who stood by me
 Through thick and thin
 In my fun-loving and chequered
 Past days of exile

- Ranjan M. Amarasinghe



The iconic mango tree

You look so sad,
 Your eyes are withered,
 Your face is dark,
 The greeny leaves
 Waved in the breeze
 Beautifying your appearance,
 Have fallen down...
 It seems that
 Nature has got angry
 With you,
 You are happy no more...
 Children are sad;
 Everyone who loves you
 Laments silently,
 They shower you
 With water of love,
 Children touch you lovingly
 With their tender hands,
 Hoping you will smile again...
 Oh! Dear mango tree,



Show your love to them,
 Carrying full of mangoes
 As you used to give them
 Each and every year...
 I will wipe away my tears
 And smile with you.

- Anjalie Chandima Silva
 Sri Lankan School Muscat

Gardens of love

Jewel bright, that tapestry,
 In my garden, planned with love.
 Yellow, orange, pink and white,
 Roses everywhere
 Their drugging perfume wafting
 Through the morning air,
 Sun-birds, magpies, parrots,
 Golden Orioles,
 Making jumbled music,
 Smiling buds unfold.

Quiet in my solitude,
 Thoughts of yesterday,
 Memories of childhood,
 Treasured and dear.
 Birdsong from the fruit trees,
 Blossoms kissed by bees,
 In another garden,
 Brings nostalgic tears.

Verna L. de Silva

Alms-giving at Home for the Aged

Around the dining table
 They stood on their feeble feet.
 Folding their hands they started muttering
 "Namothissa Bhagavatho,..." and so on.
 An elderly gent then started a sermon,
 To praise the donors of the meal provided.
 He lengthened his speech to praise us all
 No feeling at all of these hungry elders.
 How unlucky these inmates were
 To depend on others to fill their stomachs.
 "Haven't they any children?" I thought

"Why have they being deserted like this?"
 Is it their fate or unfaithful children?
 Many a question I asked myself.
 Is it a must that a sermon should be carried
 To bestow the merits on what they've
 been given?
 Doesn't this sermon is to show our
 importance
 I realised myself, ashamed I was.

- Lalitha Somathilaka