

A terrible death



“Tok, tok,” went on the axe
One by one, the branches fell.
With luscious pods strewn around,
Only the trunk stood tall and straight.
“How hard is this timber?” I heard someone ask.
Axing the age-old tamarind tree.

My mind went back when we were small
The tamarind tree stood majestic and tall.
On a rush mat spread under this tree
We did our homework, studied our lessons.
Sucking the pulp, brown, sweet and sour
For fallen pods were abundant here.

Four men were busy destroying the tree,
“They have no heart,” I murmured to myself.
Sitting under the shade of another tree
When the rays of the sun were too hot for their backs.
“The tree that gives you shade today
You’ll cut tomorrow,” I wanted to say.

For a few rupees or to put up a mansion
To destroy an ancient fruitful tree!
What a queer world! No gratitude left.
Tears began to blur my eyes
A great crashing shook the ground
Then an unusual silence pervaded

As if the world had stopped its spinning
To moan for the death of an age-old comrade.
The winds were silent, they’d stopped their whistling
A thick, dark cloud was covering the sun.
The huge old trunk of the tamarind tree
Was lying inert, the slayers had won.

I covered my hurting, tearing eyes
Then opened them back to an empty space.
“A terrible death, a murder unforgivable,”
I retorted to myself, what else could I do?
The owner was greedily caressing the trunk
Working out, what his profit would be.

- Lalitha Somathilaka

Golden paradise

My country, the pearl of the Indian ocean
Beautiful island with cultured nation
Was accepted by the ancient world
As the golden paradise on eastern earth

Sri Lanka synonymous with Thaprobana and Serendib
Amply explains its prosperity in the past
The glory of our island famous all over world
Would have influenced “Ptolemy” to
draw big state in the map of the world

It is surrounded by the blue sea and golden beaches
Inland is totally green with all over vegetations
As natural forests, national park and sanctuaries
Plantations of tea, rubber, coconut and paddy fields

Several rivers flowing from central high hills
Making beautiful waterfalls like Dunhida, Diyaluma and Laxapana.
The weather is good in the country neither warm nor cold
But within hours of travel can visit areas of more warm or more cold

Large dagobas, stone statues and ruins at Sigiriya
Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura and Yapahuwa
give evidence of our ancient civilisation worshipping
Sacred Tooth Relic in Kandy and Sacred Bo Tree at Anuradhapura

Our people are friendly and helpful
They smile with everybody and always cheerful
As our country is peaceful, harmony prevails
Law and order is maintained protecting human rights.

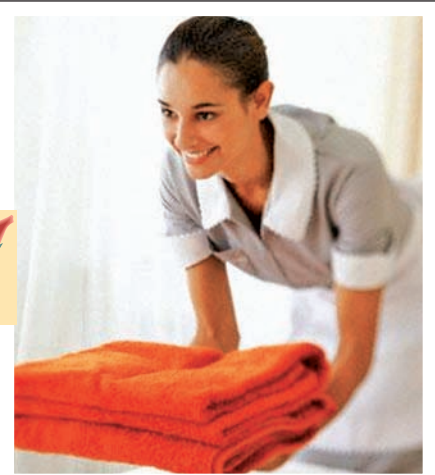
- Dr. R. Warnakulasuriya

Nature's way

The forest is facing the setting sun
A mild breeze is playing among the leaves
Dancing leaves reflect the rays of the setting sun
It is a living moment with immense joy.
Now the darkness is gathering
And the Orion is in the northern sky
Bats are on wings welcoming the night.
Things seem to happen on their own
One never knows whether Nature has improved
It is what it has been since the beginning of time.
The universe never grows old!
One wonders whether the rose has improved
It is what it is with beauty and fragrance.
It is perfect in itself- with no improvement.
Why man has caught in the idea of improvement?
What's there to improve?
He is already a human being
He has improved bombs to kill in millions
Never ending climbing the ladder of so-called suc-
cess.

Has set the rat race at its fullest.
Which is the ruthless ambition.
Ambition is the desire to become through com-
parison.
And this becoming has destroyed the world.
Man kills man not for food
But to achieve his many faceted ambition.
Conflict is the outcome of this ambition.
Has death improved in its arrival?
Is death ambitious to come?
Is Love buried in the graveyard of ambition?
Can you improve the sun?
Love cannot be improved.
Either you have it or not.
Love is spontaneous reality
That comes into being
When ego is totally absent.
Love never dies for it is not born.
Love “is” as the universe “is”.
- N. Widanagamage.

Montage
Poetry



Black gold

What dreams ! What hopes !
A cosy, simple little home, decked
With a home theatre
A picture box with the
Possible largest screen
Hard labour from dawn
to the second time the cock crows
Drudgery with torture to boot
One plate broken; a smack and
A five dollar cut
Problems are mani fold
What matters is black gold
Baba is never so cruel
Feeds you with an insipid gruel
Your ruse to evade the master is prime
You cover yourself with soot and grime
Your body smells
He from you shrinks

Deserted in a desert
Overwork claims your body
Slavery devours your soul
Gold you offer
To the State coffer
Round – bellied fat – bodied
High – flyers to
Fly in cool comfort

Your arrival!

A partner despirited by spirits
Beggared by punting and the turn of cards
Haggard, worn out and
With weaker manliness
But mostly suspicious,
Is not apologetic
He from you shrinks !

The elder has lost his fine figure
A thrice rehab for getting hooked to the sugar
The younger
Tearful and fearful
Wants to hide her shame
For which she cannot give a name

Your dram palace
Just about a couple of feet in height
Sans love, sans gold sans everything
You book another flight
Hugging a new set of dreams.

Who fated you to this doom?
Or was it karma?

- H.A. Siriwardena