

SPARK

A STUDENT-LED CREATIVE COLLECTIVE



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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND LINGUISTICS
UNIVERSITY OF SRI JAYEWARDENEPURA

Spark

Edition 02

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MESSAGE BY THE HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND LINGUISTICS

As the Head of the Department of English and Linguistics (formerly known as the Department of English), it indeed gives me great pleasure to pen this congratulatory message at this significant juncture of the second publication of our department, the ELA Magazine, named “Spark: Student-led Creative Collective.”



I am proud that the students of our department have displayed such an immense effort in contributing to the further enrichment of the festivities in publishing a magazine of this nature. I am extremely proud of our own students who, despite having no formal academic training in Creative Writing per se at the department, have boldly projected diverse innovative expressions as entailed in these pages to follow. Therefore, this is in no doubt, an expression of authentic talent indeed: Spark. It is heartening to note the creative interests of our student body, and I take this opportunity to extend my sincere wishes to the ELA student body on embarking on this promising journey. The ELA has been an integral element of the Department of English and Linguistics, since the department’s inception in 1997/1998 under the patronage of the late Prof. A.J. Gunawardena spearheaded by Ms. Parvathi Nagasundaram – the Mother of the Department – who is responsible for transforming the department into what it is today, rendering her immense services to date. It is indeed with a sense of pride that I highlight that it is the Department of English and Linguistics of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura which pioneered the TESL programme at an Undergraduate level. The department also is the forerunner in offering English Literature and English Language studies at the Undergraduate level, giving equal focus to both the streams. It is noteworthy to spotlight that our department under the guidance of Prof. Rajiva Wijesinghe and Ms. Parvathi Nagasundaram initiated the process, by way of extending the valuable opportunity to students, of pursuing an Undergraduate degree in English, despite them not having offered English at the Advanced Level examination: the department adopts the concept of an entry test by way of ranging invaluable opportunities to the student community. It is this extension of recognizing academic talent and ensuring their productivity therein, that has led to the current sphere of the department being home to students of diverse academic and socio-cultural backgrounds to pursue the tertiary education of their choice.

It is a pleasure for me to convey that this is the second edition of the Spark magazine which is published by our department. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic situation, which is currently going on all over the world, the students decided to publish this magazine through the digital platform. This clearly reflects the students’ commitment, their conduct towards humanity and their commendable collective effort despite being individually separated. Bringing the magazine to be published in the digital platform in this pandemic situation, also functions as a means of releasing the student’s psychological tension caused specially due to this unfortunate COVID-19 pandemic.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the Vice Chancellor and the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura at this celebratory juncture for all his support rendered to our department in uplifting the academic



experience of our very own students. I wish to acknowledge the commitment of the students specially Dulanaka Jayasinghe, Chathushkie Jayasinghe, Chirath Halambaarachchi, the President, Secretary and the Editor of the English Literary Association. I also would like to acknowledge my gratitude the current board members, Binuri Ruwanpura, Tani Thilakaratne, Deshadhee Wijayarathne, Senali Sagara, the President, the Secretary, the Editor and the Co-editor of the English Literary Association for taking on the duty to finish the magazine successfully. I give my heartiest wishes once again to the ELA of our department and sincerely wish our students all the very best in their future literary endeavours.

DR. CHITRA JAYATHILAKE HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND LINGUISTICS.



MESSAGE BY THE PRESIDENT OF ENGLISH LITERARY ASSOCIATION

I am grateful for the opportunity to provide a message for the second issue of the Spark Magazine- a student led creative collective. The Spark Magazine was created to be an outlet for the creativity of the students of the Department of English and Linguistics of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, who make up the membership of the English Literary Association. We are proud about the fact that the second issue of the magazine goes beyond the initial goal and extends its scope of contributors to include the entire student body of the university.



It is important to note that the entire magazine is a student-led venture. We did not rely on professional supervision. Hence there is a space for mistakes. I humbly request the readership to pardon such subtleties.

On behalf of the Board of the English Literary Association for the year 2019/2020, I would like to thank Prof. Sudantha Liyanage the Vice Chancellor of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Prof. Shirantha Heenkenda the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura for the support extended towards us. I sincerely thank Dr. Chitra Jayathilake, the Head of the Department of English and Linguistics and the academic staff of the Department of English and Linguistics for the constant guidance and support provided to us throughout the project. I would like to thank the fellow members of the Board of the English Literary Association for the year 2019/2020 and the members of the Editorial Committee who worked tirelessly for the successful completion of the magazine. I would finally extend my sincere thanks to the contributors of the magazine who make up the creative core of the project.

As I end my tenure as the President of the English Literary Association, it is the sincere hope of my fellow members of the out-going Board of Officials and myself that the Spark Magazine will continue to be a beacon of creativity and expression and will be the starting point of a new generation of Sri Lankan writers and creators.

DULANAKA JAYASINGHE

PRESIDENT

ENGLISH LITERARY ASSOCIATION

2019/2020



ADVISOR



Dr. Chitra Jayathilake
Head of the Department of
English and Linguistics.

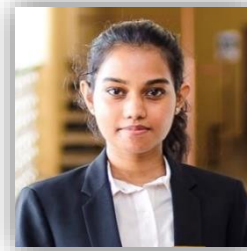
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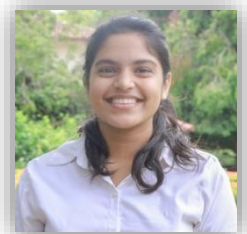


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Editor 2020/21



Senali Sagara
Co-editor 2020/21

Panel 01



Udara Liyanaratne



Naveendya Munasinghe



Navindu Thiwanka



Panel 02



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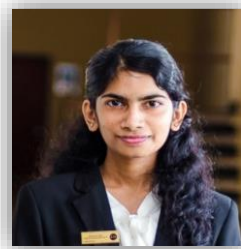
Panel 03



Tharangi Jayasekere



Chani Perera

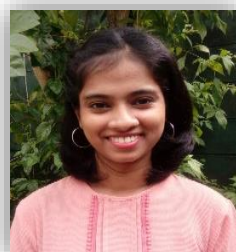


Ruth Fernando

Panel 04



Tharindi Talahity



Dinithi Gamage



Sankalpa Kalubowila

THE ENGLISH LITERARY ASSOCIATION

The English Literary Association found in 1998, is a student led non-profit organization of the Department of English and Linguistics, where the talents of young under graduates are showcased through various activities organized by the club.

The three pillars of the Association: Free Speech, Open Dialogue and Creative Expression are represented through the Uni Wits sessions, the House of Commons sessions and the Spark magazine respectively.

The past and the current members of the English Literary Association have immensely contributed in making these three pillars bring up to a remarkable standard.

Through the Spark magazine, it has helped the young undergraduates of the Department of English and Linguistics as well as the undergraduates of our entire university acquire a platform to express their passion for literature and English language skills along with their creativity.

The ELA board 19/20 are proud to present the 2nd edition of the Spark magazine to our members and also to all the undergraduates of our university.



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Mirror of time

Looking through the mirror I see

Someone else in it where I used to be

With scars on his face

With cracks all over his head

And bleeding heart on his hand

Staring coldly at my face

Uttered some words,

“hello me, meet the stronger me”

-phoenix



Angel

How blind I was, darkness was my world

Riding a dead horse, I travelled into cold

Frozen, I thought I'd die

Angel I met showed me light

Taught me to defeat the night

See the light shining - she whispered

Heaven is waiting – escape the hell

showed me the paradise

Then she flew away leaving me alone

But showed me a stairway to climb along

-Phoenix

Tale of the moon

Was just a rock in the empty space

Saw you rise up with a blaze

Felt empty seeing your brightness

Cause all I got was blackness

Your warmth vanished my cold

But you were too warm to hold

You belong there where you call noon

Now they call this rock the moon

I shine of your light – but still belong to night

-phoenix



Life cycle

Sometimes droughts
Come for our life
Not even a wind blow
To throw away the
Tiredness covered

Next comes the spring
But not only flowers
Will bloom at that time
Storms also come to
Remove the weed

When everything is over
Most of the things you
Had around are no where
Only best things are left
Which had energy to remain

You don't exist anymore
As you were at the end
Because everything has
Build a new creature
Whose more stronger

-Yasodhara Kannangara



Definition for Love

Love is a guiding light

Majority use love as

A food for hunger

But some use as

A drug to survive

You build up being

A joker for the world

Because it is unbearable

To people who haven't

Experience it so deeply

Once you loose it

Every part of you

Is vanished away

So need to built up

From the beginning

There comes moment

You become unable to

Follow your own rules

As you messed up

Your life unbelievably

No-one can wake up

From the same place

They got murdered

But most arise holding

A strength within them

-Yasodhara Kannangara



Cricket: The Apple of the Eye for One Small Island

Sri Lanka, a well-known attraction in the Indian Ocean, accounts for people of different cultures, religions and races. These cultural differences add a sense of uniqueness to the different communities living in the country, something for the islanders to definitely be proud of. Cricket, over the years has been a unifying force for the Sri Lankans. A force that gathers around 11 men who are out there to represent their country no matter what race, caste, color or religion they belong to. The country has a very rich and incredible history in terms of cricket, which the islanders can pontificate about. Players who have got the chance to represent this tiny island have certainly made their mark. Champions of the world in 1996 and 2014, it brought such remarkable glory to the nation and certainly are moments which will be cherished by all Sri Lankans in many years to come. As a country that suffered a civil war which extended for nearly 30 years, cricket has definitely been a reason to smile. With bomb blasts and chaos encircling the island, cricket was the embodiment of hope and faith in the country. From doctors to teachers to students to soldiers to villagers, cricket was personal. It was what brought the people together to make them realize that they are all Sri Lankans under one flag. Also, most of the “favorite childhood memories” were created based on cricket. Weekends were often dedicated to playing with friends and family, whether it was in a home garden, sandy beach, private road or even a paddy field. The passion and love for cricket is such that young children often dreamt of pursuing a career in the sport.

The commitment people show towards a match despite a win or a loss has always been an admired feature of the Sri Lankan fans. Those 11 men, who represented the people of this island, still remain heroes in people’s hearts as their job was surely extra-ordinary. This adamantly loyal fan-base in Sri Lanka usually turned up in large numbers to support their stars. The streets which are usually crowded would be deserted. People would meet up with their friends or family and cheer for “our boys” simply out of the spirit of the game and love for the nation even though the “boys” do not know them in person. It still remains a much-loved experience to the fans, of the times they would go to a cricket match and yell their



hearts out to encourage their team to score more runs or to get more wickets. Praying to the different gods they believe in, people undoubtedly hoped for nothing less than the best. The sheer jubilation earned from celebrating a victory or an achievement which was “ours”, cannot be quantified. This sense of belongingness drives people even today, to watch matches and root for their country, hoping for the very best, even if Sri Lankan cricket has reached a low point at present, because at the end of the day, there’s no better feeling than the pride that comes from being united in the name of one flag.

-Aishwarya Wevitavidana



Promise

Dark days passed with no
Sight of light on the horizon
Battled the rough seas with
The hope to see through to end
Sold the soul to the devil to
Once see the land
For a promise to be there
One last time, on time
Believed the lie in believe
The trust rusted in sea
Back to the black sea,
To buy back what is left of the soul.

-AK-204



When the Light Hits Right

When the light hits right

The path to light shall be revealed

To light my life.

There came the brightest

Light showering through the veil

Bearley did stare till you reshap

And mold a mud sack

To a priceless figurine, unique

The first apple, the Ruby hidden

Played for long, till its lost

To realise the value.

From the womb to tomb

By my side, to light up my way.

-AK-204



Love Them

Love them for their love,
for that nerve wrecking love

Love them for their flaws,
flaws that make you cross

Love them for all the laughter,
laughter that makes you cry later

Love them for the tears,
Tears that hurt your eyes the next day

Love them for all the talk,
talk that makes you wonder

Love them for all the fights,
fights that leave you mystified

Love them for all that they give,
the gifts that makes you smile
Love them for their hard times,
the hard times when they are helpless

Love them for their sweetness,
the sweetness that makes you high



Love them for their temper,
the temper that makes you tremble

Love them when they flourish,
when they are eye candy

Love them in their sickness,
when they need you more than any

Love them for their touch,
the touch that makes you melt

Love them for the distance,
that painful void when you miss them

Love them for their ambition,
that gives their soul a shine so bright

Love them for their stubborn,
that you feel you can't stand them for so long

Love them for all that's good and bad,
simply coz you love them

And you up for that wild ride!

-Poornima Weerasinghe



I Love You, but Not Like Yesterday

I've written you last letters
every single day
inside them are the words
I'm missing you
So here's one for a change
I love you
but not like yesterday
I love you now
like you're a beautiful memory
drifting in my oceans
I love you now
like a storm that's taken its course
and found its way out
I love you now
like a love letter
tucked away forever
inside my favourite book
I love you
but not like yesterday

-Thivanka Seneviratne



After the wait

No drink

as quenching

as the one

after hours of thirst .

No food

as appetizing

as the one

after days of hunger.

No wink of sleep

as satisfying

as the one

after weeks of insomnia .

No love

as welcome

as yours

when you come to me

after hours

after days

after weeks ,

When the wait

has made me

want you more,

Has made me

love you more ,

I do ,



I do love you more
when you come to me
as you ,
You , my sunset eclipse.

-BYR



You, You and You

You,
you were the surprise,
The meteorite
crashing in
after years.
It was all fireworks
with you,
waiting,
waiting for the bursts of light.
You came so fast,
you left so fast,
You had to,
you were
many light years behind me.
But, you,
You said I was magic.

And, you,
you were the gift,
The falling star
from great heights,
I wanted for so long.
It was all rays of light
with you,
A world of darkness



that brought us closer,
You,
you came in little bundles
of joy
that last years.
You never left
yet
I don't feel your presence
not anymore.
Maybe
you just forgot.
But you,
you made me laugh.

Oh,and,you
you were the blessing,
The gentle shower of stars.
It was all calmness
with you,
You and I
drawn together
by our love of magic.
You and I
outsiders, unearthly, together.
You
you fear the spark
we might ignite.
But you,
you understood me.



You , you and you
are the legends
my epic will speak of,
You brought me light,
magic
and heaven.

I never loved,
not you, you or you.

Perhaps

I never will, no one.

But,

Thank you,

Thank you for your heavenly fire,

Thank you for the memories.

-BYR



A Maid No More

In a saintly altar of a snowy sheet

a white lily spreads her petals

a flower so tender, reared amidst green

stranger to a whisper and a kiss

an alien to an unfamiliar caress.

Lily lies in the holy altar, waiting for her Lord,

A Lord she thinks as a mortal god

deign to hold a fragile flower, embracing its maiden scent

till the petals tear and bleed a soul,

one that was once forlorn, an untried whole.

Holy is she to her kin

who know not, what wild whims writhe

in an agonized breast.

Yearning to twine with him does she rest

her tender form, a figure so lithe, by his side.

Ever so tender he draws near,

musing how best he'd this divinity deflower.

A twig snaps, the sap spurts

in the flora without, a sob departs within,

maiden turned a woman unhurt.

She's sung her vestal hymn, now she rises.



Her lord where she left in the cradle
oblivious to all but sleep, now she is a bird
freed from the cage of prejudice.
Like the winged souls that hover in the space
Unaware of pain of the caged of their race.
Ecstasy rides her spirit, she pays her last glance
at her sleeping lord whispering in a trance.
From the barrless cage she flies out
in to the wilderness beyond, no doubt.
She knows her seasons now, when to be a dove
and when not, to be driven by lust or love.
They say you to stay tramped down
Be the dust of a weary rug unsound
Be the slave of the strong for you are weak
Soft, fragile, smooth all the traits of the meek.
Now don't listen to what the alphas say
The world revolves around the sun, not on its own way.

-Dev Rathnasekara



Facebook

Over the shelves and cupboards
The shaking hands ran busily
Searching for a title
Not knowing the author
While muttering slowly
“A cover in fully blue that
A letter embedded in the middle
With pages not numbered
Which can be turned up and down
Surprisingly not left and right”
His fragile footsteps were close to end up
Covering the four corners while
Getting tired of playing hide and seek
With tons of printed covers
“A book with the face that
magical tasks be done
writing, editing, erasing, updating
And no key to lock but a password”
He pouted his lip in a cheerful voice
Celebrating the victory of
Getting another group of clues
Keeping the tiredness aside
He got back to discover the rare book
Bur he never knew the home of
The book which being looked for
Is not the library at all

-Dilsha Siriwardhane



CONFESS

CONFESS go on CONFESS

neither baton nor khaki suit

but still she feels

her heart is beaten

by an invisible baton

the only difference is

the pain is soft

but yet she ponders

how uncontrollable her fond to him is

with so many attempts jumping out

from the windows tied with veins

to blow a butterfly feeling

through a sound of notification

yet the so called fond is in jail

while pending to go out or stay in

but this time the key is in her hand

“CONFESS go on CONFESS”

-Dilsha Siriwarshane

THE SURPRISE

“ Your secret admirer is here”

She mumbled in a soft voice

Fairies clapped heartily

The dance floor was

Filled with roses,

Amidst the melody of music

She took another step forward

Seeking for the usual face

Among the heads passing by

For the first time

She unlocked her lips

Throwing her cowardice

To the blowing wind

She waited till his

Masculine voice speaks up

His darling face was clouded

And didn't make any sound

But she could sense

His lips on her forehead

-Dilsha Siriwardhane



Games We Play

Smiles overwhelming with joy

Warm hugs of welcome

Uncountable kisses

Crimson beating hearts of love

Limited to side glances

Abrupt acknowledgements

Smiles that don't reach the eyes

And arms that never reached...

Yet no heart to admit

No eyes to see

And stone cold to the touch

Creating a queue of infinity

Thus the online games we play

-Nisali Withanage



Leaving

The distant sound of chanting pirith
The constant sound of chirping crickets
The pitter patter of rain drops falling
The rickety chair heaving at my sister's weight
The chill in the air wrapping around my feet
And the feeling...
The feeling that churns in my stomach
The feeling that tightens my heart
The occasional glances at the time
And the sickening realization sinks into me
A few more hours before I leave...

-Nisali Withanage

A Heavy Burden

Sticks and stones may break my bones
And Ed Sheeran may say “that’s okay baby, only words bleed”
Tight jeans, thick thighs, flabby arms and...
Weight.
So the comment section rise in height and pain
Thus the confession begins:
Those who give shall receive
So think twice before you judge me
As I’ve been generous in my past

Questions appear while answers disappear
She who gave me life
He who build me up
Never asked yet your ‘concern’ is heavy

Sticks and stones does break my bones and I ain’t screaming “I’ am titanium!”
Each word becomes an immortal
And walks in silence yet being so loud
Shame glimmers
As sour thoughts blossom
And judgment paves a path
Poisoning itself to its own demise

The bitter truth is that
I wish to be the person you ‘need’ to see
But also to seal your foul lips
As the chemical melts its way on them
And as I hear you choke six feet under
Making us equal
A suppressed mirth spreads its wings
“Muhahahahahahahaaaaa!”

-Nisali Withanage



A Thank you from the Otherworld

Rangamma looked at the house again. “The police had come again” she thought to herself. She felt as if the tranquility of the whole estate village was destroyed. The police was questioning a man in his late 20’s. He was wailing and crying and trying to touch the feet of the police officers. Despite the crowd gathered around this small house were visibly feeling sorry for this man, for some unknown reason Rangamma could not. Something deep within her mind already branded him as the thing he is accused of. The killer of Parvati. Of course she had no evidence.

That name took Rangamma back to an incident which shattered the calm and peacefulness of the small tea estate in to a thousand pieces. Parvati was without a doubt one of the most beautiful Tamil women in the estate. Despite coming from a family of poor worker, she always seemed to wear the best sarees to the festivals at the Kovil, her bangles were always more vibrant. It was no secret that many superintendents of the estates were after her. And this easily explained her extravagance in attire. Where beauty goes, infidelity followed the estate workers were adamant in linking this notion with Parvati, the veracity of this claim was of small significance, little to none.

Many were genuinely surprised when Parvati married an estate worker: and not elope with a superintendent. She seemed happy with Krishnan, a timid, soft-spoken young man who worked at the estate office. But Ludacris stories about Parvatis adulterous affairs and what a spineless worm Krishnan was only increased by ten-fold

One day she was gone. Krishnan had no idea where she was, her parents were furious. Yet everyone knew where she really was. In a private quarters of a superintendent in a nearby village. For the sake of formality an investigation took place. The estate was not familiar with the presence of the policemen.

Now seeing this man crying, quivering in front of the police made Rangamma feel sick. It was true that she hated Parvati, most women in the small estate village did. But for some reason Rangammas heart felt heavy now when she thought of Parvati.

With her mind heavily occupied with thoughts about Parvati, she headed towards the forest to collect firewood as was her weekly ritual. The forest neighbouring the small estate was mainly used to collect firewood. A considerable distance away from the place where people collected the firewood they dump the dead bodies. Though there are people who buried their dead everyone knew it was a pointless endeavor. The jackals get to the bodies sooner or later.

Rangamma started collecting the firewood. Usually there will be villagers at this time collecting firewood with her, but today everyone was at the village, trying to convince the



police officers to search in nearby villages for her. The tree tops filtered very little sunlight through the thick canopy. As she was collecting the firewood and tying them up into small stacks, she heard the sound of bangles.

Looking around she saw another woman few yards away collecting firewood behind a bush. The woman was squatting over something with her back to Rangamma, she could not see from the shoulders upwards because of the thick under bush. A small sense of relief flowed into her mind. She hated being in alone in that forest.

When she felt as if she had collected enough firewood to last for a few days, she started tying the smaller stacks into a single, big stack of firewood. Carrying a stack of firewood of 15-20 kilos over the head was not something hard for a female in this estate village. They perfected this art since they were little girls. But someone has to help her to get it on to her head and wait till she finds her balance.

Rangamma placed the small cloth over her head to lessen the pressure of the firewood and she squatted and partially placed the wood stack over her shoulder. She shouted at the woman behind the bush turning over her shoulder. "Sister! Can you help me?" She felt the need to remove herself from this gloomy environment as fast as humanly possible.

She heard the woman behind the bush walking towards her, Her saree was brushing against the thick underbush of the forest. With one jerking movement the woman pushed the stack of wood on to her head and Rangamma slowly stood. The woman held on to the wood stack for another five seconds till Rangamma found her balance then let go. Rangamma turned to thank her.

There was a headless body standing in front of her. It was a headless body that had helped her with the stack of wood. Even at that moment, where she was gasping for air and sweating profusely she could notice how crudely the head has been severed from the body. She fell down as she became unconscious the headless body of a woman stood over her, completely motionless.

The villagers found Rangamma several miles away from wood collecting grounds, why she went so far no one could guess. Near her unconscious body in a shallow grave they found another body. A pile of ashes suggested that her clothes were burned. Her naked body was cut up into so many pieces and villagers could not understand why the jackals had not already taken away the parts. The police was able to identify the body with the help of villagers using the broken bangles in one of the severed hands. Drowned in a stream nearby they found a Manna knife belonged to Krishnan.

Did Parvati's soul refuse to move on without justice? Did she thank Rangamma in her own otherworldly way?

-Chirath Halambaarachchi



An Echo of a Strange Good Bye

I like to think of friendships as one of the strongest bonds living beings can form with one another. Perhaps it's not entirely insane to think that some friendships transcend even death.

I had just returned home with my mother. It was dusk. Due to a surgical procedure that she underwent couple of days ago she was only released from the hospital today. It was dusk when we returned. Walking carefully towards the door with her hand in mine I couldn't figure out whether she was happy or not to be home. Her expression was simply blank.

I opened the front door, let her in and made her sit on the sofa while I took our bags into the house. Travelling 150 km can really take a toll on an 80 year old, staying in a hospital and undergoing a surgery would only add to that. I was determined to make everything as comfortable as possible for her until she was properly back on her feet.

"Would you like some tea Amma?" I asked her after looking into her blank and silent expression for a couple of minutes. With the hardly distinguishable nod of approval I went into the kitchen. The kitchen of our household happened to be an adjacent area from the side to the living room. As soon as the water was boiled I started to wash the cups and the spoons to make the tea.

I was startled to hear my mother call me. "Duwa Chandrawathi just came... I let her in... make some tea for her as well while we chat will you" I was surprised to hear my mother speak so loudly and lively. But I was more shocked to hear that Chandrawathi Aunty, a woman in her 80's paid a visit to our home at this hour.

Chandrawathi Aunty was my mother's best friend. They have been so even before they were married. On a normal day either my mother was at her place or she was at ours. As fellow octogenarians they found comfort in reminiscing about their past experiences, discussing their various ailments, as they both were widows we were glad that they had the companionship of each other. But lately this was not the case. Due to their deteriorating health they were mostly bed ridden. And in the rare occasions that she did visit our home or if I took my mother to her house her son would drop her off at our house or would take my mother there in a cab.

But now mother was chatting away with our unexpected guest. Her voice sounded livelier, cheerful. Not the woman I left in the living room when I came to make some tea. Still baffled I listened to what they were talking about. I clearly heard my mother chattering away, cheerfully. But I heard no one responding to her questions. Suddenly it hit me. My mother was talking to herself! I immediately stopped what I was doing and turned around to go to talk to my mother. It was then I heard it. At first it was just a whisper. Gradually it came to

resemble something uttered by a human yet I knew Chandrawathi aunty's voice well. And this was NOT it. All this time the chatting went on. I stood there in the kitchen with the kettle in my hand. The water that I heated a minute ago slowly started to grow cold. As I kept listening I got over the suspicion that my mother was talking to herself certain that there were definitely two people in the living room as the two voices talked over each other and interrupted each other at certain points. Only I heard my mother's voice clearly and the other voice as a strange mixture of a whisper and someone being choked. Although it has increased to the intensity of my mother's voice I still wasn't able to distinguish a single word it said. It was just...sound... an eerie, otherworldly. During this whole engagement I realized that i was in a trance. It felt physically impossible to put down the kettle and run to the living room to see what the hell was going on. While this was happening that voice kept growing and growing. I no longer heard my mother's cheerful voice. It felt as if the whole house was filled with this strange sound. As if it crept to each and every corner to the house simultaneously and it echoed in various degrees of volumes. I even felt it whispering right behind my ear. My whole body at this point felt cold, stiff and disconnected by my mind. I swear on my life, at one point this voice was so loud I was praying that one of my neighbours would break down the front door and come yelling inside. I felt a sharp pain in my foot. I realized that i was no longer frozen. I ran to my mother knocking a few things down as I went on. The exact moment I entered the living room all the whole house went silent. I found my mother seated in the same way i left her before this whole ordeal started. With that blank expression in her face. I rushed to the door and tried to open it so hard that I nearly broke the handle. I wanted to catch who or whatever did this. I was terrified to find it locked. By now my body which felt frozen and stiff earlier had broken into a sweat so terrible my entire body was drenched. The key was with me the whole time! No matter how much i questioned my mother all I could get out of her was that "Ah Chandrawathi came and went" in her blank expression. I pushed the buttons of our land phone trying to get hold of Chandrawathi aunty's house like a crazy person, failing several times in the process.

As Sanath her eldest son spoke up I asked where his mother was. There was a long pause from the other end. As he explained how she died two days ago and that they did not inform us fearing it would badly affect my mother who was undergoing a surgery at the time, I stared at my mother in a blank expression. She stared back at me.

-Chirath Halambaarachchi



When the Water sings of Love

I remember going to the river and watching the waves lap on the riverbank. When the sun was going down and the dusk was slowly creeping in, I saw my darkened reflection on the waters. I threw a pebble in and the water rippled, blurring my image. I sat by a tree, listening to the breeze hauntingly whispering something to leaves. I wished that I could understand the connection they shared, whatever it might be I was sure it wasn't anything as complex as us. I smiled at myself, closed my eyes and briefly enjoyed the cool breeze against my skin. Somewhere in the distance a toad started to croak and the crickets joined in accompaniment and the evening symphony began. I could not stay with my eyes closed much longer as your image troubled before my eyes like an apparition, direful but hard to ignore.

My eyes fluttered open. The sun had already vanished from the horizon but there was still a faint streak of orange refusing to leave even though the night's first star was visible. I let the wind carry my sigh. The dawning night drew in the nocturnal creatures. Soon I could see the reflection of the drooping crescent moon on the blackened river. Then as if from a dream I heard a voice. It wasn't you or anyone. It wasn't the wind or the leaves. It wasn't the bats, but someone was murmuring.

"Who is it?" I asked.

"Who is it?" echoed the voice.

My curiosity subdued your memory in me and I forgot you for a moment. "Who is there?" I asked again.

"No one" answered the voice.

"Then who's talking?"

There was a moment of silence before the reply came as, "It's me".

"I don't know you," I said standing up, "- reveal yourself!"

There was a sound of a low gurgle as if someone's trying to sing with their mouth full of water. Curiously eerie was that voice, it was still tranquil and musical. I was sure I had never heard anything like that before.

"I thought you knew me, I talk to you all the time" the voice sounded a bit hurt. "Wasn't you listening to me then?"

"For God's sake, who are you? A ghost?" I asked impatiently.

I heard something like a chuckle.

"Why, I am the river" said the voice sounding amused by my ignorance. "I talk to you all the time but you hardly ever replies me".

I was puzzled than before. I haven't heard anyone talking to me except you when we were by the river. "I am sorry," I said even though I didn't know why I should be apologizing. But it came out naturally, maybe because I was good at apologizing even for the things which wasn't my fault. "But I didn't know—" I continued, "—that you had been talking to me".

"There is nothing more disappointing than not hearing from your lover when you talk to them"

"Your lover?" I asked brusquely, feeling out of control. "Did you love me then?"

"Yes," came a shy reply. I felt my skin prickled with emotion. My mouth was dry, I couldn't think of anything to say.

"I loved you and I love you now" said the river.

I was astonished. It was the first time I heard those words from someone else apart from you. Her words were sincere, I knew that for sure, but I had being betrayed by you, so I wasn't going to take the risk so soon. I pondered what to say but nothing intelligent came to my mind. I felt your presence in my head but I didn't acknowledge it. Instead, I glared, practically at no one.

"Why are you quiet? Are you angry?" asked the river.

"No, I never thought you loved me, that's what" I said.

Silence fell between us. I reflected on the words. The darkness has settled around us, quietly, like some sober man who is always being ignored. The crickets were louder. Far away in the horizon, in the backdrop of the stygian blackness of the night, I could see the lights of the houses like fireflies, some blinking and some steady. Suddenly I was aware that she was abnormally quiet. I called out afraid of losing her.

"Are you still there?" I asked, my voice was desperate.

There was no reply. I was impatient, I called out again, "Hello, are you there?"

I was greeted back with complete silence. I have never felt so emotional not even after you left. "I am sorry," I said, "I never meant to hurt your feelings. I was a fool. I never listened to you when I should, and when I did it was too late. I never spoke to you and when I did, I babbled like an idiot. I beg you please talk to me. I love you. I should have told you that before" with these words I fell down on my knees and buried my face in my palms.

I heard the low ripple in the water. "Did you call? Sorry, I got carried out a bit".

I looked up and I saw a figure standing in front of me. It was her! God! She was beautiful! More beautiful than you could ever imagine. The stars couldn't have been brighter than her eyes which were of deep azure. Her skin was pale, her white hair cascaded down past her hips. Her dress was dripping down her body like water.

When she touched my hot face with her cool fingers I felt a jolt in my body. My throat was stuck. I knew that feeling. And it was strong.



"I heard what you said, was that true?" her voice was soft and I heard the love and admiration in it. She was kind, nice and thoughtful. Her voice was soothing and when she started to speak I felt as if my whole soul had been washed by her waters. Her voice, in fact, was like the spring rain, so sweet and pure.

"Every word" I said.

Her pale face reddened with a blush. "I am glad," she said sitting next to me. Her dress dropped but it never wet either of us. "I am glad you finally heard me. I am glad that you finally love me".

I heard the wind whispering, "Absolutely beautiful!" as he brushed past us. It was unusual that I could hear them now. I began to wonder how ignorant I had been all these time. Now I realized I had been distracted, terribly distracted by you. And now that you are gone, I can finally hear them, admire them and love them. I realized I no longer feel hurt. I felt lucky that you were long gone.

She rested her head on my shoulder and stared at the horizon. I am glad I said to myself. I am glad that I had found love in one the daughters of nature.

-Ruth Nimna Fernando

Monster of Loneliness

Loneliness is a monster,
that devours you up
Unlike its brothers greed and desire
It has a way of popping in its head
In your house of life

It's strong and tends to get stronger
When it lurks and feeds on your memories
It's a sneaky monster
It knows your ecstasy is sad
And your desolation haunts you

Nostalgia is what you call its sister
A perfect villain to pull you down
With reminiscences of past
Together they make you wistful
And yearn for the past,
when you grapple with your present
and your future

It drives you crazy
And you want to scream 'Stop!'
Sometimes it makes you want to cease your life
It knows your weakness



But its power has limits
It hides when he sees you
with your loved ones,
When you're happy
Open your heart to love and happiness
For loneliness is the weakest
When you're happy and in love.

-Ruth Nimna Fernando



This is a different story about a young girl who nearly dies after a kidney stolen by a man. Before this accident happens a girl comes in her dream and tries to tell her about something but she does not understand it. Suddenly the same man who killed that girl attacks this girl, but she does not die. She goes through a new experience and finally she survives. She keeps the promise by doing a prayer to release Mia's spirit. The only person with whom she shares her experience is the priest at the church.

MIA

I could see that girl coming closer to me, I couldn't see her face clearly, but I saw that she had a long hair groping down from her shoulders and her dress was dirty and torn. She came so close to me that I could hear her whisper in my ear. "Go away, save your life and help me..." Her voice was both helpless and it also had a touch of threatening. My whole body was wet with sweat, I just looked at my phone to check the time and saw it was only half past two. Though I wanted to close my eyes and go back to sleep again, the images and the voices from my dream didn't allow me.

Various thoughts started hovering around my head. It's only two weeks I have come to this apartment. I like this place because this is a comfortable and a quiet place to engage in my work. These voices I hear from sleep and the images I see sometimes is the only problem I have here. Even though I tried my best to stop thinking about those things, something bothers inside my head. And, recently I had the idea to find more information about this flat.

I wanted to ask my neighbors about this matter but, at the same time it felt awkward to do such thing without knowing anything properly. My friend Reha, started to mock me telling that I am going to be mad of overthinking. I had no time to think about all these things as I am also busy with my studies of my final year.

After a busy day of work, my only pleasure is to get on to my bed after a cool bath. It was my habit; singing alone whenever I am having a bath. I was muttering a Hindi song from a recent movie I have watched with my friends, when I heard that bizarre noise. I heard the front door open and I heard clearly someone entering into the room. I quickly pressed the shower and paid more attention. I could hear foot steps, someone walking slowly, but I didn't hear any voice. Again, all the nonsense started to come into my mind. Though I wanted my phone badly, I remembered that I plugged it to the charger. I really wanted to go out of the washroom but at the same time I felt that my legs were not ready to move a step from where I am standing. I remained still for an instant, still no voice, except the sounds of the footsteps. At last I thought of speaking.

My voice didn't come out at once,

"Who is there...Reha, is it you? Don't play nonsense. Wait I 'll come."

I really wanted to hear Reha's voice in reply, but I didn't hear anything, and now I heard the steps coming closer to the washroom door and stopped. At once, I clutched my towel and put it around my body and went out of the washroom. I didn't have even a second to guess what

happened, there was no one to be seeing and when I turned around I only saw a huge figure of somebody coming near me. I felt my whole body was trembling and melt onto the floor.

I couldn't open my eyes at once because of the bright light above my head. Anyway I opened my eyes and I felt my whole body floating, I have never felt that feeling till that day. My whole body was so light that I felt my body floating above my bed. Suddenly I thought of my room and at once I was there. And saw there were corps everywhere around our flat and when I enter to my room from the top of the window I could see a pool of blood. I had no idea about what has happened, but I enjoyed this feeling. Nobody couldn't notice me, and my mentality is similar to kid.

When I thought of someone or something, I was there as soon as I think of it .I wanted to see my friend Reha and I really wanted to talk to her. Then I was in a busy place which seems to be a hospital .Reha and Sanu my friends were sitting and hugging themselves, when I went more closely I could see them desperate.

“Hey, Reha, what’s the matter .I don’t know anything, why ..?” I did not get any response and they remained as if they didn’t hear me.

“Sanu please tell me what happened. There are corps at my place and my room is filled with blood .what happened last night.” Even she remained quiet. I was walking along the corridor, actually like floating, when I met that girl from my dreams .Today I could see her clearly and she is more alive. I saw her face for the first time. It was a gloomy face with tearful eyes and there were bruises all around her face and neck. And the blood patches all over her body gave her a terrifying look. Even through that tearful face anybody could notice the attractiveness in her face.

We were looking face to face. And I broke the silent.

“You, what brings you here?”

“I came with you. I warned you earlier about this”. Her face was more serious and her look became more pitiful at once, and she talked as if she is feeling sorry about me.

“With me? Why? How did I come here? And what happened yesterday? And who are you? Why are wearing like this?” I started to ask all my questions from her. She remained silent till I finish my questions and then she started her explanation.

“I am Mia and I lived in your room before two years. And this dress, this was what was I wearing that day when it happened like you are now.” Her words made me to look at my dress. I was astonished to see what I was wearing. I was with my towel around my body. The way I could remember the way I came out of the washroom last night.

“I can’t understand all these things!” . I almost shouted at her. I was both surprised and now a little bit frighten with her speech.

“You will. Come with me.” She took my hand and we both were in the room where I was sleeping. I could see doctors around a bed and they were in a rush, moving their hands and I could see there were machines all around the bed. Though I tried to see what is really happening there, Mia stopped me.

“They are trying to save your life.” Her words almost stuck me as a knife.

“Save me! Why I am fine and see I am well and there’s no problem with me.” Then, she gave a sympathetic smile to me.

“Do you know what happened to you last night?”

“No. I can’t remember anything except someone came near me .that’s all I can remember. Will you please explain me what’s going on here?”

“Try to dredge up what happened, only you can do it I am helpless in this case to help you.” then I tried my best to think what happened last night after I came out of the washroom. After a moment, all the images from the last night began to come in to my mind .Yes, now I can remember what went on that night. I came out of the washroom and looked around the room as I heard a footsteps while I was bathing. Then, when I turned my head I saw a huge man suddenly slapped me in my face and the shot made me to fall down onto the floor. Even though I tried to shout he just closed my mouth with one of his hands and started slapping me hardly. I was in a great fear and a shock .I can remember I tried to get away from the man, but he did not give me any chance. After slapping me hardly, he took a tape from his pocket and pasted it around my mouth and he also tied my arms and legs. I started to fight with him like a fish out of water, but it was really useless to get away from his strong arms.

After, I could remember him pushing an injection through my arm and then the whole atmosphere around me blurred, and I could feel a pain in my stomach as if from dream.

“That’s all I can recall. What happened after that? What did he do to me?”

“I was there in your room while all that happened. But, I have no strength in mediating. You were not in your sense. Your friend Reha came to get something from you. But he has left at that time. You were at least lucky than me to have a friend to hospitalize you.

“Me? Reha?! Then, why is she crying there with Sanu?”

“Yeah, she was shocked to see you in that way and she almost fainted. However she phoned the police and called an ambulance. She took you here and I too came with you.”

“Am I dead now? And am I a ghost! Is that why they can’t hear me? I just can’t believe these things. I am sure this is a dream”. I pinched my hand but I got more frightened because I was unable to touch my own hand. Then I tried to take the glass of water on the table near me. And my hand just went through it. I started to cry aloud and I remembered my family and the person I love.

“I can’t die now! I have lots of work to do. How can this be? Why did he killed me and I don’t know that person.”

“No, you are not dead yet. He took away your kidney” she told it a very sorrowful tone and it almost made me to cry more.

“He took only one from you... but from me ...”she stopped.

“But from you, tell me what happened to you. Are you dead or are you suffering like me .please tell me Mia”

“It was two years ago. I lived your room and it was the middle of my final exam. I worked hard and I even did a part time job. I used to come late and one day it happened. When I

opened the door of the room, I could see someone sitting in front of the t.v. I just thought it must be Abi, my fiancé .But it was that man. He pushed me on to the floor and hit On my head with the vase which was on the table. I was half unconscious when he injected me in my stomach. And it was the last time I could feel the warmth. I think I was lying there in that pool of blood, more than a whole day and I heard them saying the loss of blood have made me die. He has taken away both of mine. And my body was dried without blood.”

Her story shocked me and it also added more tears to my eyes. And the way she is standing in front of me. A dead person .I am with a ghost. I couldn't think of these things. And these things I never believed but, I am with the spirit of a dead person and I am half dead.

“The only way I could warn you was in your dreams. I wanted you to go away from here and help me to release my spirit from that place.”

“How can I help now? In no time I will be also dead. “

“No you can still live. That's your body they are operating this only your spirit talking with me. It's in your hands to save your life not the doctors. Go back t. Be strong to overcome the pains. I am sure you'll be safe. Think about your family, your friends and your fiancé. See the way they are frightened to lose you”. I could see them outside the room sobbing and consoling each other. I do not want to leave them so soon. So I decided to go back to the operating room. But, for the one more last time I wanted to talk to Mia.

“If I live, how can I help you to release your spirit?”

“When you gain your consciousness you'll forget our conversation and it'll only be a dream for you. I am not sure whether you'll remember to help me when you wake up. If you n just do a prayer at the church. It 'll help my spirit to release of the shock and the sorrow”.

Again I was in a deep sleep and I could feel a hand resting on mine. And the first word that came out of my mouth was Mia.

“Doctor she's awake” I could hear someone's voice and slightly opened my eyes and saw my friends were around my bed.

“Am I still alive?” It was the only thing I wanted to know.

“Yes girl ... we were all so afraid.”

“Yeah... I saw you were crying outside, and Reha thank you very much, I owe you my life.”

I saw they were confused by hearing my words. They looked at each other in surprise .I just gave them a slight smile as I could feel a Sevier pain in my stomach. I am glad that I am able to survive but with one kidney. I had to remain in the hospital for about a week and all my friends were with me. And I always remembered about Mia. As soon as I got discharged I wanted to go to the church.

“Darling, lets visit after sometime, still you are not fully recovered”.

“No Reha I must go soon, thanks to her I am alive. I must keep my promise. Let's go to day.”

“What are you saying, who is she and what this is promise you are talking about. And I want to know how you know about what happened that day. You were unconscious.” I smiled at



Reha, though I wanted to tell what happened during my operation, I am pretty sure she'll take it for a joke and nobody will believe this story. So I thought of remaining quite.

We went to the church in the evening and the only person I told the story is the head priest of the church. He understood the situation and he conducted the necessary prayer to release Mia's spirit stuck in the room. When it was about to end the prayer I saw Mia. Her look was different, she had nice clothes and her hair was combed neatly and her face had no bruises like earlier and she was smiling with me. It was the last time I saw her.

I shifted to Reha's apartment and the police was able to catch the murder of Mia and he was sentenced for lifetime prison. I had to take medicines for a long time and I am to be more concern about the foods I am taking. I did my degree well and I started to explore about death spirits and I almost found evidence about rebirths and spirits. I never saw Mia again and I'll never forget her.

-Sathya Sammani

A young girl who lives in America by herself suddenly meets this new friend about her age. The unexpected friends become closer and they spent some time together sharing their things. This young lady named as Lasika, who is found of reading mentions about a certain book, where the girl finds it for her friend. Unluckily, she couldn't give the book to her as she dies because of her unknown illness. I wanted to bring out the idea that, friends we meet suddenly may be worth than the friends we meet many years back.

The Unexpected Friend

On my way to my workstation, I used to see a young mistress sitting on a bench at a park by the road. It is very rare here to see a young lady on a bench everyday specially reading a book, in this busy western country where I am living now.

Anyway, after some months spotting, I wanted to speak to her. After talking to her, I found her very interesting and she is also from my neighbouring country and about two years younger than me. She has come here to take treatments for her illness. Even though I inquire her about her illness the only reply she gave every day was just a simple smile, which is difficult to guess if she is happy or sad.

During the whole time we used to talk, we exchanged our ideas and had lot of fun together. She was mentioning a certain book that she was longing to read but, haven't found it yet.

Spring time came, one day though I went to work, I did not see her at her usual place. So, I thought she might be busy with her medical things and also wondered why she didn't said about it yesterday.

Next day too, she was not there, even though I was waiting happily to give her the book that she was yearning to read, as I have found it in the public library .I thought of visiting her place after work, as her mobile is also switched off since yesterday.

When I was near the entrance of her apartment, I could see some people in black. When I inquired from an old lady there, her words almost made me a statue, "Miss Lasika passed away last morning".

-Sathya sammani

Story of a girl who has to participate to the wedding of the person she loved. He was her friend. Though they have been friends for years and known each other closer than just friends, neither of them confesses. So the boy end up marrying another girl. And Otara unable to govern her moods leaves the country forever.

THE UNTOLD LOVE

The wind that came through my window was colder than the usual wind which made my soul fresh. But, today it's different. I went in front of the mirror with some dresses which I thought of wearing to the event. I had no choice which one I should wear today. Normally, my friends always tell me, I am the best at choosing dresses matching for the events, and most of my friends do not forget to get my help when they have to pick up outfits for any function or anything which they are invited. I stared at myself in the mirror. I knew I would need some extra makeup to cover up the dark circles which I have got after crying a whole night. I felt as if have lost a huge chance, really I have missed my life. Now I have no choice unless be strong to survive this hard period.

Finally I decided to wear the brown saree with the black color border. When I look for matching ornaments, I remembered that I have lend them to my sister and that she haven't returned them. So, I had to try another dress. Then I picked up another one. A plain green color saree without any designs in it, with only a charm border. I decided to put only my earrings and not even a necklace and only a simple makeup, as I wanted to cover up my dark circles. Anyway my eyes appeared to be exhausted and any person could grasp I have shed lot of tears.

It was just about 11.30, so I picked up keys and went to get my car as I have to pick up Tanu on the way to the hotel. She was waiting at her gate and she was really stunning and nicely dressed. As usually she has selected a good-looking short dress and it mad my lips into a smile thinking of the way how Tanu likes to wear short dresses.

"Hey Otara." she got into the car with her general smile.

"Hi Tanu, you look gorgeous. And nice hair"

"Thank you Otara, but you look sad and this is not the normal way you dress up for events. Why?" I knew she would bother me with these questions, and I would not hesitate to tell the reason as she my best friend after all.

"Tanu really I don't feel like going to the wedding, and I don't think I would be able to govern my moods. I am only going because they are my friends." Tanu knows all my secrets and she even knows the reason I am hesitating to participate in this event.

"Don't worry Otara, I am with you".



We met all of our friends and I was happy to meet all my friends together after a long time. We were all sitting around a table, relishing our time. I could see them coming towards us, they were very blissful and talking with their friends. They were three tables away from ours and soon they will come to us. My eyes were straight at them. I was near to drop a tear, when Tanu broke up my attention. After few minutes, they came to us. We all wished them, they all were laughing but I was only having an artificial smile glued on my face.

“So Otara, when did you come back? Hope your journey was fine.”

“Oh yes, I I had a great time.” I knew he sensed the alteration in my manner. After all these years of our friendship it is really useless if he couldn't find me gathering for words to speak with him.

“Otara, are you really ok... seems you are not well, and you are different today”. I had no words to reply him, and his words only made me cry. I stopped my tears with a great difficult and Tanu aided me to make up the situation.

“Actually Reshan, she got sick after the flight, and even today she had temperature in the morning. I think that's why she seems different.”

“Oh! Then you rest Otara, why did you came, you know that I won't get furious at you for missing my wedding”

“Reshan its fine. I am okay. And how can I miss my best friend's wedding, I was longing for this day, and I am a bit depressed that I can't enjoy a lot because of my sickness”

With great effort I made up the story and I could see he really believed. I felt apologetic to see him believe my lies. But I am in a somber condition. After they left our table I went to my car making a false excuse to my friends and nodded at Tanu to manage the rest. I went inside my car and I could only shed more and more tears until my whole face got damped with tears.

From today I am going to miss my only friend whom I trusted even more than Tanu. He started a new life with her. I am nothing to him now, he has chosen a person to share his life... I couldn't stop my tears and more tears drooped down when I remembered our past.

We met during our advance level classes and those days we were not much friendly. After sometimes we were really good friends and our bond became stronger. But neither of us had any thought of a relationship other than friendship. We shared all our problems and helped each other to solve our matters. We had a wonderful time. But, all these years I was doubting whether we are having a relationship more than friends. Though I wanted to ask him if he too feels the same, for some reason I had no bravery to do it. With the time we knew our bond is more than friendship, but neither if us was strong enough to point it out. We cheated ourselves with the word “friendship”. Now, the time has come to get price for that.

He started an affair with a batch mate and today it's their wedding. It is really difficult than I thought to see the person who you love marrying another. For me, it's sadder because for all these years I had no courage even to confess him. I was thinking all these things when suddenly I heard someone tapping on the shutter glass. The figure outside made me lifeless. It was Reshan, and he had a puzzled face after seen me with tears. I soon took a tissue from the box and dried out my tears.

“Otara, what are doing here? And... and.. Why are you crying?”

“Ah, I got a headache so I came here..it is so painful that’s why I had tears.” Though I tried fix up a fake smile this this time I failed and only warm tears started to drop along my cheeks. I was unable to see his face as he was too having a horrible look. Not the cheerful face he had at the hall

“Otara, I know the reason.” His words almost pierced me, but I tried to be clam.

“You are jealous that I got married before you.....” he was laughing and mocking at me as always. He have no idea of what I am going through. So I too laughed with him through my tears. Even though I thought of at least acknowledging him now, I made up my mind to forget it. We were still laughing and I knew it is the last time that we are laughing like this. I looked at him while he was laughing making sure that I will never fail to recall his face. After I leave this country forever after three more days.

I met all my friends for the last time. Though I have told them that I am only going to spend three years at UK, I have already decided to leave. I was unsuccessful in my love, I have lost my loving friend for someone else. I had no nerve to tell him the truth. So the only way to make up mind is to get away from the memoirs. I said farewell to my best friend and the person whom I loved for years, the person I still love but never confessed and will never get a chance. I only have his memory.

-Sathya Sammani.

This is a story about a young married couple who have spent their marriage life happily and separated for few years because of a certain person, whom I haven't given a name, who have come in between them. Anyway, after a long time they meet up. The man wanted to get together as before but for some reason the girl rejects. But, he finally consoles her and they makeup again. I have included some things that makes the reader to guess.

Useless sorrow

I was already having the third wine glass of that evening, I went to the terrace just to gather up my thoughts after such a mess and because I could no longer bear the sound of the DJ music and my eyes were fed up with the neon lights all around the hall. I was just looking at the busy road, and I couldn't at least remember the taste of the wine whether I drank a Lindeman's or a Hardy's. But, I could remember his words. "Hey! Let's just let the things be...and can't we just stay as before". His voice was familiar but there was something bizarre in it, I couldn't understand if it was a threatening or a begging.

I remained hushed as usual and when I turned to speak to him ,he was gone .I went back to my wine .after two three more wine glasses I felt as if the things around me was going around. And I couldn't control my steps .I can recall that I was just wandering with the wine glass in my hand .and the red and blue neon lights almost blinded my eyes. I could slightly feel my body swaying to the music. That was all....

My whole body was in a great pain, as if I have walked 1000 miles and my head hurt a lot and I couldn't bear the pain in my stomach. I could feel the freshness of the sunlight even I haven't open my eyes yet. I stayed there trying to gather up the scenes last time, but my effort was no useless. I suddenly opened my eyes as I could feel something strange. I sat up on the bed and I saw my dress on the floor and I heard a sound of water splashing inside the bathroom. I felt a thunder bolt running inside my whole body. I hurried and dressed up and quickly searched for my mobile and the purse, but I couldn't find. Sound of the bathroom door opening felt as if someone just stabbing me. "Ah! Did you wake up., wait I'll make you a coffee". His tone was gentle and it really touched me, and for a moment my thoughts went back to our happy times.

"NO...! I don't have time for your coffee, I am already late for work. Where are my things". The words just went out of my mouth. We were staring at each other and his face had an unusual look, but I didn't care.

"You are always the same. Work is not everything. Try to understand me PLEASE....."

Words didn't came out my mouth to reply, I just grabbed my things from the table beside him and went out of the room. I took a taxi to my apartment, and on the way the only images filled up mind was the past few years, the life spent with him happily. Smiles left out of my lips when I remembered those moments but, suddenly the dark images blurred them all. I quickly dressed up for work as I was already late.

Though tried my best to concentrate my mind on the work it made no use. So, at last I made up my mind to meet him in the evening.

“Hello, are you free in the evening I want to talk,”

“Hello darling, did you went to work? Were you late?”

“Just tell me are free in the evening or not!”

“Umm ...yes.”

“Fine let’s meet at the club then”

“NO! Not at the club, come to OUR HOUSE”.

“Ok”.

I hate to visit that place after our breakup. He was right it was OUR HOUSE once, I can still remember the way we went to make plans and the way we went from shop to shop ordering furniture to OUR HOUSE. It was me who stitched curtains for the whole house and I even choose his favorite color white, for the walls and black, which was my favorite color to the curtains. We were really a nice couple THEN, before HE came in between us.

He has already made dinner when I went, and has brought my favorite wine. Though I went to discuss some matters with him, a single thing didn’t came to my mind. I just drank the wine glass which he offered me. And he himself broke the silence.

“So, how was your day”.

We were at our table, a place where used to be full of laughter once.

“Fine”. I just gave a one word answer though I knew he was expecting more. And after a long time we met our eyes.

“Can’t we just be together again, I told you it wasn’t your faultHE was the bastard,”

“But I can’t forget it, I don’t want to be a burden to you any more”.

“Stop it! Just come here” he grabbed me and hugged me tightly. I felt the strength in his arms and the warmth in his chest which I felt after a very long time. I did not want to get away from that arms and I felt as if i have done a huge mistake trying to avoid him during all these years. The only thing I did was crying after a long time, I released all my pains, anger and frustration with my tears I cried until his shirt became damp with my tears.

“It’s all over now, forget all babe, come we’ll bring your things from your apartment here”.

He swiped away my tears and we both went to bring my things from the apartment to OUR HOME.

-Sathya Sammani



The Change

Often told, that I cannot control
or change how the world goes around
Countless encounters with hypocrites
who believes that change cannot be done

Nevertheless, I firmly stand for what I believe,
that change should start from one tiny marge,
and thinking big about what I could be,
I came to think, that space could be me.

Living in an absurd world,
Where nothing is absolute,
What is the point of not even trying?

Awaiting for a day
that would make someone see
the change I want to seek
to create that little ruffle.

So do not state, not to be fazed,
over something that cannot be changed,
because for me, that change starts with thee,
and we all just need to be, the change we want to see.

-S.H.



The Swim

Swimming-

One might call an essential skill

Where downing,

Might be a handfull's experience.

Receiving swimming lessons for six long years,

I still cannot swim

So on the days that the tides get rough,

On the days that I can't reach out,

I just drown

Fortunately for me,

The one thing I learnt

Over those six long decades was how to float,

Which probably still leaves me threading

Struggling, holding on to dear life,

Trying to stay afloat

Dreading for the day the tide will wash me away,

Until then I shall still have hope.

-S.H



Story of a Jilted Housewife

The tea on the table has turned so cold from piping hot,
The sweet flavor has found its way to an unpalatable bitterness.
Love, that was once the only ingredient has dissolved
But hatred,
Hatred digests well with every sip tasted.

Did she ever imagine the long road they walked together
Would someday be full of thorns?
The rosy whispers, in each other's embrace, they used to feed,
Would one day make their ears bleed?

Alone,
Sipping the last drops of her tea and wondering
How easier it could have been if she;
A beautiful lady in white carrying a bouquet of hopes,
On her way to *poruwa* finds her to be the jilted
For after so long she hates to see all her hopes been wilted.

-Thamali

Time

As days go by I realize
the desolation of time,
Caught in memories
Reflected through
Photographs,
The cheeky smiles frozen
In time and space,
Only a distant memory of
what once was- and not
is

when they ask me to move
on,
I wonder where I should
go,
You see,
Time has trapped me in a
maze of its own,
Tempting me to stay here
When all you've wanted
Was for me to grow

I lived my life learning
From you,
But the biggest lesson
Came in your death,
And while I'm still



Walking through this
Maze, you've taught me
That,
Like the moon:
We must all go through
Phases of emptiness to
Feel whole again.

-Tharindi Talahity



Unknowingly knowing

She spent a life, building walls
By unknowingly knowing to protect her soul
She spent a life, forgetting the reality
By unknowingly knowing it would break her

She shivered when she expressed love
By unknowingly knowing he isn't the one
She shivered when he asked love
By unknowingly knowing he is the one

She knew obsession is not love
She knew infatuation is not love
But unknowingly knowing,
She is still falling for the wrong one

-Umayangi Ekanayake

Late Night Walks

Beneath the shadows of even fall

I year to hang on with you

Till sun hides his beams from al

And sends moon to lead us to dew

A night walk seasoned with street food

You and me walking through the dusk

Amidst nature's glorious rings of good

And his fountain of advents under a musk

After long cute talks of joy

I used to feel my happy pill

Holding me he washes away my noy

Just like sloping down from a gentle hill

Fluttering up to a tree hut

We used to cuddle each other

Remembering the awesome but

Weird deeds we've done together

-Isuri Sharadha



SHE

SHE is a lonely moon,
The moon which is alluring and abandoned too.
The moon is a soul now, which bears her pure spirit,

She is encircled by glinting, glittering, glistening stars,
Despite she is secluded.
Hopeless of kith and kin,
Forlorn of tie and link,
Mournful of camaraderie,
In a desolate sky, she trapped herself alone.

She, from far and away,
Glanced at people,
People who are,
Delighted outside, dejected inside,
Bullish outside, awful inside,
Smiled outside and sobbed inside,
Two million people with four million faces,
Lived there,

“The universe, the people”, she, the unloved spirit sighed
Melancholy turned to ecstasy,
She, the mournful soul
Opts solitariness over depravity lived in the debauched, depraved, dodgy universe.
Then she turns as I.

-Hazeeka Hilmy



Showtime

They pulled up the curtain, revealed her skin:

Skin of shame!

Bruises everywhere

Flooded away her soul; Red and thick,

all over the stage

as if she was honored with a red carpet

They applauded

Without wasting the show, without blinking,

they sucked her pride from their lustful eyes

Men were hungry

Women were jealous

Jealous of her youth, Jealous of her beauty

“Look how shameless!”

Cried their voices came out of cracked lips

which were covered with faded lipsticks

She danced and moved with a smile

that was painted across her face

She was hung by the strings that were unbreakable:

strings of hunger, strings of despair, stings of agony...

Each thrust led her moves

She threw herself on the “pole of blatant,”

rocked and swirled for more applause

She drowned herself in solacing bills,



to cut those strings one by one
and to dance on her own
on the stage of her
very own life

-Pamoda Wijeshinghe



Footpath through the Woods

What's there to narrate
About a carpeted road
That leads to a mansion
Than a footpath through the woods
Which leads to a cottage.
With streams that flow down slowly,
Creating the sounds of silence and mystery,
With pits and potholes
And sticks and stones
That can trip you down.
With rattle snakes crossing the road
And glistening eyes of monsters
That peep through the holes.
But they won't keep you away
From reaching the cottage.
As the birds and butterflies
Would keep company and
Be there to lead your way.

On the footpath through the woods
Which leads to my cottage...

-Vinuri Malalage



BLINDFOLDED

Blindfolded...

I stayed for a long time,

Hoping to see a world filled with

Happiness,

Immense joy!

Being in the dark,

Silence and Tranquility were my bliss,

It was time to see the light...

Deceit! Pretense! Chaos!

Saw them all.

Saw them everywhere.

I wore a facade,

To survive...the light.

-Tani Thilakaratne

BLIND LOVE

The world revolved around her,
She told me she had it all,
From drivers, to estates,
Her father would never let her take the fall.

She spoke of her family,
More often than not,
Of her late husband
And three dear children
Who she loved a lot.

She told me these stories,
Almost every single day,
And when she recalled these memories,
A look of sheer joy,
She did convey.

And so we sit here – every single day,
As she waits for her children to come.
Trapped in her memories
And in this elders home
I am aware – she has no one.

How could I – a simple nurse
Tell her that she's alone?
Her children threw her out years ago
Regardless of all the love she had shown.

Nevertheless, she still sits in this verandah
Counting the cars which pass by,
Hoping one would drive through the gate
And bring her a big smile.

Birth to death

He cried to the moans of his mother
Stepped down the stairs to leave for summer
Overwhelmed by worldly pleasures
Strived for a life of eternal divines

Becoming numb he realized
Life is not what he earlier understood
Shivered by the truth of life
He gradually shed his pleasures of life.

-Tharindi Talahity



Auditioning, Not Needed

(Exclusively for an audience that's familiar with certain chilli powder incident)

The Golden Telephone rang
At the other end of the line was the man he once hated.
Or at least he was supposed to for mere pretence,
Nobody knew.
The voice cracked open:
"Buddy lets resume to our little soap opera,
I've been lacking some drama in life"
The second dude has been quite useless to me lately.
Grab the spotlight you are accustomed to!
Sidetrack the mass audience from the wild tearjerkers!
So why not bounce back?"

An array of hope ran through his spine
He started imagining already.
He must get his crew ready
And unravel a drama you have never seen.
So it began.
Ladies and gentleman across the world,
Lets give a standing ovation to
That climax that kept you on the edge with,
Chilli powder, knives, and flying buckets,
Butterflies and lambhoginis.

-Thamali Leanage

To lost mother

It took thousands of years
For me to reach you
It was hard
I had high hopes
To be your son

For whole two weeks
I was happy
To feel your warmth
But one day
An unbearable pain hut me to death

I heard he said
“We are not economically strong love”
But then what about me!
I will never curse you
But you be careful
Nature has eyes!

-Gayathri Wickramathilake

LIFE

Life is a race
Without a finishing line
A great swim
Without a sight of Land

A great HUNT! Where
The Hunter knows not his prey
Man, with the hole in his heart, cursed by Gods
Walks for eternity, starved and unsatisfied.

-Chirath Halambaarachchi

Scarlet beauty

I stepped into the garden,
To feel the morning breeze,
Filled with sweet aroma-
Of freshly bloomed blossoms

The sight of a scarlet beauty!
Stirs my poetic chimera!

The petals you wear,
Adorned with pearls of dew drops,
Lulls to the melody of morning breeze.

Your guardian- the thorny pillar!
Keeps a watchful eye,
On the buzzing bees flirting around.

Outstands you the rest!
Like the moon outshines the starlit sky,
In a creepy dark night.

Oh!
You glamorous heart-throb,
A replica of the nature's artistry.

-Dilani Seneviratne

Broken Wings

Some little butterflies
Coming out of cocoons
Spread the delicate wings
To explore the world.

Try to reach the mountain peak
As they say,
But wings are broken
On their way.

Survival of the fittest
That is how we say,
“You cannot survive
Unless you be our prey.”

-Nilanka Madubhashini

The Guardian

A Custodian...
A Patron...
Guardian of Ménage....
Ombudsmen of the household..
The paterfamilias..
The Mastermind..
Portrait us with,
Sparkling, Twinkling happiness..
Radiates our lives..
HE the one,
Who glister our lives..
HE, "The one"
HE, "The Father"
The King, The Sovereign, The Monarch..
The Crown headed Prince..
HE, "The Father"

-Imasha Karunarathna



Little Rose Bud

A Rose bud blooms
Making everyone shines
The tree is delighted
And embraces the off comer

The world is so vicious
For her to cope
She will be suspicious
Of her own fate

Oh! My little rose bud
You are so fragile
Try not to be rigorous
Like the Sun, be vigorous

-Kalpana Wijeynayake

The couple at the church

I was sitting outside the church
Looking at the tree of flags which lurch
I wonder whether the religion
Can exist in an abstract condition

There came the couple holding hands
The lady seemed quite uneasy in promenade
I started to contemplate on the love at this stage
Which can even breathes in this old age

Oh my god! She was blind
Yet the luster in her eyes made me remind
That both religion and love can stay alive
In abstract form of one's life

-H.N. Shehari

Do you know one thing grandma?

Grandma,
Did your children really make you happy?
By visiting you once a month,
By filling your room with healthy food items and medicine?
Why you refuse to go to luxurious houses of your children,
By leaving your old house,
I know for sure they will hire a servant for you,
As your children recite repeatedly,
Are you really greedy for your properties grandma?

I know you're no longer alive to answer me,
But I know the answer;
I know you are not fascinated by gifts your children bought.
I know each and every second you miss your children.
I know you always want them around you.
I know you didn't want to live in a luxurious house,
Because your heaven is your country home.
I know you feel comfortable there,
I know you want to be the mistress there,
Like you used to be.
I know you're not an avaricious woman,
Only thing, you did was saving everything for your children.

Do you know one thing grandma?
Now all your children,
Who insisted you to leave your home,
Are now acting in the same way you did,
When you're old grandma;

-ELA collective 2019/20



Will she share the same destiny?

Her heart wince from the pain,
At the voice repeating in her head,
“She died yesterday night,
Asking to see you one last time”

A roller coaster of memories brought back,
The day she dumped her at the “elder’s house”
Forgetting all about her mother’s love,
Happily she went with children to her house.

Her heart quivered at the sight of children,
With a new fear at the future uncertain,
Will she share the same destiny?
Will she share the same destiny?

-ELA collective 2019/20



The sun has woken up before me

The sun has woken up before me
Done blooming the little ones
I did go to the window to see
And wanted to fill my lungs

The chilling breeze make so many
Dancing the rose better than lilly
Humming birds are flying so many
Beautiful butterflies getting so billy

A shy dew drop is going to cry
When the sun kisses on her face
He will sure be make her cry
When I try to tie my lace

-ELA collective 2019/20



This poem is about, how Sri Lanka is still not independent from the British chains in terms of attitudes and how the Victorian ideals are still in the minds of Sri Lankans.

Ceylon in Sri Lanka

“What would you like to order?”

“Rice and curry”

Oh! Never mind!

“I prefer Bread and Butter”

Look at that Long Skirt!

Must be a village girl.

Look at that Short Dress!

Must be quite a huss.

“Can you reduce the volume?”

Can't stand this music.

OMG! Turn up the volume

That's the Bill Board no.1!

It's been 71 years

Since the British left.

Heard the president's address?

It was in 'Sinhala!'

-Udara Liyanarathna



Me...

I've seen the stars
Beautiful as they shine
I'm with my scars
All could be mine

Locked up in space
One thing to believe
So much to achieve
I'll be me just incase

-W.A. Maheli Weerasooriya



CHANGE

Like the morning light creeping through curtains, to rest on eyes unwilling to open

Change knocks at reluctant hearts

Once it pushes through the walls - it announces its presence

Sometimes a murmur - barely heard

Other times an echo

Soon it starts invading one's thoughts demanding its effects to be disclosed

At times very slowly like the lonely seed sprouting out to form a magnificent tree

Other times rapidly like the falling raindrops in a heavy storm

-Reema Shakir



REALITY

Why do we hesitate to give;

-if giving; never made anyone poor?

Why are we reluctant to elevate another?

-if uplifting another; can never mean your downfall?

Why do we tarry felicity for others;

-if spreading happiness; never makes you any less happy?

Why do we think twice before holding out our hands;

-if assisting others; never comes in the way of you achieving your goals?

Why do we demur compliments;

-if making others feel better; never makes you feel any less,

Why do we falter in sharing;

-if sharing; doesn't reduce your belongings for what is to you is already written

Why do we insist on being selfish;

-if being selfish doesn't make one-"self" any better?

Why do we bother being jealous;

-if all it does is wipe out one's good deeds?

Why do we make so much effort on slandering;

-if that doesn't make anyone feel better?

Why look down on others;

-if looking down on people; never lifts you up any higher?

Why do we hold on to our ego;

-if it doesn't help you become a better person?

Why resort to prejudice;

-if it does you no good?

So many questions

So many concepts

Yet we choose to act otherwise

-Reema Shakir



Simplicity

Long walks without earphones,
Chats over tables, without phones
Rainy days without Insta stories,
These be underrated glories

Pray keep the phone away,
And look up, into the other's face
In an age where all are astray
Be the change you want to embrace

Laughs replaced by lol's
Emotions replaced by emojis,
Flirting now, is sending dm's
Memories, reading chat histories

Millenials we are, yes
Strong, independent and free
Yet, is that too high a price to pay
If we're rid of joys as simple these;

The smell of the fresh earth,
As rain, with kisses it smothers
The sound of a lamb's birth
Its cry, mingled with its mother's

The simple joys, we now forsake



The trend, creating accounts fake

The life we live is so obsolete

As useless, as the junk we eat

Emotions, raw we were able to see

Without the use of WhatsApp emojis

People, IRL we were able to meet

Instead, now we tag them and tweet

How few people nowadays feel

The soothing wind on a breezy eve

Which makes the leaves dance and sway

Just watching it, blows your worries away

Depression, anxiety, eating disorders

So many therapists, yet one and all orders

Blue pills and white pills, pills of all colours,

All with the aim of making quick dollars

Why is it all so complex now?

Simpler times it used to be

When people's minds bodies

Were healthy and free.

-Dulanji Beneragama

Demons

Beware, of the underside of the bed
That's where monsters lie they said
Don't be naughty or you'll be fed,
To monsters waiting under the bed

Big ones and little ones,
Furry ones and scaly ones
My imagination came to play,
Tried to keep the monsters at bay

Brave knights and soldiers,
Grave kings and warriors
All helped me on my quest
Never failed me, nor made a jest

Oh! Gallant fights we used to have
With dashing knights, I used to love
Afraid of those monsters, I was not
Knew they'd save me, whatever the cost.

They said, look under the bed
It's where the childish monsters reside
But did they warn you of your head,
The worst of demons, can be found inside

As I grew older, I came to see



Those monsters were as tame as can be,
When compared to the demons I faced
The reason why my mind was defaced

My old friends then came to my aid
Did all they could, but 'twas all was in vain
These demons couldn't be kept away
In their valiant attempt, one and all slain

The demons took over, it was a coup
Then the angels within they started to woo
All I could do was just helplessly watch
As angels became demons, and all hope was lost.

Chattering and whispering, inside my head,
Unlike the monsters under my bed
Telling me what to do and what to say
Their puppet I am, on their strings I sway

Rise, slain knights!
Come now to my aid
Fight my battles for me
Like you did, back in the day

The demons' sneers I hear to my fright
'Your soldiers are long gone', they say
'No one but you, and your will to fight
Will get you through this dreary day'.

-Dulanji Beneragama



Ruthlessness

Suckling my mother on the meadow green,
Happy and blissful as I've always been
Days old I am, yet I can run wild and free,
Chase the wind, and from the leopard flee

Towering grass all around me,
As far as my eye can see
Tickles my nose, as it bends to me
And rustles and whispers as it calls to me.

Mother told me that I should never stray
To keep both eyes open, for demons looking for prey
What demons in the grass can there be?
Who would hunt a wee calf like me?

A sudden rustle in the grass I hear,
A swish of a tail I see so near
Mother's cry and stormy bellow
Couldn't brace me for the monster so yellow

Thrice my weight the she-devil
Pound for pound, she is pure evil
But is she a mother, just like mine?
Just seeking food for her cubs all fine

On top of me now, so heavy she is,
Her claws digging deeper into my skin



With paws on my head and jaws on my neck,
Through them I see mother in a state of wreck

Slowly but surely she's strangling me
Mother's wails, getting farther from me
As she ruthlessly waits for me to die,
Mother's warning I hear, as I close my eyes.

-Dulanji Beneragama

Ode to Mother Nature

Wake up, my love,
Wake up to see the present,
Your sons are being slaughtered
Your daughters, molested

Inhumane humans we are,
To defile everything in sight
So called 'dominant species' we are
Oh please! Our presence causes such a blight

Imagine a world without hominids
Full of hope, and not ominous
A better tomorrow for every being
Sans us, as our presence poisonous

Wake up, Mother Nature
See the earthlands in ruins,
Taken by foul minded men,
Rise! And see the trouble brewing

Virgin isles are virgin no more
They are tainted by the tourists galore
The mighty Amazon, might soon be a wasteland,
The luscious world, a desert created by our hand.

How many more dodos and tarpans will it take?



For us as humans to rectify our mistake
As a species, we are but one,
More than a million, the others come

I've suffered loss but you've suffered worse
So wake up now 'fore it gets worse,
Wreak your vengeance upon the world,
For raping your child, the babe you nursed

Go back in your dreams,
To memories so sweet
Of lush green grasses,
Can you hear the lambs' bleat?

You can hear the silence then,
The silence of the quick
Can even hear the green moss growing
It grew everywhere, even the peat

Now come back to the present time,
We've lost nearly everything divine
The ice capped peaks of the glaciers fine,
Are vanishing now, to be forgotten with time

All that's left for the future, I dread
Are forsaken realms that no man can tread
The barren lands, the foul soil,
The floating fish on the river Nile.

Wake up! And listen,



To the cries of your children
The dismal cries of motherless cubs,
The mournful wail of a rhino, shot

We are invading and killing,
Slaughtering and poaching,
They are dying and languishing
In the city, dealers are thriving

If this is humanity, then I want no part
This is not love which we impart,
My faith is shaken, by the stone cold hearts
Of killers in the guise of political savants

If you seek retribution I'll not blame you
If I were you I'd want justice too,
To right the wrong that has been done,
To innocent souls who've done no wrong

Wake up now, from your deep slumber
The time for havoc has arrived yonder,
Raze the foulest minds on earth
Burn the carnage at the heart of your hearth.

-Dulanji Beneragama



Picture Perfect

Shiny glass windows,
Bright muslin curtains,
Trimmed hedges neat and spruce
It's a perfect house, that's certain

Gay laughs you hear outside,
On the lawn in the summer time
Polite smiles and kind replies
As they pass you by, on the sidewalk tiles

Both upstanding citizens,
Both with jobs white collar
Their children nice and well behaved,
Can see them wave when you holler

This is what the whole world sees,
"Happy family 'tis", says idle chatter
But once you're inside you will see,
Behind closed doors, another matter

Discord is sown not overnight,
But once reaped causes such blight
The trees of envy does not bear
Fruits of joy for people anywhere



Hatred and love go hand in hand
Like lovers walking on forbidden land
All it takes is a slight turn of heart,
For the bitterness inside to tear apart

Underneath those fresh coats of paint
There are forces, that work to taint
Simmering away until time is ripe,
To unleash the wrath at a boiling point

Years of miscommunication one will bear
All for the love of the children I swear
Everything destroyed in one single fight,
A single straw, breaks the camel's back it might

With trust as a compass, love as the sail,
No marriage with these is bound to fail
But is that all, that is needed to show,
That love, with time does indeed grow

There used to be a time long ago,
Where you tried to fix the broken
But now it's worse, you must forgo
No salvage for all that was misspoken

Picture perfect house no more,
Resentment runs down to the core
Yet, to the world, nothing to show
This must go on, this perfect show.

-Dulanji Beneragama



Streetwalker

The Darkness swept slowly through the street
Menacing and powerful, as hungry as can be
Like a lioness out on a nightly prowl
Looking for prey with a deadly growl

Men were lurking
Some were smirking,
Given the chance they'd be groping
As I scurried along, my shoulders stooping

Oh! If only I could get used to this,
Being eyed, like a child eyes candy
But, oh dear pray tell me how
Never will that be, not even with a touch of brandy

My babe is sleeping back in my loft
I'm doing my job to keep him out of the jug
To garb his body and feed his mind,
If all goes well one day he'll give me a hug

I arrive at the tavern, cold and wet,
Madam hails me, "You're late again!" She says
He's waiting in the back room, eager and thirsty,
Waiting to lay hands on me, oh! I feel so dirty



Every day the routine repeats,
The men differ but I suffer the same
A gentle few, and the many who beats
Alone in my bed, I'm crying in shame

Yet what else can I do?
What else is there for me?
A single mother I am, unmarried and free
The world looks down on the likes of us
They, who didn't hesitate to throw us under the bus,
Then laughed and sneered and pointed fingers at us!

Parents? They forsook me
Siblings? They discarded me
Relatives are now strangers to me
Friends, by now a foreign concept to me

Was it my fault he was a predator?
A wolf in sheep's clothing,
Preying on a hapless lamb.
Not once, not twice but again and again,
He took me, and he tainted me,
In the guise of a fine upstanding citizen

Now I'm alone and desolate,
Only a brink away from death
The only reminder I have of him,
Is the only thing for which I have to live



He has your features, you know
That rugged jaw, those flashing eyes
The exact features that gave you credibility
When I told the world of your bestial instability

Oh heavens! The irony of it all!
To loathe the father but to love the son
How can I look at that childish face every day?
And compare it with yours, I cannot fathom

I'm called names by the society,
Yet after all this time I no longer care
The only thing for which I have to live,
As long as it takes, for him I will bear.

-Dulanji Beneragama

Courted by Death

Death took me by the hand one day,

It was me he tried to woo

Tried to take me far away

As his lover, 'til I said "I do"

With his charming smile,

And his graceful sway

He came; powerful yet divine,

Came and took my breath away.

With Life I was, at the time,

Happy and content

Yet the more I saw of Death

Restlessness knew no end

Life and I, apart we grew

His allure I'd outgrown

Nothing left between us now

All he did now, beat me down

Death, meanwhile was one of a kind

In comparison, much more mild,

Never did he raise his voice

Nor show me any other vice

Unlike Life, whose vibrance at times



Was a cacophony of ringing chimes?
A tidal wave which overwhelmed
And drowned me, though I was at the helm

Twirled and spun around by Life,
Yet, only on Death were my eyes
Lingering glances, stolen touches
Unwitting to Life, we had our kisses

Hidden lovers that the world knew not
All your sweet whispers I've not forgot
Enticing and cajoling, wheedling and inviting
Trying to seduce me, into seeing us uniting

Chaos is running through my mind
If I go with one, the other I leave behind
My mind now in eternal daze,
Under Death's lustful gaze

I'm standing now, at the edge of the cliff
Death is calling me from beyond the abyss
"Forgive me, Life" I cry out in my mind
I'm joining Death on the journey of bliss.

-Dulanji Beneragama







English Literary Association

Department of English and Linguistics
University of Sri Jayewardenepura

englishliteraryassociation.usj@gmail.com