

Poetry Series

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- poems -

Publication Date:

2019

Publisher:

Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

Banu Dai()

But Why Did She Not Leave?

She was born on a tree top
In a nest of old straws
She had lovely feathers
And a smile that draws

Her home was old
The trunk wrinkled
Leaves yellow and dangling
Awaiting a shudder
To wither and droop

She wished to abandon
Move to a place laden
Build a newer castle
With grass of golden
Fill it with eggs to be beholden.

But why did she not leave?

The winds stopped her
The leaves spoke to her,
The branches wound up
Increased their grip on her
We shall all stay behind
Its only in this life
That we shall be together
Feel the air, gaze at the stars,
Dangle on the branches, pick straws
Why do you need someone else?
Our roots are strong
We shall live long,
Do not worry,
The yellow leaves will be replaced
By some fresh green ones,
We shall have new friends
In the trees opposite us
It's not many years that we have to pass
But we shall be here as long as we last.

Don't go flying too high,
Our eye sight is not so fine
My eyes blink if it stares at the sky
Mine waters
Life is not about high flights
Its mainly low, steady ones
As you gather speed
There's nothing that we can see
Everything blurs,
Your feather becomes colourless,
I feel so lost
With the journey my young ones sought
We lost many to these dreams
In lands which we can never see
Why did you leave? We asked,
To follow my dreams, they wrote
Did you dream pleasant?
Could you see my face?
Did you feel my tenderness?
Did some bark help you heal?
Could you find any new roots?
Did those branches embrace?
Did the flowers smell any better?
We are your life line,
In our arms you can stay strong
It's a small life this time
There plenty to do here,
You just have to look,
Look near, dreams are here
You were born in our midst
Then why do you leave to take someone's place
Let each be in their environment,
Each one is there,
Where he belongs
At a place, in a time
Recognize,
It's not we that matter
It's only our residue that we scatter
Do not go to a land that's far
For, in our old trunk is your heart.

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Connection

Children, he said
Were the only indicator
Of the passage of time

Otherwise
One thought
That time stood still
That one was young
That life still remained

Children he had
One
And life was with prosperity
Until
His wife died
His back bone curved
His limbs gave up
His skin wrinkled
His age showed up

He was not wanted
In the house or the heart
He was now a part
of a room
Right on the top
His son his only visitor
In a household full of flaws

The passageway cleared
To hold a bed
Flimsy mattress
Torn sheets
And
A ladder removed and placed
As per the
Arrival or departure
Of his lone friend

His son
His only connection
His blood relation
His only want
His only hope
To open up
His space under the pitched roof

The night was dark
His mood sinister
The attic as narrow
As his waist
His thoughts dimmed
As he heard footsteps
Of his son
Coming up the ladder

His hands searched,
Caressed
His limb
Resting as two sticks
By his bed
He waited eagerly
To see his son
A head peeped in
He smiled at him
And in an instant
There was a connect
A direct hit
With his limbs
Severing all connections.

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Face

In the absence of blue light

Engulfed by sleepiness

He was a face hidden in the darkness

By the reddish warmth of the firewood

I waited

Blinded suddenly by the illumination

It was a revelation, a face.

The earth turned

I turned with it

My thoughts scattered as if windblown

Growing inside me

In the direction of the prevailing wind

Was a seed

Spreading out its radical

Attaching within.

I was a dried flower

Wrapped in the leaves of loneliness

I unfurled and expanded

Steeped by love

Emulating,

A blooming flower

I was a green garden

Fragrant with the smell of the roses

Kissed by the thoughts of togetherness

Not a blade of grass

It dawned

I recognized in the weak sunlight

It was a face

In a green pullover.

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Never Again

Never again will I sit across
Smell your breath in the air
Hold your gaze through the stare
Feel your touch in my hair

Never again will you feel a squeeze
Expressing my longing with such ease
Never will our arms brush across
As we walk through the palms.

Never will you hear my call
Through the crowds in the hall
Never will we turn around
To the sound of our foot fall

Never again can you touch my face
Trace a line through this frontage
Never again will there be silence
To hear the sounds of my benevolence

Never will you feel the warmth
In the weaves of my yarn
Never again will I look to sew
Hem a tale or a new darn.

Never will I hold your hand
Feel the grease in the palm
Never will you be able to graze
In my land and in my space

Never again will my heart be taken
By the words of your compassion
Never will we meet again.
In any lane or a by lane.

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