

Poetry Series

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- poems -

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Janaki Nilmini()

A Letter To Santa

Dearest Santa, it's to you, I write
To enlighten you about our plight
Isn't the Christmas all about peace?
If so you must listen to our pleas

We are the turkeys, grown for Christmas
Genetically selected, fattened for meatiness
Often in pain due to hip degeneration
Cannot lift the feet in this situation
When in a natural habitat, we can fly
And, roost in trees to watch the night sky
But in the factory, overweight and over fed
We shuffle along and cry in a dimly-lit shed.

Lack of respect for nature's wisdom
Profits have compromised birds' freedom
Male birds are brutally manhandled
Beaks are partially amputated
Mechanical devices violate the females
The eggs are reproduced in large scales
The little ones never know the mother's touch
How can the man be so cruel as such?

Collection happens as they are laid
And hatched in an incubator- man made
The chicks are kept in very large units
Thousands packed together for mega profits

Dearest Santa, I am not exaggerating
There is much cruelty in factory farming
Slaughter is another harrowing process
Some have long journeys, crammed into crates.

Now that you know our story of woe
Dearest Santa, may I please ask you
Point a way forward for the human world
Toward a society that cultivates and uphold

Values such as compassion and peace
Only then this cruelty can cease

At Christmas time when the world is at ease
And, the children sing with joy and peace
When you visit with gifts and greetings
Whisper to them about our grievings
Though it is late now for my generation
The children may bring our liberation

Janaki Nilmini

A Migrant Bird's Perspective

Jets and planes have conquered the sky
Just like us, fly over the deep blue ocean
They have copied us, use avian highways
But, why can't the Humans fly?
They have made mechanical giants
Which will carry many of them.
A pilot navigates the way
They will sit in comfort
Happily drinking champagne
Once a pilot asked me, what's your Avian secret?

Our eyes are large for a sharp eyesight
In air and water, we see well.
Tube shaped nose enhances smell
Hooked bill is for gripping the fish while flying
The feet at the back, propel us from behind when diving
Narrow wings regulate, turbulence while flying
The thickly dense plumage is for insulation
The long wingspans produce aerodynamic lift
We can read the sun and stars
Parents teach us navigation skills
Instincts, landmarks, all these help
If you want to fly, this is all, I could say
Now that we know each other well
I have an important thing to tell

As you know friend, over the time we have evolved well.
Natural problems, predators and storms are manageable
Human threats like power lines and hunters are the worst of all
Destroyed habitats, changed environments, make it unbearable
Turtle dove and many other sea birds now face extinction
Please be kind. Save our migrants without restriction

Janaki Nilmini

A Sad Thought

I feel sad to see your state
A carcass, to be on a plate
Nature's beautiful creatures
Created in the deep blue ocean
Tailor made features
Spindle shaped, graceful motion
Lived in harmony
With your fellow beings
Large and small
Sharks and shrimps
But, in a world
where they terminate
Their own intimate
Will they ever spare you
My innocent friends!

Janaki Nilmini

A Short Biography

I cannot exactly remember my mother
Separated at birth from each other
I couldn't have any playmates either
we weren't allowed to play together

many of the babies, didn't see the light
The females survived, but a different plight
Wish I was dead then, rather than now
Life wasn't worth for a voiceless cow

Sooner or later you'll be on sale
No matter where you go, it's the same tale
A herd of us was taken away
It was a gloomy and very dark day

Since then, life was nothing but hell
Suffered in silence as no one to tell
There's no dignity, the abuse, forceful
But, a dream of a calf, made me hopeful

Soon my memories, haunted me
Motherhood, I felt, it wasn't for me
As they were born taken away
I Cried and wailed every single day

Producing gallons of milk for the dairy
I felt deceived, drained and weary
Having worked many years, although tired
There is no place for us to be retired

Next is definitely last destination
My mother too had the same termination
Now, this is my life, I have to tell

I nurtured a nation. May you be well! t

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All In The Mind

Often our perceptions
Of people, concepts and world
Are adulterated or skewed
So we see things
In our own way.
Perhaps our beliefs and values
Our own upbringing
Or Wishful thinking,
Cultural and religious assumptions,
Associative stereotypes
Emotional and intellectual prejudices
Subjective, and abstract biases
Cloud our way of thinking

Observing silence to reflect and evaluate
Our own minds, and who we are,
Systemic training of mind
Can remove these barriers
Enabling us to see the realities
Of materials and concepts,
And the impermanence of things.
Well trained mind
Eliminate ignorance and delusion
That darkens our mind.

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Bunny's Thoughts

Harlequin delicious harlequin

Low-growing evergreen

Whatever the weather

Yummy leaves never wither

Mottled with creamy white

It's the ?? bunny's dreamy bite

Winter garden is dry and bare

But harlequin will give my share

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Dark Side Of Spring

Spring green grass trembling
Cows cuddling newborns in fear
Trucks at the veal farm

Golden trumpets wail
Don't take the babies away
Ewes lament in vain

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Do Not Fear Me

Do not fear me, I am with you when you say good night
I will guide you, as I do now it's the end of the day
So, be calm. Gently walk through the fading light

Wrinkled skin and kyphosis, paralyze men with fright
when they see me hovering around, they start to pray
Do not fear me, I am with you, when you say good night

The end is dignity, do not struggle with all your might
Do what's good, cleanse your mind; all the religions say
So, be calm. Gently walk through the fading light

I have seen you in great many races, this is not a fight
Cameras clicked and trophies held, you had your own way
Do it again, I am with you when you say good night

Life is short, endless duties, time is always tight
You lived a life of a genius, that's what people say
So, be calm. Gently walk through the fading light

As you wished, the carriage with shire horses isn't white
Your fame is written on millions of petals, on your way
Do not fear now when it's time to say good night
So be calm. Gently walk through the fading light

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I Cry For You

From this hotel window
I saw them dragged you away
Cheering and clapping
Proud of their catch
To be sold
Cut into pieces
Or, wholesale
You will fetch such a value
More than they ever imagined

You wouldn't hear me
But, I cry for you
My heart is broken
To see you in this plight
Still gasping
I can only pray
You pass away soon
Without any delay
And be freed for ever

Man's greed is all over
He owns the sky
The land and earth
No matter what it costs
He will do what he wants
I have no say on this matter
I can only apologize
On behalf of
The advanced species

I cry for you
we've never met before
You, the beautiful creature
Made to measure
Dark blue ocean shade
Blended with winter-gray
Your spindle shaped body
That cuts through the currents

And somersault around
In the deep blue sea
Your own kingdom
But, the man has access

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I Share Your Pain

Grazing gracefully in the meadows
Among the Autumn dark shadows
Silhouetted against the fading sunshine
I see your melancholy and decline

I know the pain you felt
When your friends were taken away
I heard your laments
When your babies were dragged away

Year after year
I saw you trembling in fear
You had no say
when they took your rights away

You have nurtured thousands of nations
Societies, small and great civilizations
A glass of milk, with bread and butter
Cheese on pizza, for lunch or supper
Scones with cream for evening tea
For a bundle of hay, your gifts are free
I shan't talk of veal and steak
That will make me numb and weak

This is my praise and thanks to you
To release my pain and heartbound woe
The time has come for my grievance to air
I know that tomorrow, you won't be there

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Liberation Of Mind

Freedom; liberation of mind

Our perceptions of people and world
Often adulterated or skewed,
So we see things in our own way.
Upbringing, Beliefs and values
Assumptions and stereotypes
Emotional and intellectual biases
Cloud our subjective minds

If pause, reflect and evaluate
The way our minds operate
And think who we really are
Insight is not that far
We can change the way we see
Insight is the turning key
Eliminating ignorance and delusion
Ruminating impermanence and illusion
Mindfulness bring liberation
That is the freedom for celebration.

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Mind

Be it, pauper or king
Mind is the very thing
Through which we live,
Most mysterious and elusive.
Mind is the focal point
In the Buddhist doctrine
Mind precedes things
Dominates and creates them
Mind is the origin of all goods
And the evil within us
Mind is the nearest to us
Yet most unknown, thus
If mind is comprehended
All things are apprehended

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Mother

Hear! Dawn orchestra
Milk, with unconditional love
Wake up time for school

Material wealth is fun
knowledge cannot be stolen
She was strict and firm

Simple life brings joy
greed and hatred defile mind
Mum was always clean.

Live with compassion
Do not wait till Autumn winds
Life is short and swift

First flight from my nest
Build your own, and make it strong
It's your task, she said

I had my firstborn
You nursed my exhausted self
Lectured on nature

Days became decades
Together we grew older
You were aging faster

Feeble and weary
End of journey, you whispered
Good bye, I love you

In silence you slept
In reverence I watched you
Returned to nature

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On Myway To School

I din't travel by bus to school
Neither did my mother driveme there
With my friends and cousins
I had the best of childhood fun
During my primary school days
On myway to school

Early start from home
The tropical sun was warm
Kids from the neighborhood
Joinedas we marched by
To feel the magic of the forest
On myway to school

Avoiding the main road
And the cobbled village lane
Away from the adult eyes
Swayed by the occult cries
Of the magic creepy crawlies
On myway to school

Shuffling through the silky webs
Of the watchful Incy Wincies
Slowing at the sight of scorpions
Scurryingbeetles and centipedes
We had to crawl in the woods
On my way to school

The subtle sweet taste
Of the wild cardamoms
Was hardly enough to suck
and spit the pungent seeds
Yet it was a weird delicacy
On my way to school

Shiny purple Passion fruits
Velvety blue wild olives
Inky violet Bovitiyas
Rasamoraand blackberries

Stimulated the taste buds
On my way to school

The years have gone by
Dwellings have reached the sky
Cobbled lane has disappeared
Motor cars are revered
I wander what the kids do now
On their way to school

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Purple Aster

Vast areas of perennial garden
Ever so scattered and springtime burden
Here and there and look everywhere
Sure it's gardener's nightmare
Lush green Bushes grow quicker and thicker
Yet no benefits to any honey sucker

But you remember come September
End of summer when gardens murmur
Last feeding for the poor honey seeker
Autumn makes them weary and weaker
Displaying blossoms of glorious cluster
It's the grand finale of Purple Aster!

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Sea

Do not ask my age, I do not have a clue
The size and nature no one ever knew
I'm endless, ageless, boundless and so forth
With beauty and the cruelty both lying beneath

With full moon in the sky, my mood is high
But wind will wake my dark and monstrous mind
When solar king comes home to me to rest
He'll lay the golden carpet on his path

I bear the floating mansions in my arms
Beneath them is a lively rainbow world
Greedy humans make it their hunting grounds
Then stressed with anger I may gobble the sand

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Stinging Nettles

The first among to wake up in the Spring
The award winner, comes with a sting
Cannot touch the super herbal queen
Stinging Nettle pubescent and green

Urtica dioica is the botanic name
Dioica is the one with European fame
Tropical cousins are all not the same
Strong and sharp, they can make you lame

Each sting is a delicate hollow hair
Stiffened with a tip of silica ware
Swollen base that stores the venom with care
Shoots its payload, touch, if you dare

Transmitters are same as yours and mine
Acytylcholine, serotonin and histamine
If stung by nettles, remedy is close at hand
Do not go far, Dock is where you stand

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Storm

When we are still, our thoughts are calm
Do not make us insane, plead the rhythmic waves
I've seen your history, destruction is your fame
We are equals, respect each other, said the mighty earth
Do not humiliate me, Ophelia did so once
It's not fair, the fireball cries in shame
A battle among the elements is hazardous
Beware! Warns Aether, the celestial observer
Colourless, odorless and invisible as I am
And, labeled as a female, my identity is in crisis
Only when I am in action, you take notice of me
Yes, this is my fame and it is my game

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The Spring Is On Its Way

The green buds of nettles
Food and lodging for the hungry caterpillar
The birth of a tortoiseshell butterfly

Tadpole darts in the pond
Pinkbud peeps straight through the mud
The frog is crowned on the lotus

Slimy, shiny slugs and snails
Slither through the matted old brown leaves
Showing their new antennae off

Ruins of the spider's web
Hold the skeletal remains of the weaver
Trapping the young

The shaggy lawn livens up
With the fragrant crocuses of rainbow shades
A waft of perfumed breeze

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Waxwings Have Arrived

Perching in my garden
Swallowing winter berries
Singing Scandinavian lyrics
It's a flock of waxwings

Prominent colourful crests
Creamish brown breasts
Mask round the eyes
White and yellow wings
Yellow tipped tails
Follow winter trails
Tailor made for flight
Flies through the night
A flock of waxwings rest
In my garden nest

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Winter Babies

When icy winds blow
And the nights are long
Grey seals haul ashore
For Pups to be born
Fluffy, white and furry
On the brown sandy beach
Not the best camouflage
Seems very strange
But, they say
It's a relic from the ice age
When Pups born on snow

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Winter Garden

After the grande finale
Resting like dormant
Stage is empty
But, is it?
Not quite

Some matted leaves
On, still green grass
Some autumn sheds
Colourful as ever
Make a pretty painting

Skeleton bushes
Brown conifer brushes
Invite song thrushes
Where the spider rushes

Wood pigeon still scratches
Nuts, the squirrel yet hides
And magpie treasure hunts
Winter garden, neither empty
Nor dormant
Not quite

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