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We Are One with Nature (Landscape and poetry)

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Abstract:

We are an extension of nature at a higher level. We are part of a whole and depend on the other parts to be complete. We are one with nature - we give birth, grow, bloom, bear fruit and die only to become manure for the trees that gave us air and sustained our life. We reciprocate in death.

The overwhelming power nature has, moved poets to pour out words from their hearts and drown those who were able to perceive. The greatest testimony to this would be William Wordsworth. 'I wandered lonely as a cloud' by this great poet has remained in my heart and will continue to echo till I cease to breathe. Like him, there were many more like Robert Frost, Alfred Lord Tennyson, P.B. Shelly and John Keats who were inspired by the beauty of nature to write verses that linger till this day.

Like these great poets, I too have been stirred by nature to express my innermost feelings, the ecstasy of profound joy as well as the deepest sorrow that has touched my very soul. These poems of mine span over a life time.....

Keywords

SRM DEFL 10TH conference, Landscape and poetry, one with nature, Lamb's rock, Aftermath, I mourn for you

We are one with nature

'Men will come and men will go, but what lingers on are only memories of them'. I've heard this adage so many times and wonder if we were born only to die and leave behind memories. Are we so insignificant? Did we toil on this earth for no reason or for no purpose? Ney, Nature has taught us and shown us that after death life springs forth. We will surely die but be absorbed by mother nature, deep into her womb and become delicacies to flora and fauna only to be born again. Our existence is everlasting because we and nature are one. We are an extension of her at a higher level. We are part of a whole and depend on the other parts to be complete. We are born, grow, bloom, bear fruit and die only to reciprocate in death.

Nature celebrates us by making each one of us unique. Unique in attributes and character. Must we not give back? Must we not take care of her, praise her and sing of her beauty? Must we not lament and

drown in sorrow when she is ruined by her own offspring? My heart bleeds when I see a tree cut down and when the filth of humanity is poured into our rivers. Amidst the stench, a daisy blooms with vengeance to remind us that there is still hope.

From the day man learned to express his thoughts in words, he has only sung praises of the beauty around him. There is nothing in this world that can stir the deepest emotions of man as mother nature does. The overwhelming power that she has, moved poets to pour out words from their heart and drown those who were able to perceive in the waters of emotion. The greatest testimony to this would be William Wordsworth. 'I wandered lonely as a cloud' by this great poet has remained in my heart and will continue to echo till I cease to breathe. Like him, there were many more like Robert Frost, Alfred Lord Tennyson, P.B. Shelly and John Keats. Nature was the inspiration for all of them.

Like these great poets, I too have been stirred by nature to express my innermost feelings, the ecstasy of profound joy as well as the deepest sorrow that has touched my very soul. Born and brought up in the Blue Mountains, better known as the Nilgiri Hills, I was surrounded by lush green mountains, dales and valleys splashed with purple Jacaranda and flame of the forest red. A feast for the eyes and soul. The roses and carnations perfumed the air by day and the queen of the night did her part at night making life a joy to experience.

As I grew, my love for nature grew as well. I would sit out on the carpet of green grass and watch the mist crawl by, drawing a veil across the mountains and across anything that came in its way. I would just stare into the wilderness and wait for a glimpse of the mountains. Sometimes, the mist would sail away and sometimes would remain the whole day. Misty mornings had their own beauty but for some unexplainable reason, a sense of melancholy would overpower me. I just loved the sun and starry nights.

One sunny day.....

I lay under trees,
With books on my knees,
The sun gleamed bright,
Through the leaves like a light.

I walked through a river,
Which made my body quiver,



I sat on a stone,
and found myself all alone.

I walked passed fountains,
Which rose high as mountains,
The small creatures on the ground,
So quiet, not a sound.

The moss on the wall so green,
Which I had never seen,
The bees each flying out of their cell,
The pretty flowers, the pleasant smell.

I wrote the above lines when I was 14 years old. I lived in an old British Bungalow called Harwood. I loved sitting under the gigantic tree and looking up at the sun through the leaves. Very often I would stroll down to Darlington bridge and walk through the river that rolled along beneath. Jumping from stone to stone, chasing dragon flies while the birds sang a song. I felt one with them all.

.....

Late evenings always saw me out in the freezing cold. I would walk around in the garden, talk to the creator and be lost in the tranquillity of the night. Later I would retire to bed, fully intoxicated by sheer natural beauty and fall into deep slumber only to be woken up by a new dawn..... I would think of...

The enchanting night

The stilled night,
The blossomed trees,
The mist white,
The turquoise seas.

The shimmering moon,
The cluster of stars,
No sign of gloom,
Or drooping of flowers.

The veil of darkness disappears,
The sun's face then appears,
Good bye O' Silence,
Your end has come at last,
But please don't forget to come back fast.

Many of my birthdays were celebrated in the wilderness. One of them stands out in my mind. Close family and friends had dinner around a fire at

Lamb's Rock. This was the highest point on a hill from where one could see the sprawling plains below. The distant lights would be flickering like the stars in the sky. A sight that will remain in one's memory forever. Then suddenly the moon came out and reminded me of its presence.

I had to write.....

Night at Lamb's Rock

In the still of the night,
The moon shining bright,
What a wonderful sight,
God! Am I not right?

Pretty flowers in rows,
Dance as the wind blows,
The river passes by,
Rolling stones, saying good bye.

The mountains so high,
Nearly touching the sky,
Water falls gushing down,
Through gorges into town.

The night disappears,
The yellow light then appears,
The black mountains are clear,
Showing green trees and dew tears.

.....

One cloudy evening, I was walking back from school. There was a smell of rain in the air. And then suddenly.....

Rain

The clouds became grey,
The wind howled, there was thunder.
The country children were gay,
The sun was still shining, what a wonder.

Suddenly the roads were wet,
On my way the crowd I met,
People running helter skelter,
Looking for a little shelter.

Hail stones fell on the grass,
White against green, what a contrast.
Slowly the mist was on its rise,
From where? Only God knows, it's a surprise.

Then slowly the rain stops,
The hail stones, now they don't drop,
The sun becomes bright again,



Down the mountain comes the train.

Time, in great speed it goes,
The wet roads with water flows,
'Rain' that valuable name,
Throughout the ages will remain in fame.

.....
Time was flying, and so was I. Transforming from a larva into a butterfly. I was budding into a woman and yearning for the other part of my existence. It didn't take long for me to find my soulmate. I was in love, madly in love and couldn't bear to live without him. There were times when he went on journeys and I was left alone. Each evening I would stare out of the window hoping he would come home.....

Melancholy

When the evenings arrive, when
Darkness has power over night,
I find myself all alone,
I don't think everything is alright.

Off course everything is not alright,
A part of me has gone,
Gone to some distant land,
Leaving me forlorn.

We are so close and yet so far,
Why has distance come between us?
Is it because as the saying goes-
Yearning for your love brings nearness.

Come back soon and bring sunshine
Into this cloud stricken life of mine.
So together, and forever
We could share love divine.

.....
I couldn't lament anymore. After great turmoil between the two families, we were united in wedlock. Our wedding took place in a church on a sea shore. We spent the next few days just walking on the sand, gathering intricately designed shells and listening to the roar of the waves. It seemed like they were wishing us and pouring out their blessings on us. We felt bliss. My emotions were stirred and I said to my love.....

Spark of my life

You came into my life like a spark
And kindled the fire of my soul.

And now my heart is set on fire,
And the flames of passion and love are burning high.

Come taste the flame of my passion and love
And get your soul caught on fire too,
And we'll both burn wildly, madly kindling each other –
Until our souls return to dust.

.....
Time went marching at a great pace, seasons came and seasons went and in a twinkling of an eye, a year went by. We were living on a plantation, a paradise on earth. I sat under coffee blossoms and recalled memories of past years. Then I rushed home to my husband and said.....

Do you remember?

Do you remember the day we climbed a hill and picked little yellow flowers?
Do you remember the night we sat under trees and admired the stars?
Do you remember the day we drove up a mound through bushes and trees?
Do you remember the day we walked on the shore gathering shells, listening to the sea?
Do you remember the day you bathed under a water fall and I looked on?
Do you remember the day sitting outside our home munching corn?
Do you remember the day we sat high on a rock and I rustled your curly hair?
Do you remember the day we walked through woods and took in scented fresh air?
Do you remember the day the sun shone bright, we went boating on the lake?
Do you remember the nights you try to sleep and I telling tales keep you awake?
It's great having beautiful memories for me to recall.....
It's great having you as my husband, I love you most of all.

Our love for each other was as deep as the sea. It expressed itself in two little beings. Two little sons that brought us joy. They were the world to us and still are. Life wouldn't be complete if not for them. I thank God every single day for these precious gifts. Every new year I would send them a wish.....

Wishes from the heart



Dearest Franchen, Tanu and Mark,
You three are the spark that set my life ablaze,
With purpose, meaning and praise.
You are precious stones bright,
Embedded in my heart so tight
May God bless and protect you,
Now and the whole year through.
May 1999 be divine,
Filled with joy and sunshine!

.....
Life has its ups and downs. The path could get rough when time throws its challenges at us. When the going gets tough, the tough get going and I was no exception. For all the joy and happiness that I had experienced, equal measure of tribulations came my way. Family needs forced me to separate myself from them and cross the seas to another land. I faced great turmoil but mother nature taught me how to bend in the wind. Living in an alien land, very often in pensive mood, I would contemplate our lives as streams.....

Streams

A little stream was joined by another.
They caused quite an uproar but kept running along
Over hills and dales, through gorges and over
waterfalls-
Their lives were full of ups and downs, but they
blended with each other and became one.
They travelled along with great force, polishing
stones along the way, and giving life to those along
the edge.
It's now past 24 years and many a time the stream
nearly dried up.
But the creator thought better and sent down
showers of life
Giving momentum to the little stream and helped it
roll along.
Then one day it branched again, flowing in two
different directions to give other pastures life.
Though separated, they became one, are one and
will continue to be one.
The life force that's in them is ONE
And so they will join again and will flow together
to eternity.

.....
Living away from my husband was the most difficult part of my life. Difficult for him as well. In 24 years, we had not spent a single day apart from each other. And now....living alone in a distant

land, I felt a part of me was non-existent. I tried reaching out to him in a spiritual way. If nature and we were one, nothing could separate us. I wrote to him.....

Waves from my heart

The waves from my heart lash out to your soul-
Listen, and you'll hear the roar.
Thoughts from my mind constantly flow towards
you-
Listen, and you'll hear whispers of my love in the
breeze.
Look into your heart, and you'll see me there-
mingled with your life force.
If faith can move mountains, then think of me and
I'll be there.
Distance can separate the physical being. Can it
separate the mind and spirit?
I'm with you every second of your life, just
perceive, and you'll feel me. We are One.

.....
I had to immerse myself in my job to combat the loneliness within. Oman was a beautiful country and the landscape was breath taking. I had to motivate Omani children to appreciate their country and ruler. I taught them a song.....

A land by the sea

Our Sultan is just and kind hearted,
Faithful to him we shall be,
Shout out with joy all you young children,
To God let us make melody.

Oman, Oman, a wonderful land to see, to see.
Oman, Oman, a wonderful land by the sea.

The mountains, the hills and the valleys,
The deserts, the gorges and palm trees.
The flowers, the fruits and the honey bees,
Such amazing things to see.

Oman, Oman, a wonderful land to see, to see.
Oman, Oman, a wonderful land by the sea.

The wadis, the hot springs and falajes,
The islands, the ships and the seas.
The water falls, the towns and the villages,
The forts, parks and museums too.

Oman, Oman, a wonderful land to see, to see.



Oman, Oman, a wonderful land by the sea.

.....
Time flew by and letters and phone calls bound us together. Then one day, I was informed that the son of our dear friends had passed away. I was filled with sadness. He was only a few years old, crippled and bed-ridden from birth. He couldn't sit, walk or talk. Most part of his life he spent in the arms of his mother and father. They showered him with so much love. All he could do was smile and laugh to show them he was happy. His death was devastating to them. I wrote them a letter expressing my sympathies and a poem too.....

Little hail stone

Little hail stone,
You fell from the heavens,
And though for an instant,
You filled our hearts with joy
And melted away into nothingness.
Your innocence, purity and your very presence filled the void space in our lives.
Your remembrance will be to time indefinite!

.....
Holidays brought me back home. It was a time to rejoice with family and friends. A time to glimpse into each other's lives and share experiences. Mother nature has so much to offer. We just had to allow ourselves to be engulfed by her beauty.....

Light of the night

Bonfires and barbecue dinners,
Saw many family get-togethers,
We sat near a tree one night,
And suddenly we were filled with delight.

Hundreds of stars covered the tree,
Twinkling like diamonds, one was near me.
This was a marvel, we were struck by awe,
We had never seen a sight like this before.

What were they? Close inspection revealed,
Tiny glow worms were dancing with zeal.
They sparkled and winked, and seemed to say,
We are the light of the night, please let us stay.

.....

My mother land was calling me back. She said you have had enough of foreign air. Come back and explore the land that gave you birth. So in 2008 I returned back home. The noise, dust and pollution was getting on my nerves. The very landscape of my town had changed. It had become a concrete jungle. I just wanted to run away into the wild. Why was man treating mother nature this way? How long will she be patient and bear the atrocities committed against her? It didn't take too long. In 2015 she was enraged and poured out her wrath on the inhabitants of Chennai, a city in S. India where I was living. This is what I witnessed.....

Aftermath

Only pebbles lie on the road to tell the tale of what went by,
Bottles and shoes, kittens and mews.
Branches and leaves, tyres and trees,
Speeding cars, bikes and buses too,
Causing waves as high as you,
Shouts and screams, barks and caws,
Leave alone the buffaloesthey walked along tall and strong,
Faces filled with arrogance , braving the raging waters.
For how long the heavens will cry,
We have to wait and contemplate.

.....
Chennai suffered the worst floods in ages. Concrete jungles had sprung up everywhere blocking the natural water ways. Mother nature brought man to his knees because of his foolishness. He brought calamity not only upon himself but upon other creatures as well. They too paid the price for errors unknown to them. I was stirred to write.....

I mourn for you

I mourn for you little puppy dog, washed away by floods,
Away from the warmth of your mother's arms.
I mourn for you mortals with wings, no branch saves you from the torrents.
I mourn for you cattle on the roads, your bed has become a river.



And last but not least, I mourn for you O' man,
where is your power?
You danced on the roads, cut down the trees,
shooed away the birds
And chased away the dogs.
Now you stand alone marooned.
I mourn for you O' man who isn't part of the whole,
You know not empathy,
Wings, hooves and paws are better than you.

.....
We are changing the landscape of our planet which was so beautifully designed for us. We are stripping her naked and inviting her fury. We are cutting down trees and limiting oxygen which is our very life force. We are releasing carbon dioxide and chlorofluorocarbons into our atmosphere and destroying the ozone layer, a protective blanket that mother nature encircled us with. We are changing forests into deserts and snow capped mountains into bare towers. We are making the sea waters rise and swallow up our land. We are filling up mother nature with so much plastic and choking her soul to the core. We are inviting our own doom. How foolish can man be? We are killing ourselves because we are ONE with nature.

Is there still hope? Will poets be able to eulogize the beauty of mother nature in the future? Will there be anything left? I believe there will be. Doesn't she colour the sky with a rainbow after a storm? Doesn't she give the clouds a silver lining in the dark sky? Don't cactus flowers bloom even in the desert. Mother nature is a survivor. Black holes are healing and she knows how to restore herself back to paradisiacal conditions.

So it's up to us to return back to our mother. Like the prodigal son, we should realize our folly, become conscious of our limitations and remember we are part of her. If we run back to her, she will welcome us with open arms and drench us with her beauty. Sunshine, crystal clear water, perfumed air, green meadows, colourful flowers, butterflies, music of the birds and rivers will be our abode. We just have to be One with her.

Reference:

Poetry collection of William Wordsworth Robert Frost, Alfred Lord Tennyson, P.B. Shelly and John Keats



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