

# ආයට දුන් කඳු එළිය - නිරාශ ගුණසේකර

## The Moonlight Lent:

Wonderful Poetry we should never miss

Dilini Eriyawala

Few months ago I happened to read a poem on one of my Face Book friends' timeline. My friend was tagged on this particular poem written by NirashaGunasekera. The following parts of the poem instantly caught my eye:

ආයට දුන් කඳු එළිය - කුමකින් බැස්ස පිරික්නුල  
ආත්තපුරුද්දකුත් ගියානාන - තමමත් මා සුරතෙහි  
එලෙසම  
සුළුගසේ නොපරන්ආවිදින් - මනෙ ආන ආරන්  
රහසින  
බැස්ස උණුසුම් ප්‍රේමයෙහි - යැකුණොම මාත්  
නොදැකීම

(Even after three years, the holy thread still rests around my wrist the thread that you tied - to keep for three half-days  
..... I've been simply safe in that adoration you tied, holding my hand - sneakily)

I wanted to read more and searched for Nirasha's poetry. To my surprise, it was then I realised that Nirasha lives in Melbourne and could end up receiving three of his poetry collections as well. After reading his most recent collection, ආයට දුන් කඳු එළිය: 'The moon light lent', I thought that the book deserved more recognition. This article is a note more than a review on Nirasha's poetry collection ආයට දුන් කඳු එළිය (The moonlight lent).

Nirasha's brilliant and drilling deep into human thinking. His poetry analyses emotions and thoughts profoundly. In one of his poems 'mother's jewellery box', Nirasha discusses the nature of wants, needs and desires of women in their youth and how small things become sentimental to them as they grow old. In the poem Nirasha cleverly describes that women have to deal with the traditional Sri Lankan society and culture every day, keeping their likes and dislikes suppressed. That way they become role models of 'civilised Sri Lankan women' to their husbands and society. Nirasha explains how a woman relishes her life when she is free from the man of the house or the rest of the world.

මා බාල කාලයක - නාත්තා වැඩට ගිය උදසන  
උනම වැදුලා - ආ ගිනනුනා තනිවම

(In my childhood dawns - at my father's absence trying them on hands - she sweetly beamed to her own self)

And the poem continues saying that even now, once in a while, the bangles jingle at father's absence.

'පරණපෝත්තර' (Q & A or Questions and answers) is another vivid poem revealing a solitary man's thoughts and loneliness. Nirasha describes the man's heart as a drifting animal wandering in thicket-scrubs and wasteland but obedient to the cicada's melody.

ලද කැලවක මුඩු බිමක - ඉබානාන සිවුපාට  
කිමනද යැයි තමට ආවන

I read this as 'the' suitable explanation about a lonely heart needing love or companionship - 'a strong violent animal - 'obedient even to cicada's melody'. The man sees the moon crescent surrounded by stars as a young and fresh woman with romantic eyes. The beer he drinks and the nibbles help him to be poetic that night. The man invites the moon to 'jump over' the 'balustrade of dark clouds' and 'through the latticed window' and sit facing him 'covering the dimmed red

light'.  
...  
කළු වලා ගරාදිවට පන - වනා ලැබීය කවුලුවෙන්  
සාදේ ඉඳහන මා ඉඳිරියෙන් - පිටුපාලා රතු එළියට

What else should be there for the situation to be dreamier? The whole image is clear to the reader. According to Wordsworth, poetry is 'the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings'. Nirasha has shown his skill in using the right word at the best place in illuminating the deep feeling of solitude with a great self-control in this poem.

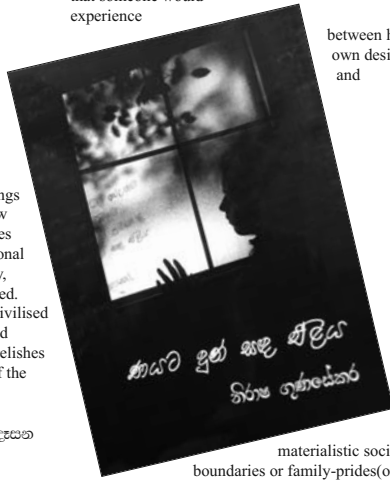
Love is a twistingly woven anecdote that binds two hearts as one. When that delicate thread is cherished, the heart knows of no other comparable dream. Nirasha explains such a state of mind as the centre of the bridge connecting fantasy and reality. And with that state of mind, the thoughts 'gallop', the Q & A paper of life is forgotten and the 'animal sniffs the prey'.

වියවිලාව සුරලාව - යාකල ඒදණ්ඩ මෙද මම  
ආරණ වැදීමකි දැන් උඩුසින මොනනාකට ආමනක  
කළ  
පිවිසේ පුණ පත්රය - කිඹුල් දාන ගාලුර ලොඩි  
කරන

The metaphors used by Nirasha in the above poem are proving his talent in poetry. The same strategies are used in few other poems in this collection, ආයට දුන් කඳු එළිය.

Someone may read Nirasha's 'නොදැකීම' as a poem discussing the psychological habits of traditional Sri Lankan caste system. The emotional struggle that someone would experience

between his own desires and



materialistic social boundaries or family-prides (or may be natural obstacles) is implied ironically by this poem. There is a hornbill sitting high up on a branch of a huge 'Milla' tree. Nirasha might have tried to symbolise the high society or higher castes here. The nature of a hornbill is that it does not drink water but survives on the sap of fruits. Its call is very loud as well. Nirasha, as a poet, must have seen this nature differently. The hornbill in the poem cries as loud as he could for the water in the lake below. This can be seen as the bird's desire for something that is not destined to be his own.

යාය ඉම දෙදරන්නා -  
නබයි උණ යටිගිරියෙන් - දියපිපාසට

This symbolises the burning need to break through the natural or social boundaries - to enjoy life in full - as life itself; but the hornbill is banned from obtaining what it needs by its 'pedigree' - inheritance - nature.

The lake is a youthful and fresh 'girl' with water-lilies of November; may be a girl from a lower caste. The hornbill loves her - the lake, and cries for her - the water - may be her love. But...

වියල් දෙපියක් හොට - පරපුටේ ආභිමානය (the large



bill - the pride of inheritance)

One of Sri Lanka's greatest poets Rathna Sri Wijesinghe has described this poem as something that is philosophical and intellectual but separated from exquisiteness. With all respect, I agree with Mr. Wijesinghe's idea. But looking at it in a different angle - in a sociological perspective, I think Nirasha is

discussing a burning social issue in Sri Lanka. This hornbill doesn't want to break the social class system. Wearing his ancestry as a jewel, the hornbill imagines the freshness of water and wets the water-lilies with his tears. The lonely hornbill, sitting on one of the top branches, Nirasha laughs at the people who become slaves of their high castes.

සිතියපත් සුවිඳිද \* කඳුලින් කෙකවියමල් තෙමන  
උයම උය ආත්තක \* හුදකලා කැදැන්නා  
පීචනය පිපාසට \* දරමින යොදුරු මේවරයා

Percy Bysshe Shelley once said that '...it is difficult to define pleasure in its highest sense. For, from an inexplicable defect of harmony in the constitution of human nature, the pain of the inferior is frequently connected with the pleasures of the superior portions of our being'. Sorrow, despair itself, are expressions of an approximation to the highest good. Tragedy delights by affording a shadow of the pleasure which exists in pain. The pleasure that is in sorrow is sweeter than the pleasure of pleasure itself....' Nirasha's poems 'අභිසර්ගද', 'ආදරවනස්' (Lovely Venus), 'ආදරවනස්' (lunar has arrived), දොරටුව (the door) are examples to prove Shelley's idea.

A poem becomes divine only when the most appropriate words are used to convey the message. Even though Nirasha has been successful in this to a greater extent; he has missed selecting better or best words to improve the beauty of some of his poems. මලසුන ආය දඩයක්කදු, නළෙළුමක් හඬ are some of those poems discussing complicated social and emotional issues that are distanced from the beauty of poetry - partly because of the use of language in those poems. But, the poetry book as a whole is read-worthy as each and every poem is interlaced by capturing the most sensitive, deep and strong reactions of human mind when it is inspired or stimulated by its meeting with the physical world, and presented as delightful poetry.

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**සියලුම ජ්‍යෙතිශ්‍ය කටයුතු**

දෙස් විදෙස් සේවද සැඟිලි, පළාලා ඔබා දීම, සරදරු ගවුරු වලට පිටුකිරීම, ආලෝක වලට පිටුකිරීම හා වටිනාකම..... වටිනා සිතුවම්, සොහොන්දැමි ගැලපීම, දැව් වැඩිවීම හා මනසර්වා ගැනීමට උපදෙස්..... මංගල, මල්වර, සිටිනා, විනාශ, ආදරු සර්වවිදි කුණ නැස්නා..... නමට ආදරු, නම් ගැනීම..... දළ, සිරිපති, ත්‍රිපිණ්ඩුපිති මානව චිත්තයට සාර දෙන්නාමු.

**ඊ මේලු, දුරකතන මගින් විශේෂ කැණීම් සෙවීම.....**

රහස්‍යභාවය සුරකීම  
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