

## Poems by Indunil Madhusankha

### Let Peace Sweep through Our Minds

("Nahi Werena Werani" - Hatred Never Ceases by Hatred)

For three long decades  
the nation was beaten  
in no small measure  
at the eruption of the terror bomb  
that dispelled mankind straight to death  
in thousands  
of whom the blood gleamed in the same carmine  
be it Sinhalese or Tamils  
So why this obsolete, spoilt stratification?

Vermillion balls of crystallized blood  
mingled with white sand like carnelian  
everywhere in the Jaffna peninsula  
Precipitously blasted vehicles  
Charred remnants of smashed houses  
Sky-climbing buildings,  
flattened to the ground and vanished  
Dead bodies put inside  
kerosene stained blackened tires  
And how the roasting corpses lifted themselves  
in the raging flames  
mirroring the killing injuries  
The day the Aranthale sky  
turned grey in thundering scream  
Mammoth massacre of saffron robed monks,  
the earth-splitting sin  
Streets studded with mounting bullets  
and heaps of dagger ridden and  
bullet embedded bodies  
stinking with the stench of the rotting bodies  
that hung in the air  
Swollen, pale bodies swathed  
in blood soused clothing

and prostrated on grubby pavements  
Detached heads with bloody tongues  
leaping out of the mouth  
The parched bodies' ashes  
mixed with air reeking through the island  
In concentration camps, mantraps and  
human abattoirs in dense forests  
death yell crisscrossing far and wide  
Carious human skeletons like bogies  
and plain blood blotches in them  
waft horribly the calamitous terror committed

Man hunting atrocities of Tigers,  
Guns, hand bombs, landmines  
and multi-barrels  
trumpeted the death knell of thousands victimized  
Doom tumbled on the innocents  
in warfare amidst  
the shower of flesh  
and the whirlwind of bullets  
Freshly budding young ones  
snatched away from their parents' bosom  
Merciless urging to rush to arms

Cuddle-some children huddled on  
torn out, crumpled mats  
in the darkened sheds  
With their eyes tightly pressed  
by soft tiny hands,  
they howled in indefinable fright  
scared by the rackets bellow of gunfire

Saturated in utter darkness  
with his incorrigible megalomania  
to approach an unreachable destination,  
fragmentation of the searing island  
He with his fellow Tigers  
pulled the trigger to  
an unendurable death toll of over 70,000  
What hearts of stone they have?

Did they achieve anything  
except bloodletting and  
the record breaking exhibition of  
abnormally catastrophic massacres?  
Heavily venerated Tigers  
enshrined in their heroic pantheons  
with Granite tombstones  
What did they really attain?  
Mere deacease and decadence  
He is already in his  
cortege to the cemetery  
The masses are earnestly awaiting  
to say him a big good bye  
Some request to catch him  
and hang him up like a dog  
so that they can pitch stones at him  
It is no small anguish crushed in their hearts  
Yet, the Buddha insists,  
“Hatred never ceases by hatred.”  
Think of the perennial truth  
couched in the pristine, untarnished dharma  
On the other hand,  
would it halt the repetition  
of murderous history  
bloated with blighting monstrosities?  
The punishment to him  
will not do,  
at all,  
But the inculcation of peace in our minds  
So let peace sweep through our minds!  
So let peace sweep through our minds!

**Hint**

Aranthale Massacre: The carnage of 33 Buddhist monks, a majority of them being young novice monks, by the Tamil Tigers on June 2, 1987 in the vicinity of the village of Aranthalawa in the Ampara District of Eastern Sri Lanka. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (the LTTE, commonly known as the Tamil Tigers), a separatist organization which aimed at creating an independent Tamil state (known as the Tamil Eelam) in the Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka thus paving the way for the Sri Lankan civil war (1976-2009).

## Humans or Beasts

“Yesterday's clash claimed thirty lives of the terrorists,  
The nation's acclaim to our valiant forces!”

The dashing lady appearing in the TV  
uttered with her rosy lips in great rejoicing.

Besides the efflorescence of  
high sounding crackers,  
whom did they kill?  
over whom did they win?  
Terrorists  
Nevertheless,  
they all are humans,  
having the same blood and flesh  
What is it that separates terrorists from humans?

Once the opposites go down  
the others organize a party  
with the glamour of dancing  
Not having even the least thought  
that the others are not beasts  
but humans they too are,  
their own brothers,  
though provoked  
Can you burst into jollity  
as your brothers remain flotsams in a blood sea?  
What an astonishment?

Merry making in the  
celebration of fratricide  
The fashionable pleasures of our days!

## A Worker Repeats History

His life had ever  
been far from easy  
The bulk of the bricks  
in the cart  
always used to  
be a companion  
though it remained  
hard-hearted  
The rumpled dirty rag  
with no less than  
a dozen of patches  
barely saved him  
from the fierce sunbeams  
It is only the tiny  
rivulets of salty sweat  
pouring down his cheeks  
that knew how  
wrinkled he was

On that day,  
the scorching sun,  
its blinding rays,  
and even the burning  
sands in the site  
They all witnessed it  
And yet stood still,  
as if they did not  
Oh, the poor man  
He could not endure it,  
the pile of boulders  
that thrashed  
him abruptly  
while hiding him  
amidst itself  
And, then  
he disappeared  
as he breathed his last

The next day  
I saw another man  
sweating out to hold  
the craggy blocks of rock  
Thus he fills the lacuna  
and he repeats history



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