

## **Persistence**

I wonder why I am so scared of a tree; a cancer-like, brain-like old oak, towering over the clock tower. Its pencil-sketched black hands squeeze the water in the creek below, and grease motion. It hexes the air and suppresses the prickly green. Its shadow softens and melts the centuries old stony building. It lets the clock cry ding dong time to time. At each cry of the clock, the pale sky scatters and falls on the deaf oak. From the vacuum, it sucks alphabets, sickles, fireballs, stars and comets, and stands lofty and lordly. Fainted ducks sit under it, hypnotized. Husky sea gulls brisk in speech, terrified. A soccer ball goes on a merry-go-round in a whirl and coils inward.

I want to kill its ego.

## Tea time

on breezy evenings  
a lazy hippopotamus  
takes for a walk  
my asparagus hand.

We cook our bodies on the grass  
we drank stilled moments in the air  
eyes burst with laughter.  
Hearts swelled.  
We laughed.  
Pink mini-skirt tickled my legs  
it was many moons ago.

Lofty wind comes whistling  
two minds silently speaking  
two spoiled kids  
appear from a corner  
of a dark room within;  
filling our eyes.  
Tiny little fingers grip our hands  
as they were afraid  
many moons ago.

Back in our lounge  
red hemmed envelopes,  
stamped picture postcards  
wool socks  
tiny hats  
leap from the wall.  
Hi mum! hi dad!

baby kisses on cheek  
hide in yesterday  
his eucalyptus lips  
sweep my forehead today

the memory traces  
a black and white photo  
of a handsome man  
'seeking a pen pal'

it was in the *Evening Star*  
It was so many moons ago.

lemon puffs sink in  
thick brown mugs  
sun still shines  
in the saffron sky

## Solitary Evening

words  
emerge  
submerge  
in dry air

spiral letters  
smoke rings  
tangle  
in the space

silhouettes  
appear  
disappear  
on eyelids

thoughts  
travel  
dissolve  
in red wine

poems  
bubble  
evaporate  
into the darkness

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Sri Lankan born Sriya Kumarasinghe has been working as a senior lecturer at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura from where she graduated. After spending some time in Japan reading for her PhD, she moved to New Zealand in 1999 as a permanent resident. Thrilled by the natural beauty of Aotearoa, she started writing poems, song lyrics and short stories which have been published in many countries including Sri Lanka, Japan, Australia, Canada, the UK, and Cyprus. She teaches financial management at the department of Accountancy & Business Law at the University of Otago. Her research interests include cross-cultural issues on management and Japanese women writers.