

## *Fare Well, Fiji*

The fading light of a summer's night  
Stirs my heart to memories  
Of child moments, tears, laughter,  
Forming and deforming our innocent lives.

The mind wanders and the heart contracts  
Unable to clasp,  
Or buckle together my longing and desire  
For words, gestures, a glance forgotten.

I remember Budhai, the golden voiced thief,  
Who sang and stole with equal fervour;  
And Mr Ramjan, the village Mahajan,  
Weaving his net of debt and deception.

Endless havans for this goddess or that,  
Soccer matches in dry fields, bruises in place of trophies;  
Feeding Lali, the motherly cow, immovable,  
The garden patch, tended to perfection.

Mother's endless tears for her departing son,  
Ben at the airport, deep, sad, silent  
Staying put while we moved on;  
Both now gone, never to return.

I miss them, as I miss the touch of smell and sound:  
The pungency of cane fires, embers reddening the ground,  
The feel of warm rain on grass freshly mown,  
Swimming in swollen rivers, menacing, brown.

The list goes on, inscribed in agony,  
Of faces vanishing beyond recall,  
Uprooted, unwelcome, on the move again  
Waiting for their turn in the scorching sun.

*Ni sa moce*, goodbye, my land,  
As I consider my fate's rough hand,  
Seeking respite from storms of memory,  
Before fading light darkens my farewell.