

Three Chemically Connected Poems

By Dr Manjula Silva and Dan Simpson

I

A monomer is a single molecular unit
sharing electrons for bonding
connecting to make a sequence
with an initiator or within an enclosed system
it continues to grow into a polymer:
some are weak – some are strong
some are tangled – some are aligned
but it links up, becomes crowded
like human beings coming together
a polymerisation of people
semi-crystalline communities
a super structure of humanity
across the earth, across our history.

We are products of a chain
that stretches back to the start:
the stories we tell
the way things are done
the art we feel
the lessons we inherit
the rituals we observe
knowingly or not.

Society is a covalently bonded macromolecular arrangement
a linked sequence of discrete consciousnesses chemically connected –
these make up the material reality
of your cultural world.

II

The lotus flower, petals simply shaped
intricately linked, gently opens for the sun
closes for the night: this is a cycle.

We feel ourselves to be synthetic
discrete from the Universe
but like plant cellulose we are natural polymers –
not just our DNA
but the bonds we form with the earth
exchanging elements with our own nature.

This is a cycle:
I hear the singing of birds around
and all other creatures' different sounds
they are talking – I try to find a meaning
it's another world.

Above the fences I see tall trees all in green
swinging in the breeze and bending their leaves
welcoming me, asking for a hug
holding fruits or beautiful flowers
asking me to use my power:
harvest for food that my body requires
decorate the home and inhale the smell
plant that seeds near or far
helps me grow my next generation
this is a cycle.

It is drizzling after a hot dry day
I am wet but I needed it
I feel like someone has sensed what I wanted
spread before the strong sun's rays
this is a cycle: I feel connected
I cannot live anymore without my nature.

I want to feel connected:
laying down with one hand on my stomach
the other across my sternum
I allow my eyes to open or close
permitting them to decide how much light
they want to let in.

දෙනෙත් පියාගමි පරිසරය නොපෙනෙන්නට
සවන වසාගමි කිසිවක් නොඇසෙන්නට
විරිය වඩනෙමි සුවද දැනි මත්නොමවන්නට
එනමුදු හැකිවේද සිතක් නවතාගන්නට

Breathe: in – hold – out
a conflict between stillness and activity
forcing myself to have patience
a quality I seem to have lost over the years.
Once I am ready, I make diminishing lists:
what I can see, hear, touch, smell, taste

සිත සන්සුන් නැත දිවයයි තැන තැන
සිතුවිලි දහසක් උපදි මොහොතින
පෙරදින අදදින අනාගතය ගැන
ඇරුමෙකි ඉපදි මියයන ඉක්මන

leads me to useful thoughts
the reflection of light on a window
makes me thankful for my home
the sound of children running around
reminds me of my own joy in playing
the feel of the soil under my hands
grounds me in the here and now
the scent of wildflowers and pollen
fills me with hope for the next season
the faintness of coffee on my tongue
tells me of the fortune I have to do important work.

රැගෙන යමි මසිත මතක ගබඩාව වෙත
වෙර දරමි හදුන ගනු පිනිස භෞතික මමව
රැගෙන යමි මසිත හිස මුදුනෙ සිට පා දෙසට
ස්පර්ශ කරනෙමි සිතින් සිරුරෙ එක එක කොටස

I repeat my slow breathing
letting any other thoughts drift across my consciousness –
worries often present themselves
and sometimes solutions too
which may be simple acceptance.

නමුදු වෙහෙසක් නොමැත ඇලෙන්නට එය සමග
ස්පර්ශ කර අතහරිමි ස්පර්ශ කරනෙමි නැවත
නමුදු සිත එක තැනක නොවේ එය තව තැනක
නතර වෙයි සෙත් පතයි ඇතර යයි නිමේශෙක

Gratitude manifests

and I thank what needs to be thanked:
my body, my mind, my world, myself.

දැනෙව් ස්පර්ශ කරනට නොහැකි බව යමක්
තැනින් තැන පමනකිය සිත ගැටෙනුයෙ තවත්
දැනෙව් ඇඳුණු රුව කුඩා වී යන සෙයක්
සිත ගිලිහී යනු දැනෙ එය නිරාමිස සුවක්

I breathe one last time
I sit up, I stand, I move on, reconnected.