

Srinivas Sampath

Broken things

A broken wing is a thing of hope,
A broken nest a hungry tide:
Of pennons sliced are born the light
Of limbless flight; a niche in spite
Invites the consonance of doom.
A broken hope is a thing with wings,
A broken tide, a nested thirst.

A broken faith is a thing of form,
A broken trust a formless thrust:
In pelted stones, they lie, the bricks
Of pious peace; an oath is thick
That's burned, as winds that clouds depress.
A broken form is a thing of faith,
A broken thrust, a form of trust.

A broken glass is a thing for tales,
A broken vase its story tells:

The crooked lines of fault receive
Their secrets dear; the shards relieve
The tightened strands of dried details.
A broken tale is a thing like glass,
A broken tell, a verbal vase.

A broken thought is a strident thing,
A broken dream a sleepy song:
Twixt whims and mem'ries are they stoked,
The fires of life; a fog revokes
From seeking eyes the chance of dawn.
A broken stride is a thoughtful thing,
A broken sleep, a tuneless dream.

A broken soil is a rooted thing,
A broken sky a boundless truth:
Intact, the pieces speak to air
Of seamless pasts; as youth despairs
Of age; and futures Hither rush.
A broken root is a soiled thing,
A broken bound, the truest sky.

A broken mind is a human thing,
A broken heart a ritual breath:
A piece of consciousness, with days,

A rainbow turns; a love effaced,
In diamond rings suspects a chain.
A broken human's a mindful thing,
A broken rite, a breathless heart.

A theoretical linguist by training, **Srinivas Sampath** currently teaches English at the SSN College of Engineering, Chennai, India. His research revolves around the phonology of Tamil, models of prosodic (particularly syllable) structure and English language teaching. His interest in poetry is non-academic, and he writes poems just for the joy that writing gives him. Some of his poetry has appeared on *The Criterion*, *Indian Review*, the *Ashvamegh Journal* and *Literary Yard*.

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