

My Birthday

Today is my birthday

No one knows anything about it

No one knows how many years are gone

Or how many are still to come

How many are sad

And how many are fun

No one can sing and say

Happy birthday

The years kept marching

While old places kept waiting

Crying for me to come

And memories kept changing times

But remained deaf and silent

Refusing to hear me pray

Smile or cry and say

Which day is my birthday

Today is my birthday
Yet, I received no flowers
No visitors or telephone calls
Not even a postcard
To remind me of the day
And wish me
A Happy Birthday

Where are my children
My family and friends
Where is my lovely mother
A sister or a brother
Where is my father's beautiful voice
Singing for the shining stars
Remembering days long gone
And hoping for days never to come

Where are the candles
The birthday cake
The music and dancing

Well, no one is around to sing

Or a flower to bring

Laugh or play

It was so dark

When a little peaceful fish

Was attacked by a hungry shark

When terrorists attacked our home

And forced us to flee in the middle of a rainy night

Abandon the place where I was born

Lived to be happy and free

To run and jump

And climb my favorite tree

As we ran for our lives

We left everything behind

My mother's jewelry

My sisters' earrings

My grandmother's wedding dress

Even the papers that say

Which day is my birthday

The invaders violated the sanctity of our home

Stole my books, clothes and shoes

Abducted my childhood

Arrested my boyhood

Kidnapped my dear memories

And grabbed everything stood in their way

They left the house empty of most things

But full of memories with wings

To fly and tell the story of a murdered justice

In the most sacred land

That made God so sad

But failed to make humanity a little mad

They terrorized and killed

To pave the way

For strangers to move in my bed

Occupy our home and forever stay

Deprive us of our land
Beautiful sea and sand
And the opportunity to one day
Light a cheerful candle
And celebrate a birthday

As the terrorists chased us away
They made us homeless
With no place to go or stay
Deprived and hopeless
With no country, address, or identity
Wandering in the cold
From one valley to another
Where hope had left no ray
We were left with nothing
Except a mourning dress
Which the night had colored black
And little hurting hearts
Full of old joyful memories

And eyes full of tears and stress

When we finally found a place to stay

It was a little tent in a refugee camp

In a desert far away from everything

Where no birds sing, dance or play

And no trees live to whisper to the wind

Only sand storms dance alone

Blind eyes with dust and stone

And have their way

I asked the years about the day

I could celebrate my birthday

They laughed and sadly said

My son, I got too old

My memory is lost

My life is ending today

Do you really expect me

To remember on my last day

A name, a place or a birthday

I asked the fortune teller about my birthday

He burst into tears and said

My son, the barbarians stole my sight

Ruined my life

I can no longer see the stars

Read the palm, the leaves, or cards

Do you expect a broken man

Who can no longer see

To remember a special day

Or be happy to celebrate a birthday

I began to forget the past

Every good and bad day that count

Got busy with my life

Concentrating on my studies

And lovely children

Who needed my attention

To avoid my torturous fate

And have a better day

We began to invent new ways

To celebrate all kinds of days

The tree day

The mother's day

Labor Day

And the day of the land

That kept us homeless and sad

My children celebrated every day

Except my forgotten birthday

Every time we sat to remember a special day

They asked about my birthday

It was so hard

Not to be able to smile and say

Tomorrow, next week, next month

Is my happy birthday

I told them my story a thousand times

How our home was raped

How our homeland was stolen
How we fled in the middle of the darkest night
How my mother lost her memory
And how our neighbor lost her sight

What does it mean to be a homeless man

A stranger wherever you go
Even in the land where you grow
To live the life of a lonely ship
Sailing against the wind
With no compass or a guide
And knowing no path or a bay

I told my story to my children
Hoping that they will remember it
And tell their grandchildren

How a native could become a stranger overnight
How memories could be tortured
How a homeland could become a dying memory
You have to struggle to keep alive

And not allow it to fade away

Tomorrow is my birthday

I saw the records yesterday

Read the month, year and day

Yes, now I can, with confidence, say

Which day is my birthday

I was born in autumn

When the sun colors the leaves of trees

And lets them fly with the wind

And be swept by racing rivers

That travel far, far away

From autumn I learned the meaning of hope

And the will to make things go my way

Borrowed the colorful shades of life

The depth of my thoughts

And the shadows of sadness

Drawn in all shades of gray

They follow me wherever I go

And camp wherever I stay

From spring I borrowed my name

Appreciation for beauty and love

The drive to dream beyond wild dreams

Sail against powerful streams

Fight stormy winds

Live and love as if life never ends

And between autumn and spring

The falling leaves and the flowering trees

The tears and smiles they always bring

I lived a homeless, rootless life

Running from a strange land to another

From frozen winter to burning summer

Unable to go home

Taken by colonialists forever

Today is fall in Washington

The leaves are beautiful
But feel proudly sad
They look so fearful
Waiting to be beaten by strong winds
And swept away by heavy rain

I sit in my office alone
Behind a rosewood desk
Read and reflect
Write articles and poems
To celebrate life and love
Remember days that never last
And honor a beautiful land
That has become a fading past

I lost track of time
I do not know what day is today
Wondering if it was the tree day
Mother's day
Or my long forgotten birthday

It no longer matters
I honor only one day
The day of freedom
For which all humans long
Struggle, hope and pray

My ideas explain my identity
My books and poems expose all that I love
Things I adore
And issues I care for
And concerns of my times are the only address I know
Where my mind and thoughts will always go

Whenever a book of mine is read
Or a poem is recited
The world will be reminded
Of my sad story
And the need to make it end

It will remember my tragedy
Realize my children's wish
And celebrate with them the day
My long forgotten birthday
Let their tears smile
And sing, happy birthday

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