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A young woman's journey in seeking meaning,
disguised in the word 'home'.



A POETRY COMPILATION BY
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Foreword

Thank you for buying this simple book with your hard-earned money and help a budding artist like me. Thank you for helping me continue writing and experiencing what life has more to offer. I hope what I am writing in this book can resonate with you, and in some ways, inspire you to live better, to live life to the fullest, to be true to yourself.

Preface

This collection of poetry is arranged chronologically from the life of Eliana, a young woman whose natural affinity to seek a home brings her into many inner conflicts. She is longing for a home where truth and honesty reside. But, finding that home has never been easy. For most of her life, she has been homeless. This book aims to help people like Eliana to feel like they are at home, where truth and honesty reside.

1

Childhood

1. The beginning

The stage was set in the most ordinary manner
No fancy lights nor 'welcome to the world' banner
Just the warmth of a mother's blood
And her tangled pubic hair

Amidst the painful cold of January's air
Deep inside the jungle of Sumatra
That was all that I needed to begin the grand opera

2. Childhood

Blossom in the bosom of my roots
I thrived like grassroots above the fertile ground
I was green, and I was growing
Sustained by love
Entertained by adventures
Nurtured by a home

My life as a kid

3. Heaven

Golden fishes in the pond
Waiting to be chased and fawned

In trade of laughter and affection
Would offer their body as a love testament

They consider it not an affliction
And never did I give them malediction

4. Nap

Once upon a time, I took a nap
I laid my body down by the side
My ear kissed the floor
As the air drifted in from the door
It touched my skin gently
Oh, co chilling

Alas, I couldn't sleep
My eyes wide open

There were many ants on the floor
Walking around and giving kisses to each other
When I was sure that no ant was kiss deprived
I closed my eyes
That is when I heard the sound of a breathing

CHILDHOOD

It was so clear beside my ear
My body froze so I could concentrate

What is it?
What is breathing so close to my ear?

Then I opened my eyes in bewilderment
The ants were walking around beside my ears
Still giving kisses to each other
It is them, I concluded

5. Upon the old bridge on the way to school

Schoolchildren walking on the bridge
Sustained by tiny ropes
Big old rocks on the bottom
Yet no fear of the chasm

6. Tuesday mornings

It is the day that we've waited with such anticipation
More than Sunday mornings or Saturday evenings

It is market time!
Rather than the same old faces, its time to see some new faces
With fairer skin, prettier clothes

It is market time!
Rather than muddy dirt on our bare feet

It is time to wear some sandals and walk on the smooth asphalt
road

It is market time!
Rather than eating rice with some cassava leaves soup
It is time to eat some *miso*, the most delicious food in the world

It is market time!
Rather than putting oxygen out of my lung
I breathe in as much time to my lungs

7. From under the wooden table

On that wooden table and chair
I remember seeing a woman sitting alone
She was one with the air
A mixture of coldness from the morning dew
And of warmth from the cigarette smoke

She couldn't be bothered
She was having a serious conversation
In her mind
With herself

Her back straight and tall as the eucalyptus tree
Her right hand on the table
Her left hand holding fast to the cigarette

Her face a canvas of contradictions
Of a woman's tenderness and life's tragedies

CHILDHOOD

Dear woman, I wish I understood
But I was just a child
Hiding under the table
Across your ankle
Waiting to steal the remaining of your cigarette butt

8. Inside the villain's drawer

Shh
Come in quietly
Tip your toe gently

Close the door
I will show you
Inside the villain's drawer

Now come closer to this wooden table
Open the drawer quietly
It is unlocked

Do you see there in the middle?
Beside the aviator reading glasses
No, no, don't try it on

Focus on the thing I'm about to show you
Look!
A vintage lavender hair gel

On the package, The painting of a Victorian lady
With a glamorous red dress
A sign that it is made for villains

Now open the tin container
It might be a bit sturdy
You'll need to apply some strength

Can you do it?

Okay
Now, scoop your finger into the turquoise gel
Then put that finger close to your nose

Smell it

Don't defend yourself against the lavender scent
Let it enter with your breath
Through your nose, to the fibers of your being

Now, as the scent nested in your heart
Be careful to make a resolve
Of what the scent represents

Affection or contempt
Friends or enemy
Colourlessness or nuance

Have you decided?

Okay
Now clean your hand with the tissue on the table

Shh
Go out quietly
Tip your toe gently

CHILDHOOD

Close the door

9. On one new year's eve

On one New Year's Eve

Which year my memory no longer conceives
I bereave

Mom got sick
Dad got drunk
I got spanked

10. On one Sunday afternoon

Like a skilled bird by the riverside
Prying on a little fish by the side
I was playing by the house
Trying to catch some mouse

Unlike a skilled bird by the riverside
I am not as skilled
I did not know what would be killed

It is the fish and not the bird
But is it going to be the mouse or myself?

Meanwhile, in the house
There are so many people
With a hymn book in their hands

They chant and chant in terror

As if to welcome an unwanted guest
 And she lay on the deathbed
 In helpless dread

As the evening goes deeper into the night
 A visitor knocked on the door

It is her
 Chosen by the unwanted guest
 It is me
 Killed by the mouse

11. My red Christmas dress

Unlike the rest of the kids
 I never waited for Christmas eve
 I was never excited to get a new dress
 Or to memorize a new bible verse

My red Christmas dress
 Was the last token of my friendship with Christmas eve
 Bought by my aunt on my fifth Christmas eve
 A few months after mom was eaten by the grave

12. A white Pentecostal church on the hill

In the village where I grew up
 There were two church buildings
 One was a Lutheran, and the other was a Pentecostal

My family belongs to the Pentecostal church
 It was a simple wooden church

CHILDHOOD

Painted all in white so bright
Built on a high hill shining under the moonlight

In front of the church, a wooden porch
And some pine trees so alive as a fire torch
How lovely was the view

But a longing it ensues
To a heart like mine
Who longs for a home
Some honeycomb for the gloom

13. Plucked out

If the universe is like a big banyan tree
And children are the roots hanging on the branch
The branch I used to hang on was cut off

Some decayed by age
Some defeated by sickness
Some too tired to hang on

My universe cut off
I fell down
Slowly and steadily

To the ground, I grow
Year by year to come
Never became a branch
Rootless all along

Above the ground

14. Growing up

As we grew up

There's more air in our lungs than we can breathe

Though sometimes there can be less air

And it can be suffocating

More salt in the food than we can tolerate

Less sugar in the drinks than we desire

As we grew older year by year

We grew to be sadder

More questions rather than answers

More longings rather than calm

More roads rather than lakes

Everyone grows up sad

Yet some are sadder than the other

2

Faith

15. Divine romance

Gentle wind on my skin
Fallen leaves on the road
Little rain drops from the trees
Butterflies on my knees

Divine romance
Transcended
Oh
The numinous

16. A moon

I saw a moon today
Sometimes bright, other times dark

When it is dark, she stops hanging in the night sky
Her toes slightly touch the land

Heading towards the beach

Then dive deep into the bottom
 As fast as she can
 Transforming herself
 Into something
 As useless as a candle in the ocean floor

17. Somewhere

In a place where the wind sings to a melody
 Where the wave dances like a ballerina
 Where the sun sets gracefully on the greens
 A little girl is bending her knees
 Wiping her tears

Mom and Dad is nowhere to be found

Such beauty and pain
 They mingle at the same place
 Is this meant to be like this?
 Does beauty have to hold hands with pain?

What's the world made of?
 What's our heart made of?
 Is suffering our default?
 Would someone show me the way?
 Somewhere as an escape

18. Things as they are

You may see it smiling
But can't you see it frowning too
I am talking about the universe
It's a place where the strong devours the weak

I may see you dancing and smiling and laughing
But I can see through the façade
Because I've been there too
Did you take your medicine?

You and I, as we are, we are broken and ruined
When will we stop pretending?
Pretending that we are okay
Pretending that we can make
The earth a better place

My bone is sick of all the lies
All we need is an escape

19. Home

You're the only reason worth living
For my wake up in the morning
For my labor in the day
For my laying down in the night

You're a friend worth dying for
You know my heart more than anyone else
When others mistook my intention