

## A VISIT TO MY OLD VILLAGE

Written by

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### A VISIT TO MY OLD VILLAGE

An evening stroll  
in my tiny old village I took;  
saw the old folks  
once so young,  
now so frail and weak.

Aged with time at nature's quest  
they stared at me in total disbelief  
They seem to think I too  
have aged along with them perhaps  
Yet neither of us could fathom  
what time and years  
had done to us in tandem.

Stories we had to tell in plenty  
of days gone by in time so lengthy,  
And as evening turned to twilight,  
it was time for us to bid "boa noite".

Since my last visit there  
many years had elapsed,  
Had promised myself  
that some day in the future  
I will once again meet  
the folks who I had left behind  
from times so sweet.

Goodbye and farewell are not easy  
as they always are resonant  
Of nostalgia and yearning,  
of anxiety and reminiscence,  
To depart at the thought  
of never meeting again  
those you hold so dearly.

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The old banyan tree still stood there aloft  
but the mango tree had stooped somewhat  
My name on its bark  
that I had carved when young  
I could barely see  
As probably some naughty lad  
Had peeled its bark off in jealousy.

The nunerca tree is long dead and gone;  
It's shade so cool that once sheltered  
Children ten score or more  
Playing beneath surroundings so sylvan.

"When will you return?"  
My childhood friend asked  
"I know not" I said as I gasped.  
"Will meet again for certain  
Before I depart"  
"Certainly we will" I heard him say  
As I turned away.

It hurt so much as I turned to go  
that I did not look back  
Lest my friend see the tears  
in my eyes that I tried to disguise  
to make him believe if I could  
that it was just plain cold sweat.

Outside the men were absorbed  
in some sort of a discussion  
While in the balcao  
women folk chatted their lives away  
And coconut trees  
in the gentle evening breeze  
Firmly held their sway.

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Then as darkness fell  
and homewards I walked,  
Seeing a score of people together pray  
by the wayside cross I stopped,  
The light from the candles  
reflected in their faces,  
They sang in perfect chorus,  
their gaze at the cross  
Fixed as if by magic.  
hearing them sing the litany  
And unable to resist  
I joined them in harmony.

Later on my way home that night  
heard the hooting of the owl in the distance  
and in the darkness bringing to mind  
thoughts about my grandma who would say  
“Go away and leave us alone,  
you silly little bird”  
“No one here is dying today”  
and making the sign of the cross  
She would shoo the bird away.

This thought, an eerie feeling,  
a cold chill, to my spine did bring,  
Alone I hastened my pace homeward  
from slow to brisk  
the evening star in the west  
leading me on my way  
Glad to be once again  
with my folks at home  
while moments ago I seemed  
in my thoughts some light years away.

And bringing to a close  
a visit to my village that day  
For the last time I watched  
the sunset of my holiday  
Uncertain of my return  
to behold another glorious dawn

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or sunset beyond.

Tony Fernandes

Canada 31/10/2010 For reviews on my book please click on the link below wherein a stanza from the poem that I last sent you has been excerpted.

<http://www.goanet.org/index.php?name=News&file=article&sid=290>