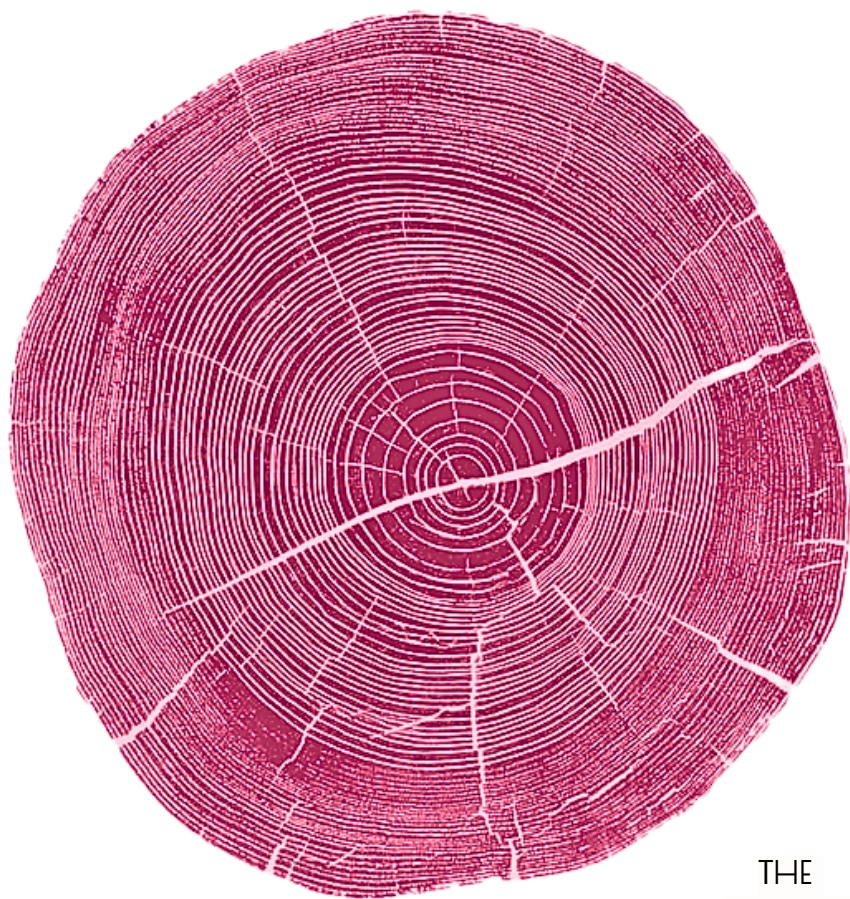


WAKING

DAVID SWARBRICK



THE
CEYLON
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FOR JEROME

HAIKU KING

1

Waking, I dream of
the tattered ends of magic:
flame trees, a white house.

2

How could others count?
On the biggest rock of all
I hook my leash.

3

I read the torn photo,
the boy, entering a car,
beneath frangipani trees.

4

Ice blocks melt on lawns,
the dinner party long over.
Now the dawn crows caw.

5

I made my garden
with the mali, plunging twigs
into watered earth.

6

Deposed now, the queen
sits above the Adyar
with her transistor.

7

Nothing is missing,
the supermarket stocks all.
And, plastic Buddhas.

8

Only fireworks -
no gunshot, bombs, villages
circled by spiked heads.

9

Always she is there -
airports, stations, quay, car parks,
angel without wings.

10

This, my bomb helmet,
my dog that sleeps skull-to-skull.
What else would I need?

11

A millennia ago
armies crept through these hills,
razed the grand kingdom.

12

An easy trick to play -
that nothing matters at all
but what matters most.

13

Dawn. The babbler calls,
and the small niggardly things
fade into the night.

14

Pub, party, shopping -
all entrapment, is it not,
forgetting what's next?

15

Licking each other,
all day my dogs show their care.
Ah, if we could too.

16

Jungle hills confuse
which way is north, which path leads
to the shallow sea.

17

The tea Wiji brought
Cools fast. I have spent too long
dreaming in my bed.

18

It will not complete –
the four-sided perfect square
that doesn't quite meet.

19

This is my tally -
the long day burdened with scent
of sapu flowers.

20

They had no daughters,
just sons who learnt not to speak,
but come, go and go.

21

Tiny waves recall
last movements of a great storm
far out in the sea.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Swarbrick is a publisher, planter, hotelier, hermit, broadcaster and writer. He was born in Colombo and lives in Sri Lanka and the UK by way of India, Singapore, the Middle East, Wales, Scotland and Sweden.