

Imtiaz Dharker's Blessing

When you live in England it is hard to imagine life without the luxury of having water. However on my first visit to Bombay, India the reality of how differently water is valued in some other countries became apparent and startling. When I was there I witnessed how the people of the settlement I visited treated the burst of a pipe. It was almost as if it was God himself were present. The way the children pranced about, screaming in celebration reminded me of some sort of religious ceremony. The extent, at which this surprised me, gave me the incentive to write a poem to express the almost distressing situation that I came across.

When I saw the people living in this settlement my first impression was how different their appearance was to my own. For example their skin was cracked and very dry from its constant exposure to the sun's heat. To look at it made you think of how painful it must be. I have included my initial view of these people in my first stanza by using a simile which compared their dry skin to how a pod cracks. I have used such a powerful image right at the beginning of my poem to create an image to the reader of extent of under nourishment that I witnessed in Bombay. However the people of these lands are not greedy for water, all they wish for is just a sip of it. They wish just to hear a tiny splash of water hitting their mugs. In my poem I used an onomatopoeic effect of an echo in a mug in order to properly emphasize my point. It is probable that because there has been such a long length of time since they have heard such a noise, it makes it hard for them to remember what it sounds like, they only remember how it drips. The need for water seems to control how they view and go about their lives. They pray for it to come in their prayers and wish for it to come in their dreams.

When the day does finally arrive when water does come out of the pipe it does not simply drip out, it rushes out like a flowing river. There is suddenly a sense of wealth in the community, as if they had just found a gold mine. In fact they react in a very similar way to the water as we would react to finding ourselves a fortune of riches. I used this idea of the water being like silver crashing to the ground in my poem, as it would express to the reader just how much water is worth in a way that they would understand. The adults and children of the city act in very different ways to this sudden explosion of the wealth from the water. Although all the people will celebrate the coming of the water, the adults run frantically in search of pans and pots in which to store the water. If they collect some water there is more of a chance that they will survive the next drought. At first they bring out pots, pans and buckets but once they have filled all of those they carry the water with their hands, not wanting to waste a single drop. Whereas the children run and scream in rejoice that their prayers have been answered and they have been granted with a gift from God.

Water will control how they go about their day to day life. My poem is entitled 'Blessing' as whenever the blessing of water appears it brings joy, wealth and happiness to the people of the community. Then maybe, just maybe with this gift from God they will be able to struggle through the next drought.