



The Elephants of Old Siam: A Children's Poem

Description

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Have you ever looked into an elephant's eyes?
Have you ever gazed at the stars in the skies?

The Elephants of Old Siam

Before Kings, soldiers, war and vice
Before Buddha, silk, gold and rice
In the River Ping when golden turtles swam
The elephant ruled the Kingdom of Siam

With ivory shining such a sight to behold

Great herds spread across our Kingdom of old
So many trunks walking could make Siam shake
from calf to death, a hundred years could take

Watermelon, mangoes, bananas a bunch
Salads of sweet fruit and bamboo to munch
Calves slept soundly with mothers nearby
Siam had more trunks than stars in the sky

Strong as an ox makes an elephant laugh
Ten oxen equals an elephant by half
no tiger would pounce, nor crocodile bite
Their realm they ruled with humble might

Creatures cast their colors in Siam of old
So frogs chose green and tigers stripes of gold
Birds are quite showy taking all color of clowns
Drunken monkeys dove into a bucket of browns

The elephants held council, what color to be?
Not purple, nor pink they all did agree
The great Council of Trunks lasted a day
Then unanimously chose God's eye grey

At evening silence when light's last kissed
You'll see the ghostly grey of a wizard's mist
Found in God's eye and clouds with rain
Creatures that wear it must be not vain.

Hyenas jealous of not having a trunk
Leered and threw words around like junk
At the elephant they mocked and squealed
Their anger and contempt quite revealed

But schoolyard bullies are all the same
They prey upon the weak to hide their shame
The elephants answered with stern civility
Such confidence proved their grey nobility

Wisdom is separate from having a brain
Brains without wisdom are deviously insane
Elephants have both and with humility
Ruled their Kingdom with great ability

And so life unwound in slow motion time
The elephant danced to nature's rhymes
But slowly and surely to Siam of Old
came men who worshiped power and gold

Men prized elephants for strength and brawn
Power and wealth came from the mastadon
Elephants were caught, their freedom no more
Worst yet they made elephants part of war

Oh, to sit on an elephant in hot battle
and see a foe's courage quake and rattle
Such perverse pleasure gave these men delight
They used elephant might to cause fright

Teak is a wood so heavy and old
Cut and haul it and reap your gold
Man has no trunk and legs too weak
so they made elephants toil for teak

But elephants cared little for teak or war
and wanted only peace and bananas galore
They pleaded as needed to King and Queen
that their use at war was quite obscene

But gold and war were higher demands
Than freedom and peace upon their land
At a Council of Trunks where all agreed
to flee to the forest to escape human deed

Seeking freedom from greed, war and folly
Their life turned from jolly to melancholy
They left the plain and a life turned hollow
Unaware that men would quickly follow

From plain to forest their exodus held witness
to a land now ruled by toil and grimace
Man shouted to the sky 'I am, I am'
For now they ruled the Kingdom of Siam

The forests of Siam are dark and deep
Tigers can hide in caves to sleep
But elephants must stay on open ground
An easy catch when men come 'round

A lust for money in our soul does lurk
Men again caught trunks for war and work

With families torn, calves paid the price
Their numbers melted like hot sun on ice

Years make you old with fleeting speed
At your peril give Father Time no heed
All creatures on Earth share a common fate
For all our souls will history soon confiscate

Elephants ruled Siam in ancient lore
When men came their Kingdom was no more
In forest they faded ever farther from sight
Their existence diminished to a grey twilight

You can find elephants now, but few are free
For how much longer there's no guarantee
Content and happy eating leaves of bamboo
But sadness comes with words of circus or zoo

Have you ever looked into an elephant's eyes?
Have you ever gazed at the stars in the skies?
Then you know that all life is heaven-sent
And our fates tied to God's grey elephant

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J. Gallagher

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Author

jeffcgallagher