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Rhino – Open Season

Ravi Naicker

The calf shadowed its mother
As they walked to the watering hole.
The Mother Rhino surveyed the scene and feared nothing.
Her horn conspicuous on her gentle head
As she sipped the cool water patiently.
The sun had long set in the horizon.

Twilight provided a veil of protection
From lurking danger
As both Mother and Calf
Retraced their footprints to their haven
Under the huge tree.
These colossal creatures fed on grass
Are gentle giants when unprovoked.

All this while the poachers lie in ambush
As they prepare their cultural weapons of mass destruction.

The Rhino having schooled her calf
In ways of survival
But not in defence against cruel humanity.
The poor calf knew her Mother was there
Until the end of time.

The predators swooped upon the Gentle Giant
Leaving her disoriented.
They cornered her as she fought fiercely and tirelessly
For Dear Life and her prized possession.
The heartless indigenous poachers
Hacked at her horn relentlessly.
The calf now a would-be orphan
Never deserted her Mother remained numb with pain.
Her Mother's forlorn cry pierced the lonely valley.
The rest of the animals in the game reserve were silenced.

The horn sawn off hurriedly, the Rhino bleeding profusely.
The Chinese b-a-s-t-a-r-d shrieks with laughter and victory.
As he hurriedly bags the bloodied horn.
Leaving the Gentle Giant dying.

At dawn the calf snuggled up to its Mother
With no understanding of the grand scheme of things