

# Musings under the mango tree

newsmaker

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A mango tree has stood rooted solidly to the ground ever since I occupied this house a couple of years ago in a sector that leads straight to the lake in Chandigarh. Its sprawling branches provide shade for almost half the terrace where I sit daily for my morning cup of tea.

The leaning branches, apart from nurturing the juicy delicious delight of the season, also serve as home to the koel who sings her heart out in ecstasy. The air around is cool and resonant with her melodies that are perhaps the finest tribute to the maturing sun as well as the fruit. Wonderful it is to enjoy the morning cuppa in the lap of nature and listen to a cricket singing, bees humming and a redbreast whistling, making the world of nature all the more sublime.

A recently retired colleague narrated an incident when we met over dinner. The young one of a parrot had fallen on the ground from the dense branches of a mango tree in the lawn of her bungalow

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a few years ago. In the absence of bird-parents, who refused to claim it back, her children took fancy to it, nursed it and bought a fancy cage for the little one, calling it Tweety. It was a matter of time before Tweety became the favourite of the household and gradually learnt a few Hindi words, much to the delight of everyone. It would protest ceaselessly if it was not made to join the family in their after-dinner *gup-shup*, repeating at short intervals "*Tu sota kab hai*" (when do you sleep?) leaving everyone in splits.

Eleven years passed by when her children left home in pursuit of higher studies and Tweety was left alone to cope up with his dismal loneliness. "It is time for him also to fly away," thought the lady of the house and Tweety was set free one fine

morning after the doting rituals of an affectionate patroness. Come next morning and the lady called out Tweety from her open window just to check whether it had flown away. And a sweet 'twing-too' came the answer, a voice only she could recognise to be that of her own little Tweety. Since then, whenever she feels 'Tweety-sick', she calls out to him and prompt comes the answer 'twing-too' from a horde of noises and the mother in her feels reassured about his safety. Free as a bird or in exile, Tweety has refused to leave the sweet home that he still considers to be his own.

Nature, it seems, created its own feeling of kinship with mankind if only we recognise that bond. In our fast-paced life of blogs and mobile mania, we seem to have severed that essential link and upset 'nature's holy plan' much to the detriment of our own happiness. Perhaps Wordsworth was right in lamenting about this loss in *Lines written in Early Spring*:

*I heard a thousand blended notes,  
While in a grove I sate reclined...  
... And much it grieved my heart to think  
What Man has made of Man.*

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