

1st Place Poem for the “Poetry for Peace” Contest

Explosion Affected Reflection

Blasted into a wasteland,
behind an old torn photo
Father silently weeps
for what were once his people
their voices and love forsaken
while Mother has grown old
torn in recollection with grief
her children’s young kisses
still innocent upon her cheek;
memorizing, unborn babies
hear exploding bombs
as yet she stares, despondent,
out the broken window,
in remembrance for peace.

— **Helle van Aardeberg (Ms.)**
(submitted from the Netherlands)

2nd Place Poem for the “Poetry for Peace” Contest

How can I forget?

How can I forget
That exploding sound
Which stole my family from me
Leaving me, with no one around?

How can I forget
Looking into mother's eyes?
Desperately, she called for my help
Hopelessly, I watched her die

How can I forget
The burnt bodies on the floor?
Whether my family was amongst them
Even today, I am unsure

How can I forget
Those piercing screams
Which haunt me daily
When appearing in my dreams?

How can I forget
How some are so unkind?
Peace on Earth is something
We urgently need to find

— **Hashela Kumarawansa (Ms.)**
(submitted from Australia)

3rd Place Poem for the “Poetry for Peace” Contest

Until

Time paused
a moment imploded,
the shuddering tremor,
rippled in dramatic light
silence came with pain,
fallen boughs
new sown seeds,
growth blemished in bark
reaching skyward
with gentle leaves,
the tree had not forgotten
yet learned from it's birth
never to touch
that light
or feel that moment
again.

Kyochikuto/Oleander

from chugoku to the ota
nothing remained
upon the debris strewn
red earth,
in the silence
that came with time,
shoots with elliptic leaves
to five bright petals,
vivid signal that,
survival is the future
that through resilience
we find a peace
and learn that for
no other reason
it should never
happen again.

— **Chris Lawrence (Mr.)**
(submitted from the United Kingdom)