

**THE WALKING TREE**

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(The poem is a translation of my Telugu poem

Nadiche Chettu)

One rainy morning the tree is a paper boat in our playful hands,
Another summer noon the tree turns into gaming cards amidst us,
In winter evenings the tree becomes a kite in our sport,
On moonlit beaches the tree holds peanuts for our delicacy.

The papers which land at my doorstep before dawn, are trees,
Letters adorning me with distant news from near and dear, are trees,
Trees which nurture my joys and offer succour to my grief are my
anthologies.

Volumes waiting for a gentle touch in the library,
round the corner of my street, are trees.

Last night in my dreams – trees and trees!
From paper boats to books – all ... all trees!
Trees leading me, and trees following me.

When I looked into the mirror next morning – again those same trees!
I knelt before them in humble reverence.

“What is this” “Why” – two questions danced before me.

“For energizing my soul with deep bonds of affection,



For casting a golden childhood for me,
For civilizing me,
For inspiring me and being with me,
For sheltering me.”

“Is that all? Is there nothing else?”

A laughter.

“The air I breathe out is your breath, your life.

And your breath is my life.”

Tree and man are one soul, one life.

The tree flowed into me

And went into raptures with the touch of my breath.

The tree and me. We exist for each other. In each other.

The true spirit of Advaita.

And now I'm a walking tree!
