

THE DISAPPEARED

***Where are the Lost Ones - the Disappeared ?
Where are they now - the men who spoke up;
The women who asked questions;
The children who were taken away
So that others would keep quiet.
Now they are all gone
And there is a void in our lives.***

***Where are the Disappeared ?
Grandmothers' tears are their only markers.
They weep for their sons and daughters -
Dropped into the rivers
Or out at sea - to leave no trace -
Or simply shovelled into mass graves
And their children sold to rich people.
And they cry out;
"Where are our Disappeared Ones ?
Our heritage has been taken away.
Our blood line stolen. This is a crime."
They are beaten, these old ones, into silence.***

***Where are our Disappeared Ones ?
Each day we count carefully
Our relatives, our friends, and neighbours,
And there are more of them missing.
They have gone in the night.
Quiet death squads have come for them
And we will never see them again.
They have been disappeared.***

***If their names were on somebody's list,
Maybe they were considered important
Or dangerous.
Is that enough of an epitaph ?
The secret fear is that it is all random.
Just so long as someone disappears,
People can be controlled that way.
It is very effective.
Only a few of us dare to speak out - and
Soon we will disappear as well.
We do not say "Good-bye" here -
it is much too final.***