

၂ This is Thailand ၆

What with the rains and sun and winds, the ocean green leaves have fairly fallen now. I will say goodbye (see you again soon) to my time in Thailand which has ended. A book tour of which I saw smiles like no other. A gift returned to me a thousand-fold – so much more from these people than I gave to them. Those which still hang onto the hope are like the leaves still clinging to the trees that line the roads, groves, farmland, and tropical forests of this beautiful country. Nothing here withers and dries, but is remade into something useful. I am surprised at the change in myself since I came months ago. Looking at the distant face in the mirror, it is closer now and more at peace. I perceive that there is no weeping or scarlet rim about my eyes; save for the whimsical ache in a heart not want to leave my sweet dear friends (all of them known and unknown).

In all the provinces I have visited and for those I have yet; which are few, but still I struggle with pronouncing their names and the people are patient with me as the words form about my mouth. My true spirit (except for tattered parts) has been renewed and even what was broken has begun to mend. There is nothing mundane, dry, dull, or hasty in my step any longer. One cannot be unsure of anything when he/she has stepped foot into paradise. The season has changed and so am I. The colorful tints of all flora and fauna are gone, but in their place is a new shade and pattern – as lovely as before. What life remains here is now memories I hope to again one day awaken. At the foot of this remembrance will be my homecoming. The people, my friends, my loves ... for the most part weep quietly, but never say they will never see me again.

What a wonderful aspect to a culture so old and filled with the summer and winter aspect of a surge toward authentic bliss. Their clothing rustles in the afternoon air as they wave to me. Heads bowed ceremoniously in respect and love. Light-colored or dark, their eyes shine with hope in any light. Tall grasses skirt the rivers and wave to me as well. By my side I can feel the people standing firm and without reserve. A shy culture, but not too reluctant to show fondness, adoration, tenderness. This is more than a country, a place, a dot on an earth in the shape of a geographical outline. It is bursting with the old ways merging brilliantly with the new and all melding into a never-ending story of optimism and perseverance. I/they are now prepared for a farewell, without any misgivings of a speedy return.

And I say to these people yet again – When the forest and fields put on their sober hue ready for harvest of the next delicious crop, I wish for you the abundance of health and happiness. I will also look to the East with a new set of eyes and a changed heart. A look more to the sunset for color and variety ... and I will know in my mind, body and soul –

You will always be my home away from home. A glimpse into Heaven.



This is Thailand. [My] Thailand.



for all of the wonderful people – g. milligan, 25 June ©2013