



Wind

*The wind blows strongly and causes a lot of destruction.
How can we make friends with it?*

Wind, come softly.
Don't break the shutters of the windows.
Don't scatter the papers.
Don't throw down the books on the shelf.
There, look what you did — you threw them all down.
You tore the pages of the books.
You brought rain again.
You're very clever at poking fun at weaklings.
Frail crumbling houses, crumbling doors, crumbling rafters,
crumbling wood, crumbling bodies, crumbling lives,
crumbling hearts —
the wind god winnows and crushes them all.
He won't do what you tell him.
So, come, let's build strong homes,
Let's joint the doors firmly.
Practise to firm the body.
Make the heart steadfast.
Do this, and the wind will be friends with us.
The wind blows out weak fires.
He makes strong fires roar and flourish.
His friendship is good.
We praise him every day.

SUBRAMANIA BHARATI

[translated from the Tamil by
A.K. Ramanujan]

Subramania Bharati (1882–1921) is a great Tamil poet, famous for his patriotism in the pre-Independence era.

A.K. Ramanujan is a Kannada and English poet, well known for his translation of classical and modern poetry.

GLOSSARY

poking fun: making fun of

rafters: sloping beams supporting a roof

winnow: blow grain free of chaff; separate grain from husk by blowing on it

✿ Thinking about the Poem

- I. 1. What are the things the wind does in the first stanza?
 2. Have you seen anybody winnow grain at home or in a paddy field? What is the word in your language for winnowing? What do people use for winnowing? (Give the words in your language, if you know them.)
 3. What does the poet say the wind god winnows?
 4. What should we do to make friends with the wind?
 5. What do the last four lines of the poem mean to you?
 6. How does the poet speak to the wind — in anger or with humour? You must also have seen or heard of the wind “crumbling lives”. What is your response to this? Is it like the poet’s?
- II. The poem you have just read is originally in the Tamil. Do you know any such poems in your language?



The tree on the mountain takes whatever the weather brings. If it has any choice at all, it is in putting down roots as deeply as possible.

CORRIE TEN BOOM