

New Year's Day, Sri Lanka 2022

Vivimarie VanderPoorten

My first *ganudenuwa*^[i]
 This Sinhala and Hindu New year
 was with a hungry man
 who rang the doorbell
 with his elbow
 at the auspicious hour for
 money transactions.
 He had had his fingers
 chopped off
 and stuck his hands through
 the grill of my gate.
 I didn't ask him
 what happened
 I merely inserted
 currency notes in between
 the stubs on his hands:

I don't know if
 such transactions
 are auspicious
 but then, neither
 is hunger

Vivimarie Vanderpoorten is a university teacher, poet, and translator based in Colombo.

Notes

[i] *Ganudenuwa* (singular, plural = *Ganudenu*) = money transactions that happen at an auspicious time after the New Year dawns, as a symbol of prosperity and gain.