



## **Silent Friend - Soheila Ghodstinat**

My backpack is staring at me  
with its wide dark eyes,  
and deep blameless look  
wondering  
Where to?  
Where is the next destination?  
When is the final destination?  
When will this never-ending path end?  
When will this non-stop train stop?  
My silent friend  
is confused but ready  
full but empty  
tired but lively  
old but brisk  
scared but brave.  
I fill it with my mother's old picture.  
my father's long forgotten shirt  
my nanny's threadbare handkerchief  
with my memories and dreams.  
For a moment I believe  
they're ready to burst out.  
But as long as I loved  
the backpack on my shoulders  
never complained, not once!  
Finally,  
I fetch the stars  
from one corner of the sky,  
place them inside my backpack,  
and zip it up.

**Soheila Ghodstint was born in Iran. She has lived in 30 different places, 13 different cities and 6 different centuries.**

Thank you to Refugees & The Arts Initiative for their help and permission to use poetry from the "Poet Tree Project" a collaboration between Refugees & The Arts Initiative and the London Borough of Newham. The project hopes to enrich communities and widen understanding about different cultures through poetry and literature.