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Why are you so sad?

by Leszek Czuchajowski
(translated from Polish)

.....
Why are you so sad?
they painted you
as having smiling face
so you have to smile!
aren't you supposed
to be a birthday balloon?

-you can smile yourself if you want
but I would rather cry
when I see that
all those people around
like that one who
blows the birthday balloon
will soon depart this earth
while I, hydrogen,
the witness of their joy
will live for billions of years!
how many more of these
birthday balloons
will I have to fill up?

.....
Leszek Czuchajowski leszek@uidaho.edu is a chemistry professor at the
University of Idaho.

"Why are you so sad?" is from the collection of poems titled *Molecules, Women, Gods* and published by the Plus Publishing in Krakow, Poland, 2002.