

“Myriad-winged Bird”

Aduri Satyavathi Devi



- BA I English
Compulsory
- Poetry Section
- Submitted by
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About the Poet



Aduri Satyavathi Devi (1948-2008) is a Telugu poet. She has three collections of poetry to her credit: *Rekka Mudavani Ragam* (1992), *Jalapata Geetam* (1997), and *Veyi Rangula Velugu Ragam* (2006).

The text as well as the texture of her poetry is smooth, sensitive, caring, free-flowing, and Nature-loving: reflecting her fears, desires about Nature and Mother Earth vis-à-vis the cruelty of man. Even otherwise, her lyrics and poems have that special feel of spontaneity, clarity, and fluency in chaste Telugu idiom. Her poetry can be described as having reflective, tranquil, composed, balanced, and romantic strains.

She has won many awards and prizes during her lifetime for her immense contribution to the field of Telugu poetry.



About the Poem

- This poem is a translation from the original in Telugu. It has been translated by K.Damodara Rao. The English version was first published in *Pratibha India* in 1981.
- “Myriad-winged Bird” is about the poet’s creative process. The poetic flow comes to her in various situations and gives her peace and comfort. She calls this poetic flow ‘word’ and then compares this word to a dove, a lullaby, a song in a season of wild blooms, a school, a waterfall, a throat-box and a music treasure.
- Words come flying to her whenever she needs them. Moreover they mean many things to her. They are like a bird with multi-coloured wings. Thus she compares the words that come to her in the process of writing poetry to a “myriad-winged bird” (a bird with many-coloured wings).



Notes - Stanza I



- In this stanza she calls the poetic/creative flow a “Word”. At first she creates the image of a child playing with its toys. She calls the process of poetic flow “a child’s play”. It means the creative/poetic flow is spontaneous and natural. She doesn’t make any conscious effort to write. Later she uses a metaphor and calls the “word” “a dove”, a symbol of peace. The image of “a dove” has been used to describe the feelings of peace and comfort she derives from her creativity.
- The poet evokes another image of a child “caught in the midst of the alphabets”. At this moment word or the poetic flow comes to her softly and gently revolves round her head.



Stanza II & III



- The process of writing poetry gives her immense comfort and joy. In this stanza she calls word a lullaby(a soft gentle song sung to make a child go to sleep) as it gives her the same comfort. She begins to feel that she has become a child and is “rolling in the cradle of fairy tales”. With the help of “word” she enters the gorgeous but unreal world of fairies where clouds look like the treasures of gold and silver and the sky looks like “starry tents”.
- She dreams of her silken youth “while sleeping”. The dream has the soft fragrance of flowers. Here the poetic flow/word comes to her naturally “like a song in a season of wild blooms”. It means word comes to her as naturally as flowers bloom during the spring season.



Stanza IV & V



- Finally she comes out of the dream world of fairies and returns to the real world. She feels sad and lonely. However word/poetic flow reassures her and provides her the comfort of mother's milk. It nurtures her like mother.
- At times the poetess finds herself in a humiliating or embarrassing situation. Word/creative flow becomes "a school in itself" and gives her a learning experience. In this stanza she has used two similes: 'circling round like a spider' and 'facing humiliations like a caterpillar'. These similes compare the moments of her idleness and humiliation to the movements of a spider and a caterpillar.



Stanza VI & VII

- Word/poetic flow cleanses the poetess “like a waterfall on a moonlit night. The “fret of life is washed away and she feels fresh.
- Finally she compares word to “a throat-box and “a music treasure. Thus her poetic flow/word “edutains” her: as a school it educates her and as a throat-box or music-treasure it entertains her. She decides to write poetry and add new songs and melodies thereby enriching this music-treasure. In this way she will be making this “myriad-winged bird” more colourful and varied.
- The poem is written in a free style. All stanzas in this poem consist of one long sentence. It gives us the feel of her creative flow. This poem is full of evocative imagery. The title of the poem has been derived from the image of a bird with many-coloured wings. Her poetic flow or words are like a “myriad-winged bird”.

