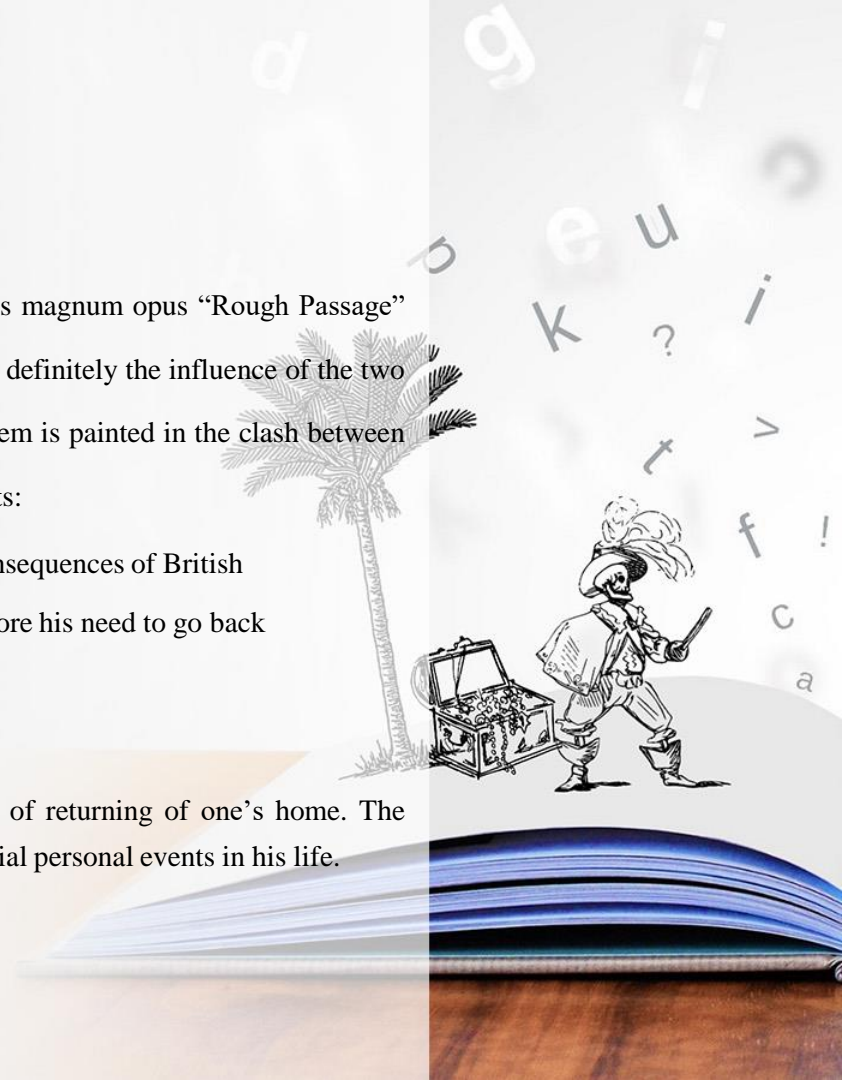


HOME COMING

R.PARTHASARATHY

Rajagopal Parthasarathy

- is a **bilingual poet** who wrote in two languages – **Tamil and English**. His magnum opus “Rough Passage” took him fifteen years (1961-1975) to complete. The essence of the poem is definitely the influence of the two different cultures on the life of the poet speaker, Mr. Parthasarathy. The poem is painted in the clash between two different cultures – English and Tamil. The poem is written in three parts:
 - **I Exile**” opposes the culture of India to the Europe and examines the consequences of British rule on an Indian, and especially an Indian’s loss- his identity and therefore his need to go back to his roots.
 - II. **“Trial”** celebrates love as a reality here and now.
 - III. **“Homecoming”**, the third and final part explores the phenomenon of returning of one’s home. The strength of his poem derives from the writer’s sense of responsibility towards crucial personal events in his life.



- **I**
- **My tongue in English chains,**
- **I return, after a generation, to you.**
- **I am at the end**
- **of my dravidie tether,**
- **hunger for you unassuaged.**
- **I falter, stumble.**
- **Speak**
- **a tired language**
- **wrenched from its sleep in the Kural,'[=**
- **teeth, palate, lips still new**
- **to its agglutinative touch.**
- **Now, hooked on celluloid, you reel**
- **down plush corridors.**



- **II**
- **To live in Tamil Nadu is to be conscious**
- **every day of impotence.**
- **There is one**
- **language, for instance;**
- **the bull, Nammalavar took by the horns,**
- **is today an**
- **unrecognizable carcass,**
- **quick with the fleas of Kodambakkam.**
- **There is little you can do about it,**
- **except throw up your hands.**
- **How long can**
- **foreign poets**



- **provide the staple of your lines?**
- **Turn inward. Scrape the bottom of your past.**
- **Ransack the cupboard**
- **for skeletons of your Brahmin childhood**
- **(the nights with Father droning**
- **the Four Thousand as**
- **sleep**
- **pinched your thighs blue). You may then,**
- **perhaps, strike out a line for yourself**
- **from the iron of life's ordinariness.**



- **III**
- **And so it eventually happened?**
- **a**
- **family reunion not heard of**
- **since grandfather died in '59?in March**
- **this year. Cousins arrived in Tiruchchanur**
- **in overcrowded private buses,**
- **the dust of unlettered years**
- **clouding instant recognition.**
- **Later, each one pulled,**
- **sitting cross-legged**
- **on the steps**
- **of the choultry, familiar coconuts**
- **out of the fire**
- **of rice-and-pickle afternoons.**
- **Sundari, who had squirrelled up and down**
- **forbidden tamarind trees in her long skirt**
- **every morning with me,**
- **stood there, that day, forty years taller,**
- **her three daughters floating**



- **IV**
- **I made myself an expert**
- **in farewells. An unexpected November**
- **shut the door in my face:**
- **I crashed, a**
- **glasshouse**
- **hit by the stone of Father's death.**
- **At the burning ghat**
- **relations stood like exclamation points.**
- **The fire stripped his unwary body**
- **of the last shred of family likeness.**
- **I am my father now.**
- **The lines of my hands**
- **hold the fine compass of his going:**
- **I shall follow. And after me,**
- **my unborn son, through the eye of this needle**
- **of forgetfulness.**



- **V**
- **You were born in this island:**
- **rains sprouted**
- **all over its large, Arabic eye.**
- **I see myself in you**
- **as you bend, daily, our world**
- **to yours. Chase the sun**
- **from one window to the next**
- **till sleep ties knots**
- **in your limbs. Old,**
- **I smart under your absence.**
- **The long years break out in a sweat**
- **down the spine of pillows.**





SUMMARY

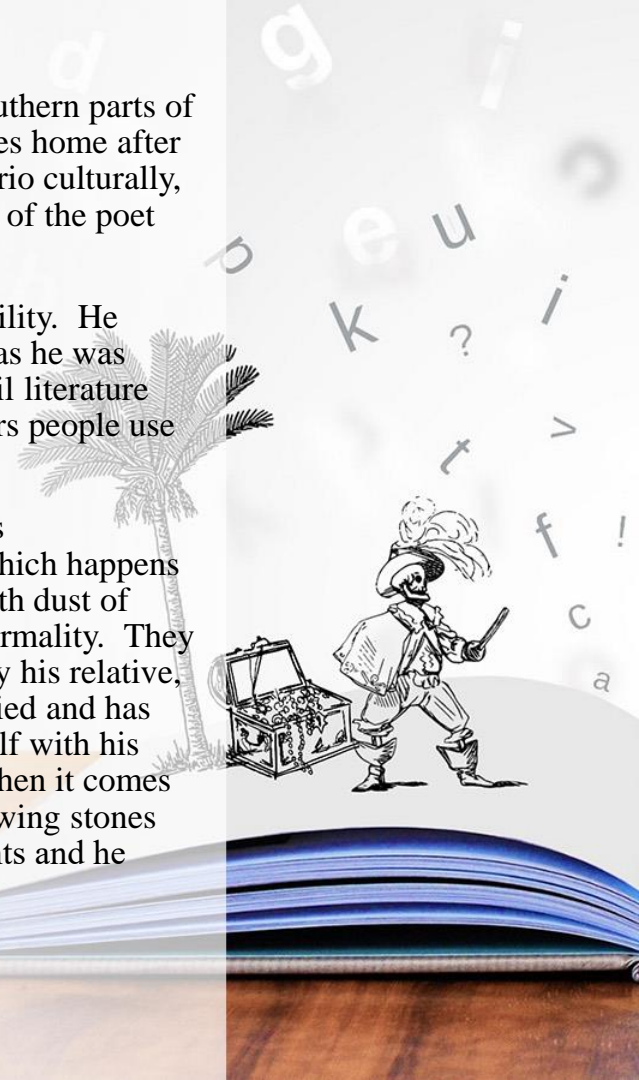
- Rajagopal Parthasarathy is a **bilingual poet** who wrote in two languages – **Tamil and English**. His magnum opus “Rough Passage” took him fifteen years (1961-1975) to complete. The essence of the poem is definitely the influence of the two different cultures on the life of the poet speaker, Mr. Parthasarathy. The poem is painted in the clash between two different cultures – English and Tamil. The poem is written in three parts:
- **I Exile**” opposes the culture of India to the Europe and examines the consequences of British rule on an Indian, and especially an Indian’s loss- his identity and therefore his need to go back to his roots.
- II. **“Trial”** celebrates love as a reality here and now.
- III. **“Homecoming”**, the third and final part explores the phenomenon of returning of one’s home. The strength of his poem derives from the writer’s sense of responsibility towards crucial personal events in his life.

R. Parthasarathy’s poem “Homecoming” portrays a picture of his native state, Tamil Nadu as he returns from his sojourn abroad. He perceives a marked change in his native language. He comprehends that it was his lack of familiarity with the native language that rendered the language alien to his perception. His persistent use of the foreign tongue dispossessed him of his inherently rich native language. His association with English appears to be like imprisonment as he wrestles with English chains. His mother tongue is emblematic of his rich Dravidian heritage that he cherishes. In his chains, that disable him to move freely, he falters, he stumbles. He also stumbles as he has lost his ground.

- R. Parthasarathy is a famous Indian English poet. He hails from the southern parts of India. As the title, Exile from Homecoming, announces, R. Parthasarathy comes home after spending sometime abroad, but he is not able to fit himself in the current scenario culturally, linguistically, sociologically and psychologically. The poem builds on the idea of the poet feeling exile and isolated, in spite of familiar things that surround him.

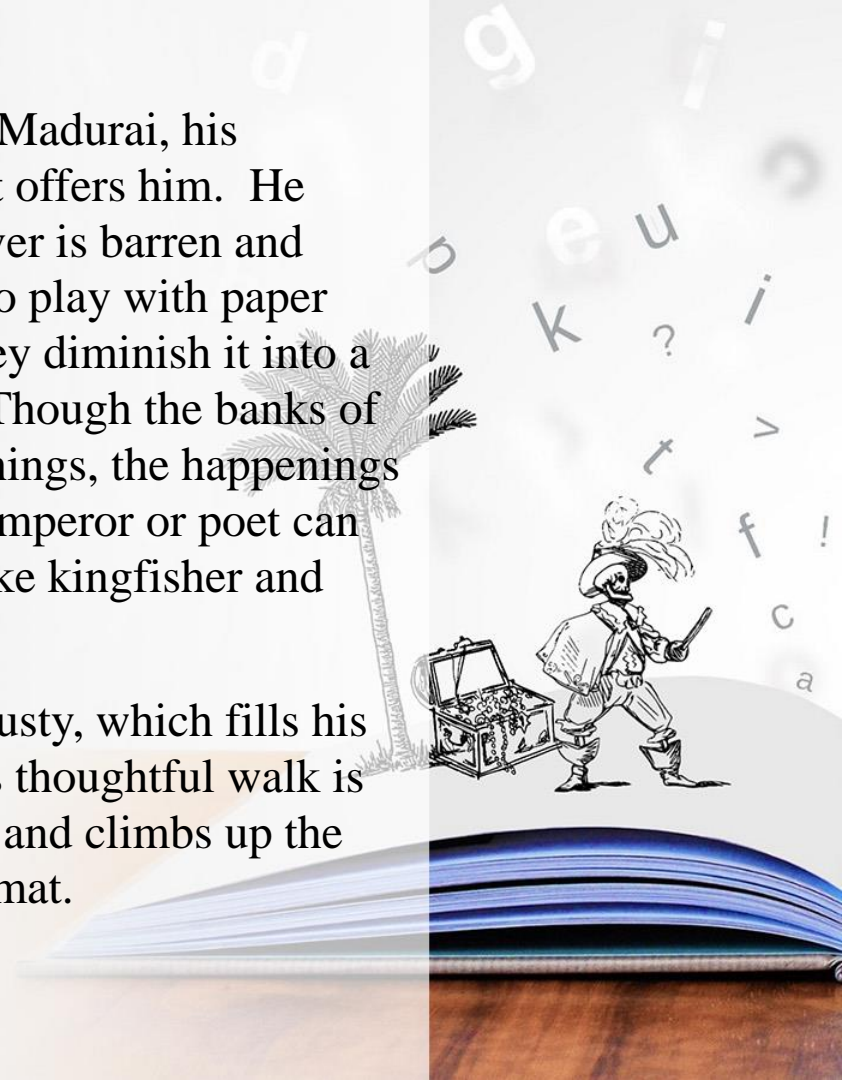
- The persona opens the poem by sharing his linguistic instability or inability. He accepts that his tongue is been tied by English and he is not fluent with Tamil, as he was abroad. He expects people to speak good Tamil, as been used in good old Tamil literature and scriptures. His expectations are in vain and his hopes vanish, when he hears people use Tamil that is articulated by the characters in celluloid world or cinema.

- The persona moves on to brief his attempts to establish relation with his relatives. The family members gather at a Tiruchchenur for family function, which happens after 1959, when his grandfather died. They come in crowded buses loaded with dust of many years of memory. The relatives gather in groups and sit without much formality. They eat the packed food they have brought for lunch. He looks at Sundari, probably his relative, who had once climbed up and down a tamarind tree with the poet. She is married and has three daughters clinging to her like three planets. The poet cannot relate himself with his relatives and with the circumstances. He stays aloof and he claims expertise when it comes to farewell. He feels guilty of losing his familiar tradition. He regrets for throwing stones from a glass house built by his father. He has evaded from his father's footprints and he hopes that his son will not follow him in the future.



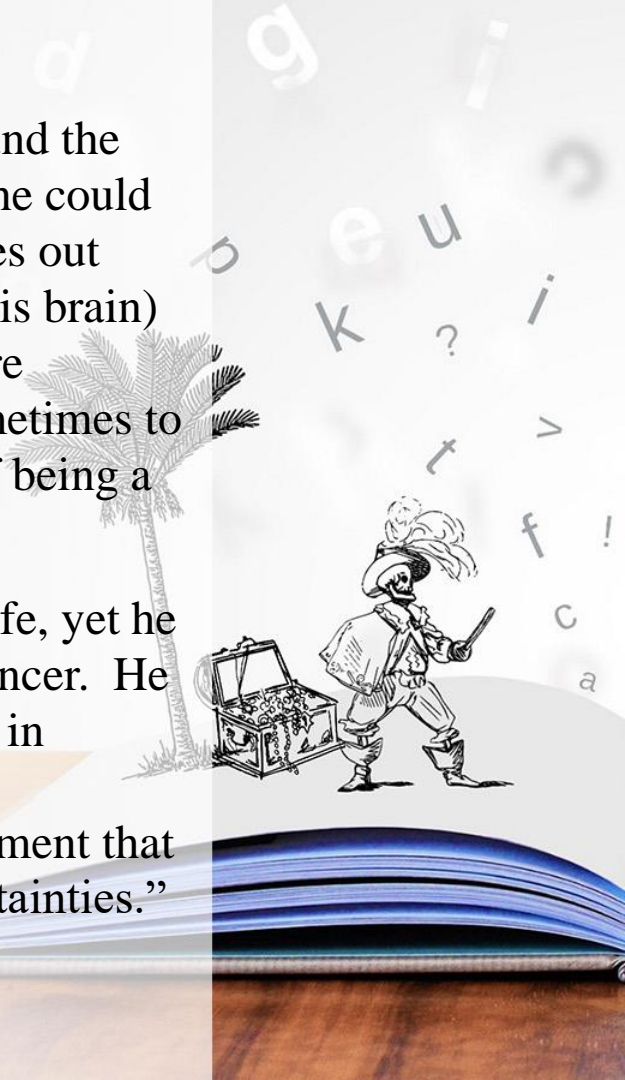
- The poet walks near river Vaigai that flows in Madurai, his hometown. He is not satisfied with the sight it offers him. He calls it as river once and not as a river. The river is barren and empty without water. Boys get into the river to play with paper boats. Buffaloes also loiter in the river and they diminish it into a pond. It is filled with hair and stale flowers. Though the banks of the river are full of temples and other sacred things, the happenings inside the river are mean and degrading. No emperor or poet can talk or boast of river Vaigai. Not even birds like kingfisher and egrets come to river Vaigai.

- The poet walks home. The roads are dusty, which fills his eyes. The streets are jammed with traffic. His thoughtful walk is answered by the barking dogs. He goes home and climbs up the stairs carefully only to be tripped off over the mat.



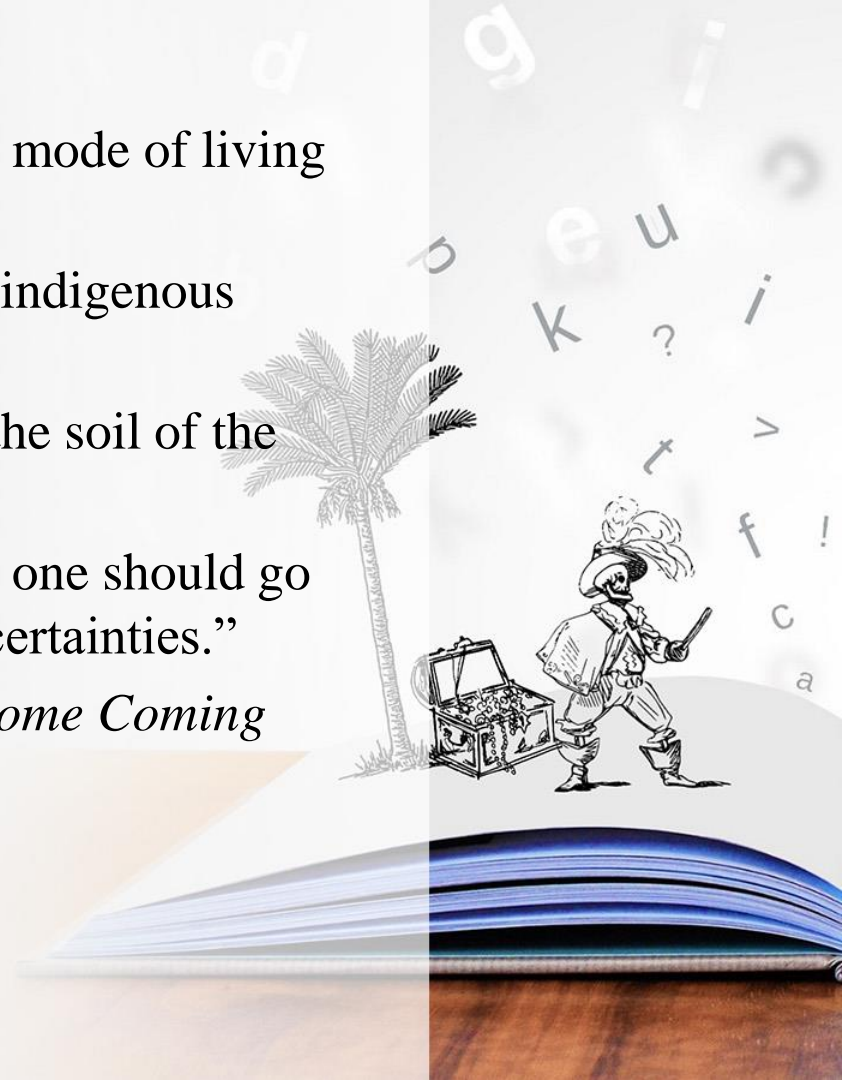
- The poet persona becomes fed up with things around the world. He considers himself as a poet and a creator. All he could do is defined a poet. He looks himself as a poet and comes out defining him. A poet is someone who becomes fat (fills his brain) by reading many old poems and poets. He also reads more commentaries. He is been invited to conferences and sometimes to schools and colleges to teach. The poet is against himself being a poet and abuses himself of being one.

- The poet persona is finally willing to retire from life, yet he is not content with life. He establishes himself as a freelancer. He prays to god that a few of his articles should be published in newspapers and his prayers are sometimes answered. He concludes the poem with a compelling thought of contentment that he should go through his life with “small change of uncertainties.”



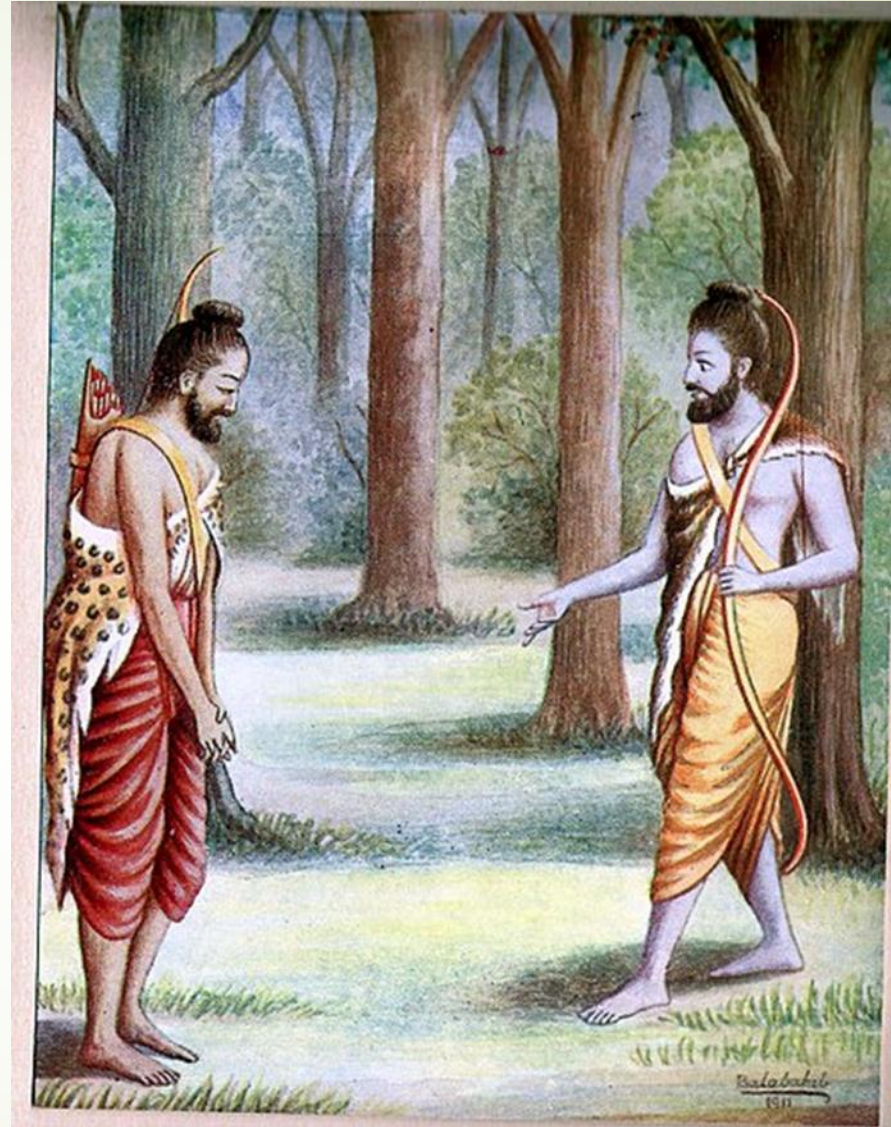
THEMES

- The present problem of settling down to a mode of living life fully with contentment.
- Acclimatizing the English language to an indigenous tradition.
- The consciousness of the hiatus between the soil of the language one uses and his own roots.
- A compelling thought of contentment that one should go through his life with “small change of uncertainties.”
- Indianism in Rajagopal Parthasarathy’s *Home Coming*
- Justification of the title.



LAKSHMAN

Toru Dutt



Toru Dutt

A Bengali translator & poet.

Wrote in English & French

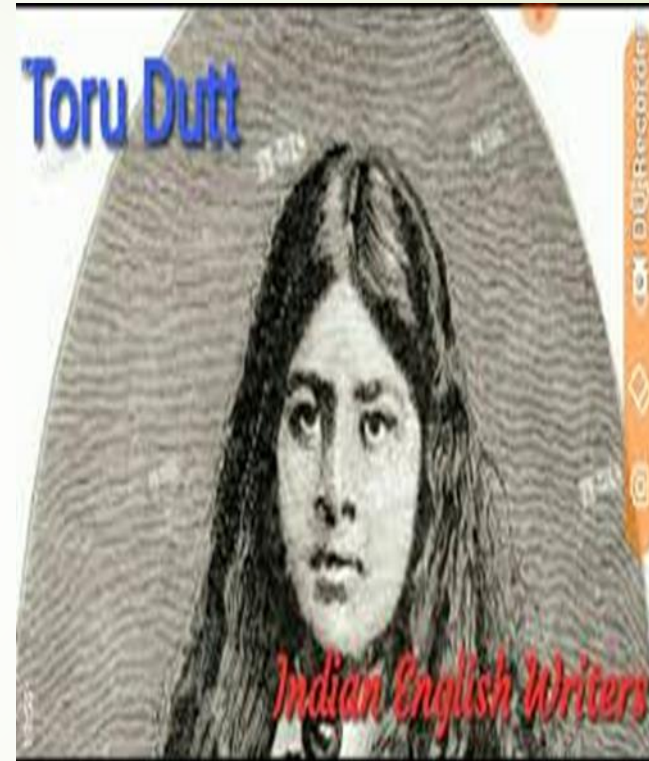
Known for her volumes of poetry-A Sheaf Gleaned in French Fields

Died at the age of 21 , like Keats

Themes- loneliness, longing, patriotism & nostalgia.

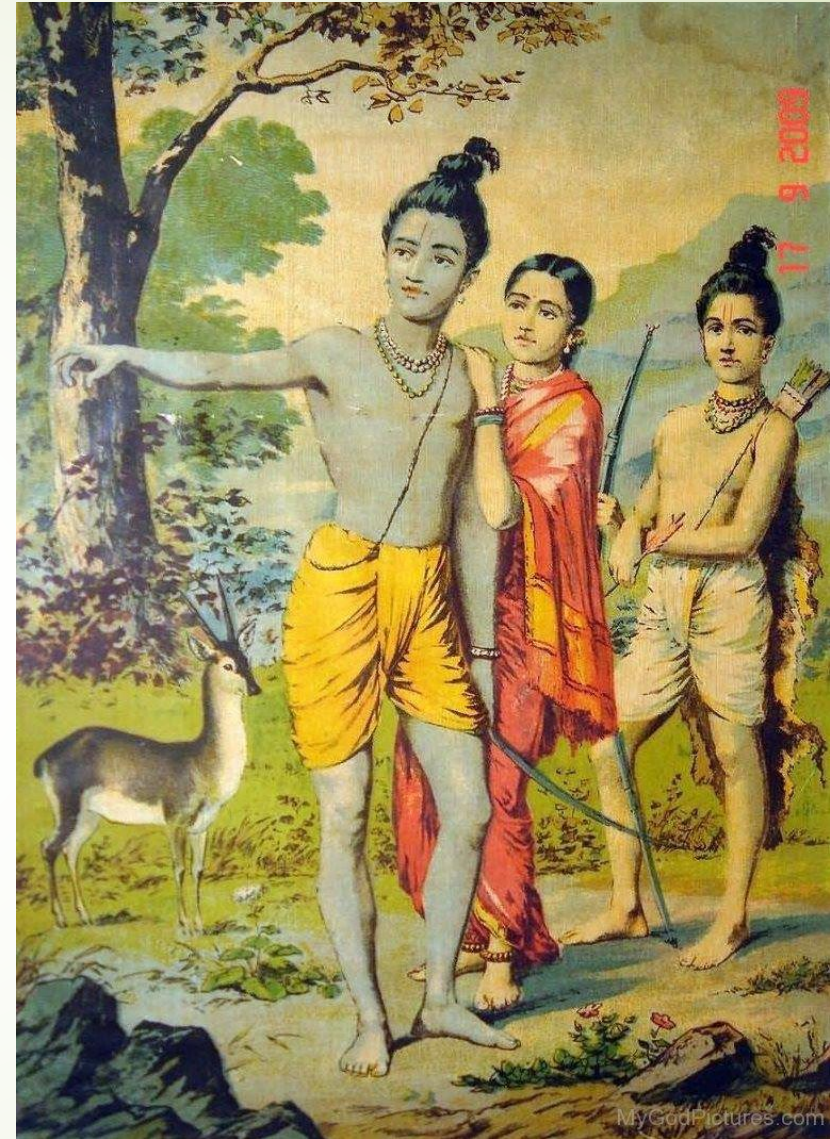
Based on great Indian myth & epic the Ramayana

Lakshman is a historical character- known for brotherly love, faith & bravery.



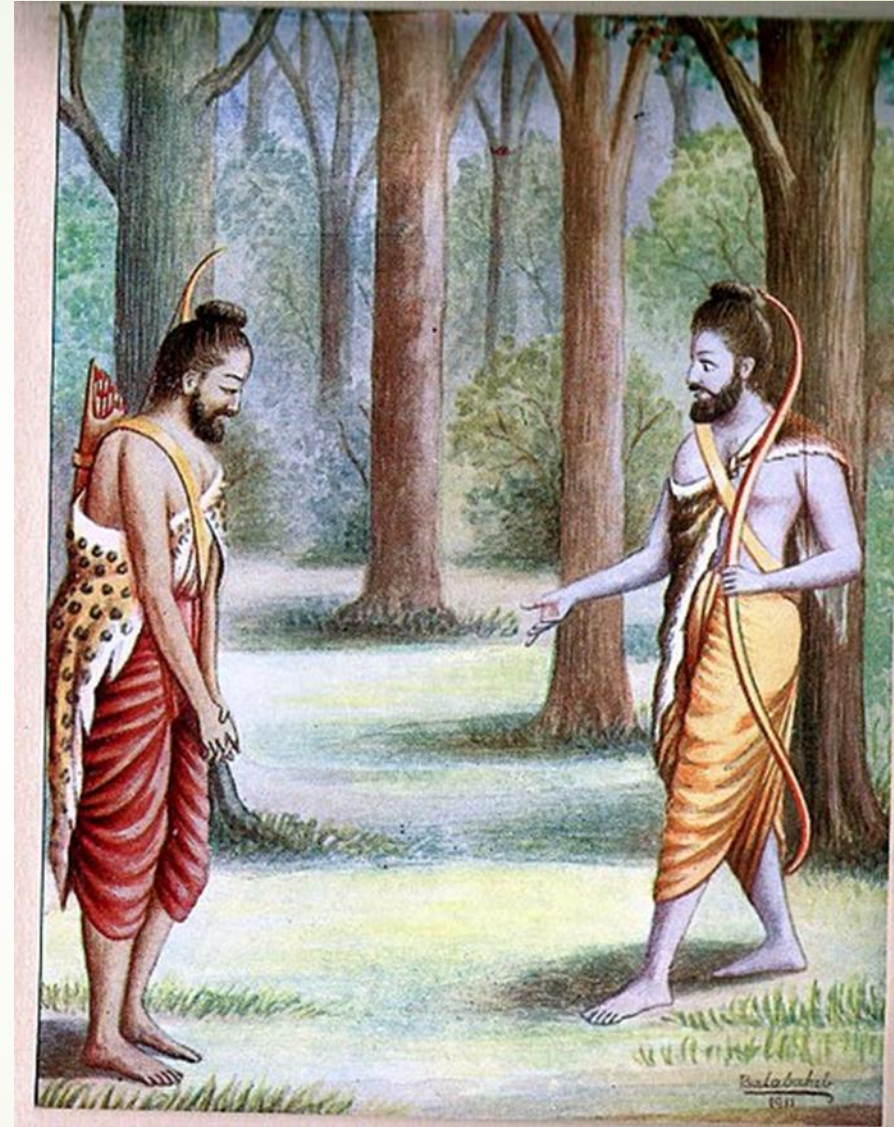
Hark! Lakshman! Hark, again that cry!
It is, — it is my husband's voice!
Oh hasten, to his succour fly,
No more hast thou, dear friend, a choice.
He calls on thee, perhaps his foes
Environ him on all sides round,
That wail, — it means death's final throes!
Why standest thou, as magic-bound?

"Is this a time for thought, — oh gird
Thy bright sword on, and take thy bow!
He heeds not, hears not any word,
Evil hangs over us, I know!
Swift in decision, prompt in deed,
Brave unto rashness, can this be,
The man to whom all looked at need?
Is it my brother that I see!



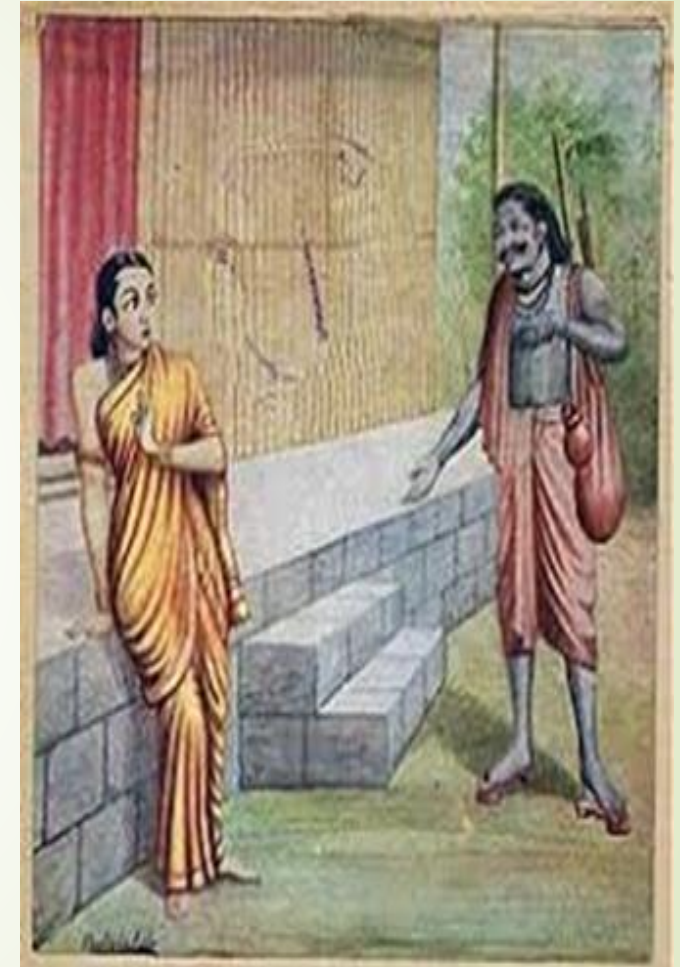
"Oh no, and I must run alone,
For further here I cannot stay;
Art thou transformed to blind dumb stone!
Wherefore this impious, strange delay!
That cry, — that cry, — it seems to ring
Still in my ears, — I cannot bear
Suspense; if help we fail to bring
His death at least we both can share"


"Oh calm thyself, Videhan Queen,
No cause is there for any fear,
Hast thou his prowess never seen?
Wipe off for shame that dastard tear!
What being of demonian birth
Could ever brave his mighty arm?
Is there a creature on earth
That dares to work our hero harm?"



"The lion and the grisly bear
Cower when they see his royal look,
Sun-staring eagles of the air
His glance of anger cannot brook,
Pythons and cobras at his tread
To their most secret coverts glide,
Bowed to the dust each serpent head
Erect before in hooded pride.


"Rakshasas, Danavs, demons, ghosts,
Acknowledge in their hearts his might,
And slink to their remotest coasts,
In terror at his very sight.
Evil to him! Oh fear it not,
Whatever foes against him rise!
Banish for aye the foolish thought,
And be thyself, — bold, great, and wise.






"He call for help! Canst thou believe
He like a child would shriek for aid
Or pray for respite or reprieve —
Not of such metal is he made!
Delusive was that piercing cry, —
Some trick of magic by the foe;
He has a work, — he cannot die,
Beseech me not from hence to go.

For here beside thee, as a guard
'Twas he commanded me to stay,
And dangers with my life to ward
If they should come across thy way.
Send me not hence, for in this wood
Bands scattered of the giants lurk,
Who on their wrongs and vengeance brood,
And wait the hour their will to work."



"Oh shame! and canst thou make my weal
A plea for lingering! Now I know
What thou art, Lakshman! And I feel
Far better were an open foe.
Art thou a coward? I have seen
Thy bearing in the battle-fray
Where flew the death-fraught arrows keen,
Else had I judged thee so today.


"But then thy leader stood beside!
Dazzles the cloud when shines the sun,
Reft of his radiance, see it glide
A shapeless mass of vapours dun;
So of thy courage, — or if not,
The matter is far darker dyed,
What makes thee loth to leave this spot?
Is there a motive thou wouldst hide?



"He perishes — well, let him die!


His wife henceforth shall be mine own!
Can that thought deep imbedded lie
Within thy heart's most secret zone!
Search well and see! one brother takes
His kingdom, — one would take his wife!
A fair partition! — But it makes
Me shudder, and abhor my life.

"Art thou in secret league with those
Who from his hope the kingdom rent?
A spy from his ignoble foes
To track him in his banishment?
And wouldst thou at his death rejoice?
I know thou wouldst, or sure ere now
When first thou heardst that well known voice
Thou shouldst have run to aid, I trow.




"Learn this, — whatever comes may come,
But I shall not survive my Love,
Of all my thoughts here is the sum!
Witness it gods in heaven above.
If fire can burn, or water drown,
I follow him: — choose what thou wilt
Truth with its everlasting crown,
Or falsehood, treachery, and guilt.

"Remain here with a vain pretence
Of shielding me from wrong and shame,
Or go and die in his defence
And leave behind a noble name.
Choose what thou wilt, — I urge no more,
My pathway lies before me clear,
I did not know thy mind before,
I know thee now, — and have no fear."




She said and proudly from him turned, —
Was this the gentle Sita? No.
Flames from her eyes shot forth and burned,
The tears therein had ceased to flow.
"Hear me, O Queen, ere I depart,
No longer can I bear thy words,
They lacerate my inmost heart
And torture me, like poisoned swords.

"Have I deserved this at thine hand?
Of lifelong loyalty and truth
Is this the meed? I understand
Thy feelings, Sita, and in sooth
I blame thee not, — but thou mightst be
Less rash in judgement, Look! I go,
Little I care what comes to me
Wert thou but safe, — God keep thee so!

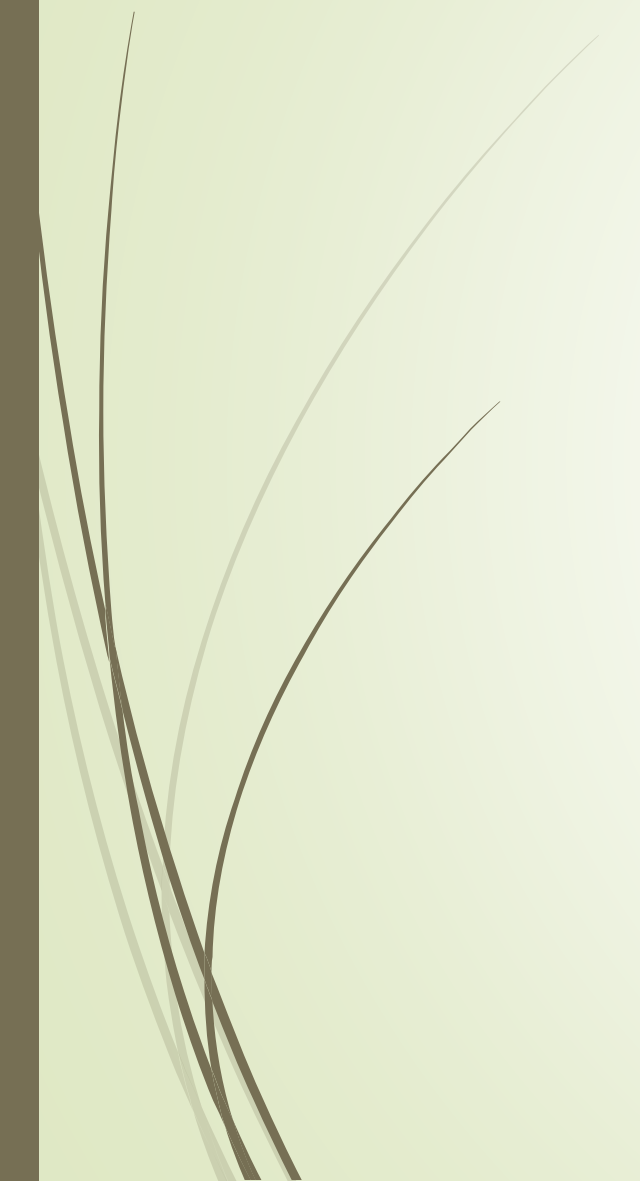


"In going hence I disregard
The plainest orders of my chief,
A deed for me, — a soldier, — hard
And deeply painful, but thy grief
And language, wild and wrong, allow
No other course. Mine be the crime,
And mine alone. — but oh, do thou
Think better of me from this time.


"Here with an arrow, lo, I trace
A magic circle ere I leave,
No evil thing within this space
May come to harm thee or to grieve.
Step not, for aught, across the line,
Whatever thou mayst see or hear,
So shalt thou balk the bad design
Of every enemy I fear.



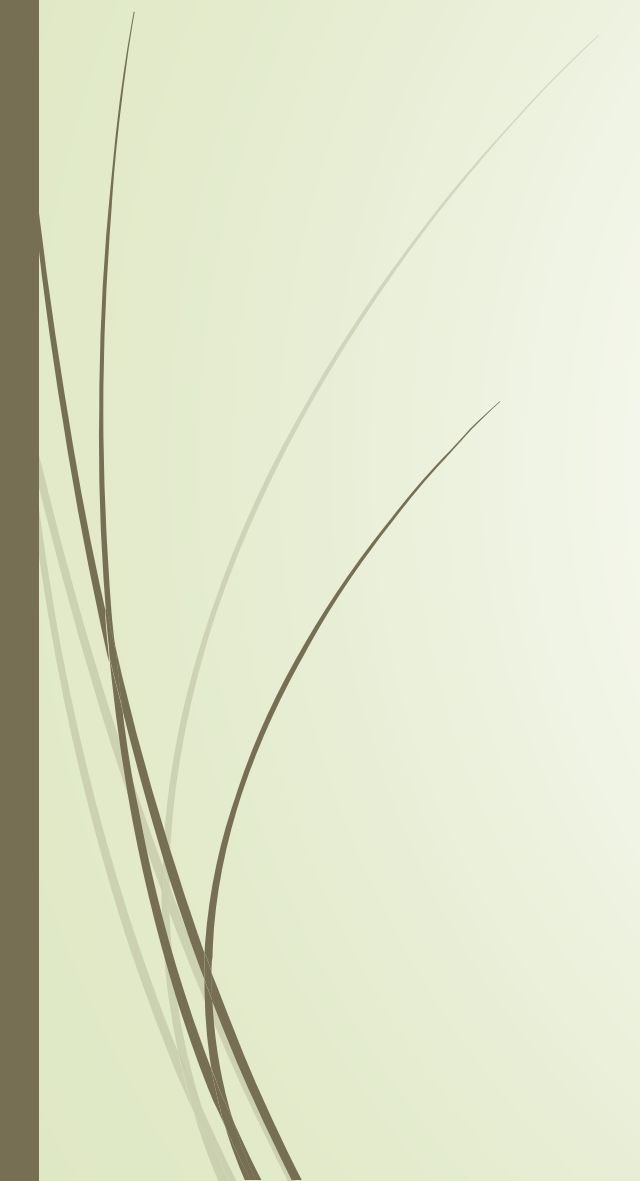
"And now farewell! What thou hast said,
Though it has broken quite my heart,
So that I wish I were dead —
I would before, O Queen, we part,
Freely forgive, for well I know
That grief and fear have made thee wild,
We part as friends, — is it not so?"
And speaking thus he sadly smiled.



"And oh ye sylvan gods that dwell
Among these dim and sombre shades,
Whose voices in the breezes swell
And blend with noises of cascades,
Watch over Sita, whom alone
I leave, and keep her safe from harm,
Till we return unto our own,
I and my brother, arm in arm.




"For though ill omens round us rise
And frighten her dear heart, I feel
That he is safe. Beneath the skies
His equal is not, — and his heel
Shall tread all adversaries down,
Whoever they may chance to be.
Farewell, O Sita! Blessings crown
And peace for ever rest with thee!"



He said, and straight his weapons took
His bow and arrows pointed keen,
Kind, — nay, indulgent, — was his look,
No trace of anger, there was seen,
Only a sorrow dark, that seemed
To deepen his resolve to dare
All dangers. Hoarse the vulture screamed,
As out he strode with dauntless air.

SUMMARY

- ▶ Toru Dutt (1856–1877)—poet, novelist, essayist, translator and polyglot—was an outstanding pioneer in the history of Indian literature. The only work that was published during Toru’s lifetime was *A Sheaf Gleaned in French Fields* (1876). This was a collection of English translations of French poetry. In spite of her untimely death, Toru Dutt remains an exemplary poet, and her works are widely regarded as being among the best of Indian-English writings. In particular, critics have paid much attention to Toru Dutt's lyric focus on the complexity of individual emotions, especially in light of her mixed religious heritage and her encounters with death from a young age. Much critical attention has also been paid to Toru Dutt 's successful combination of European and Indian cultural influences, linking her identity as a cosmopolitan and multicultural figure to her poetic synthesis of English verse forms (such as the ballad) with Indian inspirations and legends.
- ▶ The poem Lakshman is from Dutt's *Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan* (1882). It tells a story from the Hindu epic *Ramayana*, in which the hero Rama is told to procure a golden deer for his wife, Sita. After Rama leaves Sita with his brother, Lakshman, for safekeeping, he finds out that the deer is actually a demon and kills it. The theme is derived from the *Ramayana*. Sita, deeply moved by the beauty of a golden deer roaming about the hermitage, pleads with her husband [Rama] to get it for her. Rama goes in pursuit of the deer in spite of the forebodings expressed by Lakshman who guesses that the golden deer is Maricha in disguise sent by Ravana. After a long pursuit of the deer Rama sends an arrow which fells Maricha. While dying he cries out in Rama's voice for help. Hearing the agonised cry, Sita mistakes it for Rama's voice. Toru Dutt's poem begins at this point. Sita urges Lakshman to rush to help Rama. However, Lakshman is unmoved as he has been instructed by Rama not to leave the hermitage and to give protection to Sita. Moreover, Lakshman knows that Rama is fortified against death and is invincible" (Nair, 109).




■ However, when the demon dies, it calls out for help using Rama's own voice. Though Lakshman knows Rama is invincible and does not worry, Sita panics at the sound of the cry for help and asks Lakshman to go and investigate. So that he can both please Sita and also ensure that she stays put, as ordered by Rama, Lakshman draws a line in the ground that Sita is not to cross while he leaves to search for Rama. While he is absent, however, Sita crosses the line and is abducted by the demon king Ravana.

■ The poem takes this story from The *Ramayana* and opens up the discussion between Sita and Lashkman, expanding it beyond what is present in the epic. Still, much of the core elements of their dialogue are preserved from the epic. First, Sita warns Lakshman to take heed of what are allegedly Rama's cries. When Lakshman tries to counsel Sita otherwise, she accuses him of conspiring to bring Rama down and take her for his own wife. Lakshman is harmed by her words and finally bows to her wishes, drawing a circle with an arrow that she is not to cross while he goes out to assist Rama. Despite the fact that Sita is enraged and has hurt Lakshman's feelings, however, he is calm, only speaking to bless Sita and pray that the deities of the forest will keep her safe when he leaves. The poem ends with a "sorrow dark" on Lakshman's face and a "vulture scream[ing]" as he departs.

■ In terms of its form and rhyme scheme, the poem is written in twenty-two stanzas of eight lines each and closely mirrors a standard ballad, with each stanza consisting of alternating rhymes. Importantly, however, the stanzas of a standard ballad are only four lines, so the doubling of the line count per stanza in "Lakshman" might be meant to reflect the dialogue occurring between Lakshman and Sita. Also important to Dutt's rendition of the legend is her preservation of language that mirrors other translations from the Sanskrit original, such as "succour" and "Videhan Queen" in reference to Sita. This lends Dutt's rendition the authority of an accurate and rigorous account while still allowing her to innovate greatly on the story.

Second, Dutt has Sita taunt Lakshman and his supposed cowardice by means of a new, original metaphor: "But then thy leader stood beside! / Dazzles the cloud when shines the sun, / Reft of his radiance, see it glide / A shapeless mass of vapours dun; / So of thy courage, —or if not, / The matter is far darker dyed, / What makes thee loth to leave this spot? / Is there a motive thou wouldst hide?" Sita here is comparing Lakshman to a cloud that seems to shine only when it borrows the light or radiance of the sun. She suggests that Lakshman's courage is similar, only present when his brother (who is like the sun) is around; otherwise, Sita suggests, Lakshman is cowardly, just as the cloud is "shapeless" and "dun" without the sun's light. This metaphor connects Lakshman to the natural world as well, conveying the message that he himself is also inferior to Rama, who is the master of nature. The later detail of Sita shooting "flames from her eyes" paints Sita also as a goddess or supernatural being that Lakshman must not deny, further isolating Lakshman from the couple of Sita and Rama.

Finally, at the poem's close, Lakshman turns to nature and prays that it will keep Sita safe from harm, in a manner adapted from the original but far more explicit and extensive: "And oh ye sylvan gods that dwell / Among these dim and sombre shades, / Whose voices in the breezes swell / And blend with noises of cascades / Watch over Sita." As a merely loyal servant to the more powerful Rama and Sita, he must entrust nature with the task of protection when he fails. Further, the "hoarse" scream of a vulture serves as an ill omen that foreshadows Sita's eventual abduction by Ravana. Here, too, nature seems to play an important role as it mirrors the affairs of the demigods and legendary figures depicted in the *Ramayana*.



► The poem is thus characteristic of many of Dutt's interests—the relationship of humanity, divinity, and nature; the complexity of family relationships; the experience of loss or bereavement; and the merging of English verse forms and poetic traditions with her own innovations and Indian inspirations. At the same time, its more formal tone and register—as distinct from those of other, more personal poems in the collection such as "The Tree of Life" and "Our Casuarina Tree"—also shows that, in writing this poem, Dutt was intentionally calling back to something other than her own experience, something deeply rooted in tradition and timeless in its telling and retelling over time.

► Where Dutt chooses to embellish the original account, then, is in providing additional descriptions of both the surroundings and Rama, so as to round out the sentiments conveyed by both Lakshman and Sita. First, when Lakshman begins speaking in stanza 4, he quickly begins listing a series of figures that would cower before Rama, adapted from the original, including "the lion and the grisly bear," "sun-staring eagles," "pythons and cobras," "Rakshases, Danavs, demons, [and] ghosts." The rhymes that are set up between these beings and their surroundings reinforces not only their connection to nature, but also Rama's supremacy—his power both to make the world and her children bow before him and his might. Further, the move from natural animals such as lions and bears to supernatural figures such as Raskshases and ghosts emphasizes that Rama is a being who commands not only things of natural significance, but also things of divine import.

THEMES

- Sita's Feminine Anxiety and Lakshman's Dilemma
- Sita's Allegations on helpless Lakshman
- the relationship of humanity, divinity, and nature; the complexity of family relationships; the experience of loss or bereavement; and the merging of English verse forms and poetic traditions with Toru Dutt's innovations and Indian inspirations.
- Faith & helplessness of Laxman
- Laxman's heroic nature & Sita—a common woman



The Death of a Bird

Keki N. Daruwalla



Keki N. Daruwalla

- an Indian poet and short story writer in English.
- He is also a former Indian Police Service officer.
- He was awarded the Sahitya Academy Award, in 1984 for his poetry collection, *The Keeper of the Dead*, by the Sahitya Academy, India's National Academy of Letters. He was awarded Padma Shri, the fourth highest civilian award in India, in 2014.



The Death of a Bird

- TEXT
- **All happening under the overhang of crags,
Fierce bird-mating
Of the monal brown grey birds,
The male shot at
And it falling blood-soaked
From the lead of the barrel
While the other female companion
Shrieked in pain
And ready to give life,
But the evening on the forest tract
Was descending
And they hastened towards
Retreating from the highland
With the pony
Which too succumbed to
A fall
Tottering down.**



The jackals howling frightened
The lady together with
And they reposing in each other,
Confiding in,
Retreating to a safer place,
Firing in doubt,
Finally burning the turf
To warm up
Before reaching the road
And the next morning
At ash grey-dawn
The female bird too seemed
To be giving away
Having made the last shriek.



The author laden quite under
Bloodshed and violence,
After the spill of blood
And the shoot-out,
Gave away before the bad omen
Frightening,
Marauding the self
Making them accursed,
Sinful and guilty
Which but the female partner
Of the author felt it
And finally weighing it all,
He broke the gun in two
To cleanse with..

RATIONALITY VS BEASTLY NATURE



- Even some sadhus living with ferocious animals in caves.
- The role of a hunter, a falconer venturing into the forests, going for a sporting kill



- The bird found fluttering in pain & the female partner Squeaking, crying in pain to give her life.
- The policeman 's fingers always on the trigger & the bayonet ready.



SIN & THE SINNER

- **Man has to pay dearly for perpetrating sins on inoffensive animals and birds.**
- **The victim of the poet's cruelty is a king Monal that was engaged in love-making with his mate.**
- **The sinner and his female companion cannot get away with the sin**
- **glazed eyes and throbbing heart of the dying Monal fill the poet with terror and foreboding.**

Themes

- Prosaic & broken rather than verse.
- The gun speaks the language of poetry- blood shed , pain , etc.
- Aggravating the element of woe & tragedy rather than consoling.
- Life- Hitting hard.





SUMMARY

- **Keki N. Daruwalla** (born 1937) is an Indian poet and short story writer in English. He is also a former Indian Police Service officer. He was awarded the Sahitya Academy Award, in 1984 for his poetry collection, *The Keeper of the Dead*, by the Sahitya Academy, India's National Academy of Letters. He was awarded Padma Shri, the fourth highest civilian award in India, in 2014.
- Daruwalla elaborates the theme of sin in his poem *The Death of a Bird*. The poem has the same motif as Dostoevsky's novel *Crime and Punishment* Man has to pay dearly for perpetrating sins on inoffensive animals and birds. The victim of the poet's cruelty is a king Monal that was engaged in love-making with his mate. The sinner and his female companion cannot get away with the sin. "Why did our footsteps drag?"

Depressed a bit we took the road
walking like ciphers disinterred
from some forgotten code

The consciousness of sin begets weird feelings and sensations. The terror that the sinner experiences is more-than-life-size. The glazed eyes and throbbing heart of the dying Monal fill the poet with terror and foreboding. Every incident after the perpetration of the sin however trivial has a nightmare horror. The pony's cry as it fell into a gorge drowns even the roar of the river. The sinners are even incapable of enjoying love-making!



- The world depicted by Daruwalla is not a pleasing one. It is a sombre world where man is at the mercy of relentless elements. His poetry provides a unique experience for readers of Indian poetry in English. Daruwalla is indeed a star that dwells apart in the firmament of Indo-Anglian poetry.
- While reading the poetry of Keki N. Daruwalla one is bound to have the feeling that he is being transported to a bizarre world. No other Indo-English poet delves so deep into the mysterious inner world of the human psyche as does Daruwalla. Daruwalla writes with a vision, and the vision follows him like a shadow. While reading his poetry, the reader will have occasion to remember several poets. His attitude towards nature will remind one of Tennyson. His morbid pre-occupation with death will remind one of Emily Dickinson. His supernaturalism will remind the reader of Coleridge. His poetry as a heap of broken images will remind us of the poetic technique of T.S. Eliot.



INDIAN WRITING IN ENGLISH

**Where the Mind is
Without Fear**


Rabindranath Tagore



ABOUT TAGORE

- Rabindranath Tagore [1861-1941] was considered the greatest writer in modern Indian literature. A Bengali poet, novelist, educator, Nobel Laureate for Literature [1913]. Tagore was awarded a knighthood in 1915, but he surrendered it in 1919 in protest against the Massacre at Amritsar, where British troops killed around 400 Indian demonstrators.

Tagore gained a reputation in the West as a mystic originally and that has perhaps mislead many Western readers to ignore his role as a reformer and critic of colonialism.

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- He was a polymath who wrote on various subjects and reshaped Bengali Literature. Translations of his works were published diversely. Tagore's writings were highly imagistic, deeply religious and imbued with his love of nature and his homeland. He was the first non-European to win the Nobel Prize in Literature, in 1913. His compositions were chosen by two nations as national anthems: India's *Jana Gana Mana* and Bangladesh's *Amar Shonar Bangal*. He is the author of the famous work *Gitanjali* which was written in Bengali.




Where the Mind is Without Fear

- Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high
Where knowledge is free
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments
By narrow domestic walls
Where words come out from the depth of truth
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way
Into the dreary desert sand of dead habit
Where the mind is led forward by thee
Into ever-widening thought and action
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country
awake.

Line 1-2

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high

- Poet prays to the Almighty
- free from any fear of oppression or forced compulsion
- everyone in his country has his head held high in dignity
- every person should be fearless and should have a sense of self dignity.
- **Where knowledge is free**
- poet dreams of a nation
- where knowledge would be free
- everybody should be allowed to acquire knowledge
- the children should learn freely from the nature and the world around them

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- **Line 3-4**
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments
By narrow domestic walls;
the unity of not only of his countrymen but also of the entire world
 - no division among people based on their caste, creed, color, religion or other baseless superstitions
 - prejudices and superstitions should not divide the people in groups and break their unity.
 - **Line 5-6**
 - **Where words come out from the depth of truth;**
 - people are truthful.
 - should not be superficial and words should come out from the depth of their hearts.
 - **Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;**
 - everyone to work hard to reach their goal, and in the long run to reach perfection
 - People should not be lazy and ignoring their work.

- **Line 7-8**

**Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way
Into the dreary desert sand of dead habits;**

the poet compares 'reason' or logical thinking to a "clear stream" and in the next line compares 'dead habits' or superstitious beliefs to a 'dreary desert'.

- the stream of reason not to lose its way into the desert of prejudices
- people's thought should be monitored by rational thinking, not by superstition; logic should rule over old baseless beliefs.

- **Line 9-11**

- **Where the mind is led forward by thee
Into ever-widening thought and action;**

- his countrymen to be progressive and broad-minded.

- their minds are "led forward" to "ever-widening thought and action" by the Almighty.



- **Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake**

the poet addresses the God as 'Father'. He asks him to awaken his country into such a 'heaven of freedom' where the above conditions meet.


- Poet's Message
- If all the people of a nation are not wise enough to lead a happy and peaceful life free from all evils, they cannot enjoy their freedom well
- only political freedom is not so important unless you are fearless, self dignified, knowledgeable, truthful, hard-working and broad-minded enough to enjoy it fully.

Questions

- i) To whom is the poet speaking to ? ...
- ii) Which narrow walls is the poet talking about? ...
- iii) What does the speaker mean by 'where tireless striving stretches its arm towards perfection'? ...
- iv) What kind of freedom does the poet desire for his country?

SUMMARY

- Rabindranath Tagore (7 May, 1861 – 7 August, 1941) was born in Kolkata. He was a polymath who wrote on various subjects and reshaped Bengali Literature. Translations of his works were published diversely. Tagore's writings were highly imagistic, deeply religious and imbued with his love of nature and his homeland. He was the first non-European to win the Nobel Prize in Literature, in 1913. His compositions were chosen by two nations as national anthems: India's *Jana Gana Mana* and Bangladesh's *Amar Shonar Bangal*. He is the author of the famous work *Gitanjali* which was written in Bengali.
- 'Where the Mind is Without Fear' was included in the volume called *Naibedyā*. The poem is a prayer to God to protect the nation from evil effects. The poem was written by Tagore during the time when India was under the British Rule and people were eagerly waiting to get their freedom. It is a prayer to the Almighty for a nation free from any kind of manipulative or corrupt powers. This poem is a reflection of the poet's good and ideal nature.
- He has utmost faith in God. He prays to God with all his heart that he should guide the countrymen to work hard, speak the truth, be forward and logical in approach. Rabindranath Tagore aspires to see his country and people in peace and prosper. He loves his country a lot and wishes for its welfare. In this poem, the poet is praying to God to grant his country such freedom of thoughts and expressions, freedom from the shackles of superstitions and bondage of social evils which leads towards perfection. The poet prays to God saying that his country should be free from the fear of oppression and each person should be able to hold his head high. There should be an atmosphere of fearlessness. The country should be a place where knowledge is available to everyone equally and free of cost without any discrimination on the basis of caste, gender or religion.

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- He wishes for a country which is not 'broken up into fragments' by prejudices and superstitions and where people stand united. He wants a nation where people are truthful and words come out from the depth of their hearts. He wishes for a nation where everyone is free to toil and work hard for anything they desire for their own or for the good of the nation. Everyone is encouraged to strive tirelessly till they attain full satisfaction in reaching their goals and perfection.
 - The poet prays to God that Indians should be logical and progressive in thoughts and actions. He wants the power of reason to dominate the minds of his countrymen. He does not want the 'stream of reason' to be lost among outdated customs and traditions. It should be a nation where blind superstitious habits of thought and action have not put out the light of reason. Where people's mind should not dwell in the mistakes of the past nor be possessed by it. On the other hand, they should be led by the power of reasoning to be focussed on the future by applying logical thought and action.
 - He wants the country to be led forward by God into the freedom of broadened attitude and mindset. He requests 'The Father' to awaken his country into such a 'heaven of freedom'. It is only by the universality of outlook and an abiding passion for the realisation of great human ideals that India will achieve her true freedom. This way alone will she realise her destiny.



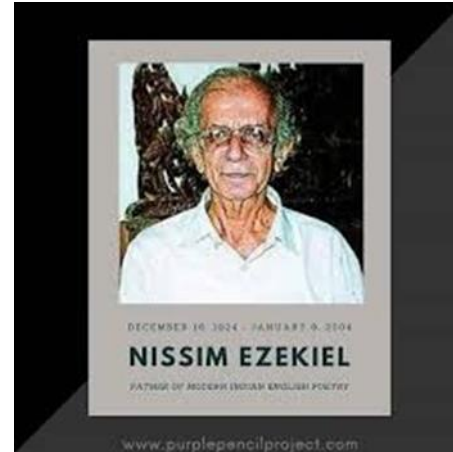


NISSIM EZEKIEL

**--Ezekiel was born in
Bombay in 1924**

**--his roots were in a
non-Indian, Jewish
Parsi religion and
culture, he grew to be
an Indian both in his
beliefs and world-view**

**--He was a Professor of
English in Bombay
University**





Poet, Lover, Birdwatcher

- **To force the pace and never to be still
Is not the way of those who study birds
Or women. The best poets wait for words.
The hunt is not an exercise of will
But patient love relaxing on a hill
To note the movement of a timid wing;
Until the one who knows that she is loved
No longer waits but risks surrendering -
In this the poet finds his moral proved
Who never spoke before his spirit moved.**

**The slow movement seems, somehow, to say much more.
To watch the rarer birds, you have to go
Along deserted lanes and where the rivers flow
In silence near the source, or by a shore
Remote and thorny like the heart's dark floor.
And there the women slowly turn around,
Not only flesh and bone but myths of light
With darkness at the core, and sense is found
But poets lost in crooked, restless flight,
The deaf can hear, the blind recover sight.**



the poet (and his poem), lover (and his woman),
and birdwatcher (and his birds)

- **describes the process of writing poetry and compares it to being a lover or a birdwatcher**
- **"The best poets wait for words" (3).**
- **this waiting should not be strenuous and instead should be as peaceful as "patient love relaxing on a hill" (5).**
- **From this relaxation, the poet/lover/birdwatcher can notice details, like a bird's wing or the moment a woman gives in to love.**



- "slow movement" (11)
- to find the rarer birds, the speaker advises, one must go off the beaten path toward areas that are "remote and thorny" (15)
- the bird or woman one was chasing will "slowly turn around" (16).
- Poetic creativity is discovered in this place, a power so transformative that because of it, "the deaf can hear, the blind recover sight" (20).



THEMES

- the theme of self-examination
- bird in the poem is symbolic for the quest for self-knowledge
- the female image can be read as representing a fertile creative impulse
- displays Ezekiel's views on poet's problems
- but patient waiting is itself strategy, a kind of planned action to reach the goal.
- The hunt is search for birds or the desire to win a women's heart.
- seriousness of the content is reflected in a strict meter and rhyme scheme.
- The capitalizations at the beginning of each line have returned.
- is broken up into two stanzas with two lines each, which visually signals symmetry and perfection for the reader.
- All of these formal elements slow the reader down and force her to digest that which she is reading and in turn take it more seriously.



SUMMARY

- **Nissim Ezekiel** who is considered the foremost among the modern Indian poets writing in English is, like Ramanujan and Parthasarathy, an academic poet. He was a Professor of English in Bombay University and more importantly, he is as much an intellectual and a philosopher as a poet. His birth and background were such that while his roots were in a non-Indian, Jewish Parsi religion and culture, he grew to be an Indian both in his beliefs and world-view and developed into a personality that was too complex for easy analysis.
- **Ezekiel was born in Bombay in 1924.** After his early schooling he joined Wilson College, Bombay and later went to Birkbeck College London. Though he went to England to study philosophy under C.E.M. Joad, he showed no less an interest in the theatre and the visual arts as also in poetry and his career as a clerk in the High Commissioner's office in London. Ezekiel has held many important positions besides that of a professor at Bombay. He was the Editor of Quest, Imprint and the poetry page of The Illustrated Weekly of India and he has been a visiting professor at several universities both in India and in the U.S. and Australia. He was also a Director of a theatre Unit in Bombay.
- Ezekiel's first volume of poems appeared under the title **A Time to Change** (1952) and the other volumes which followed were **Sixty Poems** (1953), **The Third** (1959), **The Unfinished Man** (1960), **The Exact Man** (1965) and **Hymns in Darkness** (1976). While the poems in these volumes focus on a variety of themes such as **love, sex, death, loneliness and prayer**, they bear testimony to the fact that Ezekiel showed a consistent preoccupation with the banality as well as the complexity of present day civilization as he perceived it in the Indian scene.



- In "Poet, Lover, Birdwatcher," the speaker describes the process of writing poetry and compares it to being a lover or a birdwatcher. The speaker notes that "to force the pace and never to be still" will not get one very far if one wants to "study birds / or women" (lines 1-3). The speaker then reveals the point of these comparisons: "The best poets wait for words" (3). The speaker notes that this waiting should not be strenuous and instead should be as peaceful as "patient love relaxing on a hill" (5). From this relaxation, the poet/lover/birdwatcher can notice details, like a bird's wing or the moment a woman gives in to love.

- The poem displays Ezekiel's views on poet's problems. Poet, Lover, Birdwatcher is one of the better known poems of Ezekiel and has received considerable critical attention. The message of them poem is clear, 'The best poets wait for words': the best poets began to write poetry only when they are truly inspired. It epitomizes the poet's search for a poetics which would help him redeem himself in his eyes and in the eyes of god. Parallelism is drawn between the poet, the lover and the birdwatcher. All the three have to wait patiently in their respective pursuits, indeed their waiting is a sort of strategy. Ezekiel attempts to define the poem in terms of a lover and the birdwatcher. There is a close resemblance among them in search for love, bird and word. All the three became one in spirit, and Ezekiel expresses this in imagery noted for its precision and decorum:

- The hunts is not an exercise of will
- But patient love relaxing on a hill
- To note the movement of a timid wing...

- There is no action, no exercise of will in the three cases, but patient waiting is itself strategy, a kind of planned action to reach the goal. The hunt is search for birds or the desire to win a women's heart. Patient love relaxing on hill is to assume an attitude of patience and relaxation while watching birds or women. A timid wing is a transferred epithet where the idea of a bird being timid is suggested. Until the one who knows that she is loved is for the man to wait for the woman to respond to his love out of her own accord, and should not force him upon her. In this poem poet finds his moral proved, who never spoke before his spirit moved.



- The first section opens with a reference to 'pace' which is taken up in the second section by slow movement. The lines weave in and out of the three fields and emerge as single morals learnt. The first stanza refers to physical love and suggests how to win women. Women are treated as birds of prey. Making love is like the experience of hunting. Right weapons are to be chosen like appropriate words used by the poet. The lover manipulates the situation in such a manner that the women cannot resist but surrender at the cost of being blamed.
- The second stanza stresses the fact that slow movement is good. One has to go to remote place just as one has to discover love in a remote place like the heart's dark floor. It is there, that women look something more than their body, and that they appear like myths of light. And the poet, in zigzag movements, yet with a sense of musical gladness, manages to combine sense and sound.
- At the end of his wait, the poetic word appears in the concrete and sensuous form of a woman, who knows that she is loved and who surrenders to her lover at once. In this process, poetry and love, word and woman become intertwined. But this slow movement of love and poetry which shows no irritable haste to arrive at meaning does not come by easily. In order to possess the vision of the rarer birds of his psyche, the poet has to go through the deserted lanes of his solitary, private life; he has to walk along the primal rivers of his consciousness in silence, or travel to a far off shore which is like the heart's dark floor. The poet, then, gloats on the slow curving movements of the women, both for the sake of their sensuousness and the insight they bring. Poetic creativity is discovered in this place, a power so transformative that because of it, "the deaf can hear, the blind recover sight" (20).
- All three are hunters, we are told: ironically none are going to devour what they succeed to hunt. The poem conducts a lesson through comparisons between the three : poets, lover and birdwatcher. Poet is placed first in the title and in the poem he comes last. The differentiated placement is suggestive of who is learning and who becomes a lesson. Lover and birdwatcher are illustrative cases for the poet to learn the craft of poetry. The last two lines of both the sections indicate that the moral to be learnt is for the poet. The poem is well-structured poem in two regular stanzas having the rhyme pattern a b b a a c d c d d in each of them. It has a casual, conversational opening with a direct address to the poets, urging them to patiently wait for words as does a birdwatcher for birds and a lover for his ladylove.
- The idea of labour and hard-work is implied here with regard to a bird watcher in search of rare birds and to a poet in search of the right words. 'And there the women slowly turn around, not only flesh and bone but myths of light': Only after undergoing an arduous journey may the lover get some response from the woman. The woman then becomes for him not just a being of flesh and blood, but appears as a radiant spirit which is not so much real, but mythical and imaginary. She is no longer a mere physical presence. The poet has thus glorified love as well as the woman who eventually responds to a man's love.