

ONE POEM, MULTIPLE CLAIMS

By U Atreya Sarma

DTP operator:

“Oh, how well I’ve formatted the poem!
It has been finally published!
And they’ve acknowledged my service.”

Editor:

“How nice is the poem
With my editing touch!
My name has added to its credibility.”

Printer:

“How neatly I’ve printed it!
No smudges, no wrinkles!
Especially the printer’s name and address –
Oh, what an imprint!”

Paid critic:

“Oh, what a masterpiece, my Foreword!
A royal entrance! You needn’t go further!”

Patron:

“Ah, how attractive my advertisement!
It would boost the sales of the book,
(I mean the sales of my wares).”

Reader:

“Where’s the leisure
To read this free copy and its type of bizarre stuff!”

“Oh, how lovely my poem?”

I repeat my self-pat

As I read and re-read it a number of times –

From the paper wrapping the savoury

That I nibble in no mean measure.

“Hey, the delight is not from your poem

It is from the sapidity of my identity”

Wisecracked my favourite savoury... piquantly.

A SOPHIST'S POETIC 'APPRECIATION'

“Friend, you're a great poet, none like you;

I'm your admirer great, and I love your poesy.”

“Yes, thank you a zillion for your appreciation

If non-reading and non-response is appreciation”

“Your poems are so hypnotising

That my eyes at once dreamily close;

And my mind's eye scans your creation.

And on the unseen page of my heart

With my inkless pen I chisel my praise

With a silent approbation and elation.

“Go on composing with all your might;

May you reach the greatest poetic height!

I keep from applauding you in the public

Lest the glance of evil eyes should unsettle you.”

“But are you not flooding other poets

With your generous praise nonstop every day

Just on the grounds of personal equations?
Isn't art first and the artist next?"

"Yes, my equation with others is personal;
Poetry and forum are my aid and medium
To achieve a mutual private equilibrium.

"But with you, the relationship is too divine
You're too sacred for any personal touch
That's why I've singled you out
For this singular treatment."

Bio

U Atreya Sarma is Chief Editor of the *Muse India* e-journal (www.museindia.com), and has 18 years of experience as a freelance editor.

His output comprises more than 800 writings (poems, articles, editorials, reviews, forewords, translations) mostly in English and a sprinkling in Telugu. His work has appeared in various print/online media and anthologies. He has also brought out four Telugu literary features in *Muse India*.

His maiden collection of poetry is *Sunny Rain-n-Snow* (2016) has been well-acclaimed.

He has edited eight books: *Celebrating Creativity: HLF 2010* (An anthology of poems/ short stories by 76 writers); *Souvenir: HLF 2010*; *Lung Care and Long Life* (2012, by Dr Shyam Sunder Raj); *Memoirs & Musings of an IAS Officer* (2013, by KV Natarajan); *Turquoise Tulips* (2015, Collection of short stories the USA-based Dr Ashok Patwari); *Prolegomena and Transformative Articles on Literary Translation* (2015, by Dr VVB Rama Rao); *Femininity: Poetic Endeavours* (2016, by Dr VVB Rama Rao); and a revised fictional autobiography by a Sahitya Akademi Awardee (awaiting publication).

He has two books of translation to his credit: *Salt of the Earth* (2013) (16 Telugu short stories by Dr Mallemala Venugopala Reddy); and *Thousand Hoods* (2015) (Chapters 9 to 14) (Jnan Pith laureate Viswanatha Satyanarayana's Telugu mega novel *Veyipadagalu*).

The bilingual book he collaborated on is *Marapuraani Maanikyaalu* (2010) (for which he provided profiles in English of 132 ‘Unforgettable Gems’ – modern Telugu stalwarts – with wordy & pictorial sketches in Telugu by BNIM, a noted writer & artist).

Atreya Sarma has been featuring and encouraging poets from across the country through a weekly column ‘Wordsmith’ in *The Hans India*, a Hyderabad based English daily since 2013. He is also an official critic with *Metverse Muse*, an international print journal of metrical poetry published from Visakhapatnam.

Atreya Sarma holds an MA (English Litt) and a PG Dip (Mass Communications & Telugu Translation Techniques), backed by a basic degree each in sciences and arts, and a banking qualification with mid-level managerial experience in SBI. He lives between Hyderabad and Bengaluru.

Email: atreyasarma@gmail.com