

***THE BIZARRE LOVE AND OTHER POEMS***

**By U Atreya Sarma**

They say, love is unconditional  
Unconditional in seeking?  
Or unconditional in giving?  
They say love is platonic  
But then you won't have it with anyone  
But one of your prejudicial choice only  
They say, love begets love  
So when I love you,  
Does it necessarily follow  
That you too love me?

***CHILDREN TEACHING THEIR PARENTS***

Bearing and blessing,  
Parents love to teach their young children  
Whose receptivity is, naturally, sharp and rising.  
A touch of guiding tradition.  
  
Booing and hissing,  
Grown-ups insist on teaching their senile parents  
Whose faculties are, naturally, dull and declining.  
A dash of grinding modernity.  
  
Didn't Wordsworth say,  
'The child is the father of the man'?

***MY MIND'S PRIMEVAL ART***

I begin to describe a thing  
As it shows up concrete before my eyes  
Or hovers in my mind's eye.  
  
But the drawing comes out altogether different;  
No resemblance to what's been seen or visualised!  
  
If we just copy a thing, where's the greatness of art?  
A photograph would then better do.  
Anyway, who cares for a clone when they've the original?  
  
My drawing is unintelligible, they accuse.

If everything is plain and clear, why the rigours of art?  
Can anyone precisely read what goes on in others' minds?  
If that be the case, every would-be criminal can be seen through,  
And the crime can be pre-empted well in advance.

My picture reflects the richness, the variety  
The complexity of my limitless mind.

To comprehend my creation  
And to appreciate and admire it  
Requires a mind  
That can delve deep into my own  
And understand it, ever since it was born.

I don't know – and nobody knows either –  
When my mind came into being.

So isn't my art – the offspring of my ancient mind –  
As primeval?  
And isn't it as great as any other great modern art?

### **Bio**

Interested in literature, U Atreya Sarma is into writing poetry, freelance editing, book-reviewing and translating. His poems and writings (articles, editorials, reviews, forewords, translations) mostly in English and a sprinkling in Telugu – has appeared in various print/online media and anthologies. A freelance editor with 18 years of experience, he is Chief Editor of Muse India e-journal ([www.museindia.com](http://www.museindia.com)) since November 2016, having joined its team since November 2009; he was Editor (Fiction) up to Mar-Apr 2017 issue; he handed its News & Events column also up to Sep 2017; and continues to handle Reviews and Telugu Literature sections. His past editorship includes Bharatiya Pragna monthly and Cyberhood weekly. He is also the official critic of Metverse Muse, an international journal of metrical poetry from Visakhapatnam.

As Contributing Editor (Telugu Literature), he has so far presented four exhaustive features on Telugu Literature in Muse India.

He composed in English the profiles of 132 modern Telugu Stalwarts for the bilingual book Marapuraani Maanikyaalu (2010) (with wordy & pictorial sketches in Telugu by BNIM, a noted writer & artist).

Atreya Sarma 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 by Dr Shyam Sunder Raj (2012); Memoirs & Musings of an IAS Officer by KV Natarajan, IAS (Retd) (Menaka Prakashan, 2013); Turquoise Tulips(a collection of short stories) by the USA-based Dr Ashok Patwari (Authors Press 2015); Prolegomena and Transformative Articles on Literary

Translation by Dr VVB Rama Rao (Authors Press, 2015); Femininity: Poetic Endeavours (Authors Press, 2016); and another book.

Sarma's translation of 16 Telugu short stories by a senior and prominent writer Dr Mallemla Venugopala Reddy under the title Salt of the Earth (2013) has been acclaimed by reviewers. As a panellist, he has translated into English 6 out of 36 chapters of Jnan Pith awardee Viswanatha Satyanarayana's Telugu mega novel Veyipadagalu under the title Thousand Hoods, under the aegis of the Hyderabad based Viswanatha Sahitee Peetham (2015). Apart from this, he has translated many individual poems, short stories and articles from Telugu into English.

Atreya's first collection of English poems, Sunny Rain-n-Snow, came out in May 2016.

Atreya Sarma has been, since 2013, featuring and encouraging poets through his weekly column 'Wordsmith' in The Hans India, a Hyderabad based English daily circulated in AP & Telangana states.

He has also guest-edited a Feature 'India @ 70' for the Aug 2017 issue of Setu magazine (<http://www.segumag.com/p/setu-home.html>).

He holds an MA (English Litt), a PG Dip (Mass Communications & Telugu Translation Techniques), a BA (English Litt, Sanskrit Litt, History) and BSc (Botany, Zoology, Chemistry), and CAIIB (Part I) with mid-level managerial experience in SBI.

He is a recipient of the "Setu Award for Excellence 2017" conferred by the Pittsburgh based Setu, a monthly bilingual online journal.

While his home base is Hyderabad, Atreya Sarma lives between Hyderabad and Bengaluru.

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