Stone-Masons, My Father, And Me

Namdeo Dhasal

NAMDEO DHASAL (b. 1949 probably) a noted Marathi poet, grew up in

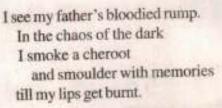
Mumbai slums. He organised 'Dalit Panthers' to fight the oppression of the Dalits. His collections of poems include Golpitha and Gandubegicha. He has also been honoured with Padma Shree. His present poem 'Stone-Masons, My Father, And Me', translated from Marathi by Vinay Dharwadker, very succinctly depicts a stone mason's life - his miseries and the dexterity with which he gives shapes to stones.



Stone-Masons, My Father, And Me

Stone-masons give stones dreams to dream;
I set a match to fireworks.
They say one mustn't step into
One's father's life:
I do; I scratch
his elbows,
his armpits.

Stone-masons give stones flowers;
I play horns and trumpet.
I overtake the Parsi who stands turned to stone
by the bodies of four women bent like bows.



Stone-masons inseminate stones;
I count exhausted horses.
I harness myself to a cart;
I handle
my father's corpse;
I burn.

Stone-masons mix blood with stones;
I carry a loud of stones,
stone-masons build
a stone house.
I break heads with stones.

LET'S THINK AND DO

- How is the life of stone-masons depicted in the poem?
 Describe in your own words.
- 2. What is the attitude of the speaker to his work? Why did he become a stone-mason?
- Talk to the stone-masons in your locality and do a project work on them.



SHOW:

mon