

I am The Daughter Of The Land Of Dravida

Amrita Pritam

*Amrita Pritam (b. 1919), Punjabi poet and fiction writer, has published 18 volumes of her poems including **Kagaz te Kanvas**. She has also authored 24 novels including **Yaatri** and 15 collections of short stories. Her autobiography **Rasidi Ticket** is a widely read book. On various occasions she has been honoured with several awards including Padma Shree, Sahitya Akedemy (1956) and Jnanpith awards. The poem 'I am The Daughter Of The Land of Dravida', translated from Punjabi by the poet herself, is about the different roles of women in different situations and time.*



I am The Daughter Of The Land Of Dravida

I am Kama- kanya, the daughter of love.
I am Kal -kanya, the daughter of death.
Wearing this body, I have come.
I am the daughter of the land of Dravida.

One by one, I passed
Through each of the four ages
And was turned into a mere subject
I am the daughter of the land of Dravida.

Temple, palace, brothel, slum
The allure of the body's clay
The body resides in all of these.
I am the daughter of the land of Dravida.

The red veil of honour
the black veil, of disgrace
Both colours have fluttered in the air
This was my body's earthly stage
Where I wore both colours
And then discarded them
I have merged myself in the depths of
My own being.
I am the daughter of the land of Dravida.

LET'S THINK AND DO

1. Why does the speaker call herself both Kama-Kanya and Kal-Kanya?
2. Comment on the significance of the title? Why does each stanza end with this?
3. Describe the condition of woman in your society.

