

Echoes of the Reminiscence

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Women has been an inspirational muse in the beautiful verses of the poets. Robert Burns symbolised his beloved as a Red Rose in his poem "A Red, Red Rose", for Robert Frost it's his "Silken Tent" holding the innumerable delicate ties of different relations. She is the beautiful Duchess in Robert Browning "My Last Duchess" whose generous nature and innocence has made her an inspirational muse.

Earlier women were deprived of the freedom to write and publish their works. Gender discrimination has hampered their rights, as illustrated by Virginia Woolf in the illustration of Judith Shakespeare from "A Room of One's Own", being as talented as her brother William Shakespeare, has perished without a sign deprived of the opportunities, but in the contemporary era women has made a distinct place in the field of Literature. Women has come up not only in expressing their feelings and emotions in their writing's but they also hold a mirror to life by depicting the realities and happenings.

Love is a beautiful emotion as expressed by several poets in their unforgettable verses. "Love is an irresistible desire to be irresistibly desired" wrote Robert Frost, William Shakespeare in his poem "Let Me Not to The Marriage of True Minds" brings out the strong force in love. Elizabeth Barret Browning the famous Victorian poet has expressed her fond love for her husband Robert Browning in the poem "How do I Love Thee Let Me Count the Ways" in sonnet 43. Robert Browning fell in love with her and wanted to marry her but she being a cripple, refused his proposal. He courted her for a long -time writing poems for her and trying to pursue her. He wrote the poems "One Word More" and "The Last Ride Together" for her as a way of his persuasion. Finally, she accepted and they eloped and got married. She wrote poems dedicating them for her husband Robert Browning. He called her "My Little Portuguese" therefore titled the volume of poems as "Sonnets from the Portuguese" these poems reflect the unconditional love and devotion for her husband. She emphasises that it is difficult to measure Love or any other emotion that we have for others but love is a need, a habit that comes with us in everyday's and everyway. She compares her love to childhood innocence and saintly love pure and unconditional. This poem begins on a question How do I love thee let me count the ways? She describes all the ways of loving her husband. Her love is multifaceted, as she describes her innumerable ways of loving him. She measures it in three-dimensional terms length, breath and height.

I Love thee to the depth and breadth and height

My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight

For the ends of being an ideal grace.

She says if she can she will love him even after.

Maya Angelou wrote on the theme of submissive role of women in the society in her poem “I know why the caged bird sings” expressing the desire of woman to come out of the imposed limitations and sing as a free bird. Her poem “Phenomenal woman” glorifies women as a phenomenal being. It has the themes of womanhood, identity, pride and self- acceptance. In one poem she brings out the adverse circumstances that compel woman to be in limitations and in the other she shows that women herself can come out of the cage through her self-confidence.

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings, is the first of seven autobiographical works by American writer Maya Angelou, published in 1969. The predominant theme of the poem is freedom. The first line depicts this by introducing "the free bird."singing happily whereas the caged Bird longs for freedom from imprisonment. A caged bird in captivity "sings of freedom."

A free bird claims the sky to be its domain, it flies soaring the sky with happiness on its complete liberty. Contrary to this the caged bird is longing for the things that it is deprived of, it sings for freedom and the echoes of its painful survival are heard in the distance, its wings are clipped and its feet is tied as if it is standing on the grave of its dream as deprived of freedom, it can't fulfil its dreams to rise in the sky.

But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams

His shadow shouts on a nightmare scream

His wings are clipped and his feet are tied

So, he opens his throat to sing

“Phenomenal Women” is a poem by Maya Angelou, first published in 1978. The poem celebrates womanhood, quest of self-identity, pride, self-love, and self-acceptance. It's a didactic poem giving the message that empowerment comes from within, from your own self. This poem emphasises that beauty is not a condition to be a phenomenal woman; it rejects the expected role of women in the patriarchal society and focuses on an alternative perspective of the definition of real beauty. It focuses on the Self- confidence and comfort of being a person you are, the speaker insists are the markers of true beauty. The line, “I'm a woman” propagates her self-confidence in being a woman. She celebrates not only her physical beauty but also her inner glow.

Pretty women wonder where my secret lies.

I'm not cute or built to suit a fashion model's size

But when I start to tell them,

They think I'm telling lies.

I say,

It's in the reach of my arms,

The span of my hips,

The stride of my step,

The curl of my lips.

I'm a woman

Phenomenally.

Phenomenal woman,

That's me.

She explains that “pretty women” often look at her and wonder what makes her so attractive and alluring. The speaker says she is unlike these conventionally-beautiful women; she is not “cute” and does not possess a model’s figure. But she has a very powerful presence.

However, she claims that when she tries to explain her allure to these women, they never believe her. The speaker insinuates that they may be incapable of believing that a woman who does not fit conventional standards of beauty can be beautiful at all. The speaker concludes the stanza with a refrain about being a “phenomenal woman.” She proclaims with pride that she is not merely a lovely woman, but an exceptional one. The speaker proceeds to describe her effect on men. She explains how she draws their attention whenever she walks into a room. Each time she walks before them calmly and confidently, they either stand up at her arrival or melt from their desire for her. They try to captivate her attention.

The stanza concludes with the refrain of being a phenomenal woman, once again reaffirming the speaker’s confidence and justifying other people’s reactions when they notice her.

However, she takes her analysis to another level when she suggests, that she possesses another kind of beauty altogether. She has a mysterious inner beauty that men cannot see or understand even when she tries to show them. They are blind to what makes a woman beautiful from within, as they only judge her based on her physical looks.

The Literature written by women writers depicts the concealed facts of life through women's perspective. We, women are phenomenal in different ways, but this beauty is visible only to the eyes of the beholder.

Reference

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