

“Being a Tree in Love,” “प्रेम मेंपेड़ होना” Jacinta Kerketta – A Review

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Abstract:

The transient nature of existence raises a profound question: why persist in effort and aspiration when the inevitability of loss is certain? This perhaps constitutes the enigmatic and poignant paradox of life. Though fully cognizant of impermanence, we nonetheless engage in affection, pursue ambitions, and endure adversity. The act of striving, arguably, validates our being; we may prioritise the process of the journey over its ultimate conclusion. Moreover, the fear of eventual cessation does not compel us to cease living, for the inherent significance of life resides in the very endeavour of striving.

Within the context of affection, one can sometimes assume the state of a tree—stationary, awaiting, our roots deepening, our canopy expanding—yet the recipient of our provision of shade may remain entirely unaware. The predicament of this metaphorical tree is equally peculiar: we are immobilised, incapable of voicing grievance, merely observing or internally experiencing the passage of seasons. True aspiration, perhaps, mirrors this arboreal state: its foundations are firmly established, yet its branches yield to the air's currents, oscillating between optimism and resignation. There is a specific dignity in embodying the tree, for it maintains its position steadfastly, irrespective of whether an individual seeks solace in its shadow or whether anyone ultimately returns.

Will this anticipation find its resolution, or will it merely persist like an interminable season?

The essence of genuine affection is to maintain its constancy, irrespective of the numerous changing seasons it endures. It has accepted the destiny of dispersal in autumn, efflorescence in the rain, and a yearning for shelter in the sun; a profound beauty is intrinsic to this state... However, does a query not surface in some recess of the heart—will a season ever arrive when this love transitions into a spring, blooming as a flower, rather than remaining a tree?

Indeed, a connection that dispels all ambiguities, that culminates this period of waiting, that separates one from the mundane world and simply encompasses one within itself... this quest constitutes perhaps the deepest foundation of the edifice of love.

"Being a Tree in Love" "प्रेम मेपेड़ होना" is a poetic compilation by Jacinta Kerketta, richly imbued with themes of affection, which endeavours to conceptualise love by correlating it with permanence, forbearance, and the constituents of nature. This volume portrays love as a state of anticipation, the profundity of roots, and the capacity to furnish succour, wherein love becomes focused not merely on acquisition, but on bestowal (the complete relinquishing of oneself). Yet, the critical question arises—is love restricted to this scope? Does affection solely comprise stability and tolerance, or does it also encompass ardour, volatility, struggle, and mutability? This critique attempts to scrutinise Jacinta's poetic assemblage through this balanced perspective. Jacinta's lexicon and methodology are unpretentious, empathetic, and lyrical, which constitute the principal strength of her literary output. Her approach possesses a distinct rhythm and emotional resonance, presenting love not merely as a theoretical construct but as a lived reality.

The author pens the following:

"Being a tree in love...

Gathering the sunlight in its roots,

Giving shelter to birds in its branches,

Wiping someone's tears with its leaves."

Such articulation elevates love beyond a mere psychological state, transforming it into a vibrant, nature-integrated experience. This collection of poetry is distinguished by its profound connection between nature and the emotion of love. While the highly poetic language effectively unites the verses, the consistent attempt to link every manifestation of love to the sole symbol of the "tree" constrains the broader scope of ideas. Had the author incorporated other symbols, such as "water," "plant," or "creeper," the underlying philosophy could have achieved greater comprehensiveness.

Love within this poetic anthology is primarily examined through three conceptual lenses:

1. **Patience and Endurance** – Love is likened to a tree, characterised by unconditional giving, which serves as its primary emblem.
2. **Devotion and Self-Sacrifice** – Love provides refuge to all in its shade yet seeks no reciprocation, epitomising selfless dedication.
3. **Tolerance and Steadfastness** – Love withstands all adversity while maintaining an unwavering position.

While these three dimensions illuminate a significant facet of love, they neglect to address its inherent instability, restlessness, and internal conflict. The collection's exploration of love's depth could have benefited from further enhancement. The straightforward emotional tone and style with which love is presented across these three aspects both confine the reader and simultaneously encourage a consideration of broader perspectives. Love is not solely defined by stability; it must also encompass the experience of changeability. Perhaps love is not merely about being resolute like a tree, but also a process of growth and evolution akin to a plant. Love can involve not only the act of giving but also the necessity of receiving and acceptance. The collection adopts an overly idealistic perspective on love, overlooking the fact that human frailties, ambitions, and insecurities are inextricably linked to the experience of love. Love initiates not just a period of waiting, but also a necessary dialogue. By portraying love predominantly as one-sided anticipation and sacrifice, the collection may present an incomplete understanding of the emotion.

An illustrative example is presented:

"Trees know how to love.

They keep their roots deep,

But they don't hold anyone back."

This concept reflects the altruistic essence of love; however, love occasionally necessitates restraint, commitment, and attachment. Love ought to be perceived as a dynamic equilibrium—acknowledging not only the depth of the roots but also the expansion of the branches and their interaction with the surrounding environment.

Regarding emotional appeal, this poetry collection will likely resonate profoundly with readers who view love as a serene, enduring, and devoted commitment. In the contemporary milieu, where conspicuousness often determines success, the diction of this poetry collection possesses a delicacy and resonance that render it a commendable literary endeavour. Nevertheless, it may fail to provoke a response from a significant portion of the readership. In the age of digital platforms, modern readers, akin to receptive surfaces, habitually immerse themselves in social media, absorbing the emotionally embellished rhetoric within each new creative work and engaging deeply with the sentiment of love during reading. Conversely, readers seeking the intricacies, inconsistencies, and challenges inherent in love, or desiring poetry depicting fervent passion, may find this volume somewhat deficient. The intensity, unfulfilled aspirations, abruptness, and volatility of romantic love are afforded minimal attention within this work.

Structurally and stylistically, this collection is predominantly organised into concise reflections and emotive fragments. While this facilitates an accessible reading experience, its symbolic resonance is consequently limited. Had a broader array of symbolism been

employed, particularly concerning the relationship between love and the arboreal motif, this collection could have achieved greater impact.

The collection is inspired by the tenets of subaltern and feminist epistemology, suggesting that we should move beyond viewing the "tree" solely as a symbol of sacrificial love and instead expose and comprehend broader social disparities. It further reflects inequalities rooted in patriarchy, caste, class, and gender. Whether in the context of patriarchy or caste struggle, the "tree" must be interpreted here as a central metaphor. Historically, women in society have been positioned as the "tree," signifying the one who provides shade, embodies tolerance, and is an exemplar of sacrifice—expected to endure, wait, and make sacrifices in love. In contrast, men are frequently depicted as a free bird, the wind, rain, or a storm—capable of unrestrained movement. A critical question arises: will a woman ever be granted the space to pause, receive support, or live autonomously? Moreover, caste and class distinctions within our society also dictate who occupies the role of the "tree" and who benefits from its shade. Those at the societal margins—deprived castes, impoverished classes, and women—are perpetually relegated to becoming the "tree." They continuously offer shade but are never afforded shade for themselves. This collection also serves as a reminder of historical Indian social movements where women, caste, and the tree (environment) collectively became symbols of resistance.

Jacinta expertly weaves this understanding into her work. In one of her poems, she portrays the grief and dilemma of the marginalised community, where Dalit women continue to work in the homes of others, raising others' children, yet lack personal security. Similarly, poor farmers cultivate grain but remain hungry, and labourers construct cities without possessing a home of their own.

In the contemporary era, while the ease of finding a partner has increased, notably through dating applications, the conflict between love and caste persists within our society. Love is not merely an emotional matter; it is profoundly influenced by caste and class structures. Consequently, the social hierarchy dictates "Who can sit in whose shade?" Even now, in cases of inter-caste romance or marriage, it is frequently observed that the individual from the deprived caste or class often assumes the role of the "tree" in the relationship, with the benefit of their stability and support being accrued by the person from the upper or dominant caste.

"Being a Tree in Love" by Jacinta Kerketta offers a sensitive and poetic contemplation that frames love as stability, patience, and anticipation. The language is profound and evocative, allowing the reader to experience the delicacy of love. However, other dimensions of love—

such as its restlessness, spontaneity, and inherent struggle—are somewhat restricted in this collection. Had love been explored not solely through the metaphor of a "tree" but also through the symbols of a "plant," "creeper," and "water," the work might have achieved a more comprehensive and deeper resonance. This symbolic form of the "tree" extends beyond the realm of love, mirroring the broader social structure, illustrating who makes sacrifices, who receives benefits, and who is perpetually denied refuge. Following the reading of this collection, the reader is compelled to re-examine poetry inspired by various conceptualisations of love. "Being a Tree in Love" successfully captures the tenderness of love but does not fully engage with its complexities and the human struggles it often entails. If this poetry collection successfully provokes an awareness of these conflicts, it represents a successful endeavour, or rather, a philosophical stance seeking resolution. It is a thought process that aims to extinguish the debilitating contradictions of society with the passionate essence of its words. Jacinta's poetry collection underscores the necessity for society to abandon the perspective that only a select few should become "trees" while the rest benefit from their shade. A sense of partnership and reciprocity is essential in love—both individuals should provide mutual support and shelter. Similarly, in society, everyone must be afforded equal rights—the burden of being the perpetual giver should not fall on some, nor should others always be the recipients. This collection challenges readers to reflect: Can we establish a society where everyone is afforded equal benefit and protection? This is the fundamental question.