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“Kamli”

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“Kamli”

By Ayesha Perveen

Introduction
The poem sketches the landscape of a resilient South Asian woman’s un/conscious as she resists socio-religious norms that condemn her to be bereft of love. The woman is thirsty for love due to unreflective customs of a society that makes women crazy by refusing to consider the significance of love for a normal happy life. The poem embeds Urdu words within English to convey the indigenous intensity of emotions, from different levels of craziness on one hand and multiple levels of intensity of love on the other hand. The poem’s title “Kamli” conveys a higher level of craziness in which one loses one’s worldly self to achieve transcendentalism through love. In the South Asian Sufi tradition, transcendental love is achieved through *Ishq*—an all-encompassing love for the divine. Love, the poem suggests, is sacred and heals like an Amaltas tree.

“Kamli”

*Pyasi* fabricates dreams
With the trauma yarns
Of the desires buried alive
By the dogma, rituals, creeds,
And the rapacious greed
Of thirsty crows!

*Pagli* weaves art
With method in madness
So creatively possessed
To become an ethereal painting
Of unconsecrated love!

*Jhalli* finds amaltas
Leaves, in the jungle lake
And tries to build a hut
Of love, that hits her
Hard on the corporeal face!

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1 Dr. Ayesha Perveen is currently working as Assistant Professor at the Virtual University of Pakistan. She is passionate about writing poetry and primarily writes about Pakistan and South Asia. Her poetry is an attempt to unearth the rhythm of ordinary, everyday life which is often invisible to many people. Her poems have been published in *New Writing, Down in the Dirt, Poetry and Covid Anthology*, and *FemAsia*, among others. Email: ayesha@vu.edu.pk.
2 *Pyasi* means thirsty in Urdu.
3 *Pagli* means crazy in Urdu, but the term is not derogatory and refers to a simpleton who fails to conform to social norms. It refers to a level of craziness as well as a level of intensity of love.
4 A simpleton in Urdu. Similar to *pagli*, *jhalli* signifies a level of craziness and intensity of love.
5 Amaltas is considered to be a sacred tree in Hinduism symbolizing prosperity. In Buddhism, it symbolizes enlightenment and spiritualism. It also contains healing properties according to Ayurveda.
Kamli\textsuperscript{6} knows not
How she ruins herself
With the subversiveness
Perished, in \textit{Ishq} that
Kindled the flame!

\textsuperscript{6} \textit{Kamli} conveys a higher level of craziness as well as transcendentalism achieved through love.