

My Mother at 66 (Poem) By Kamala Das

Kamala Das :- Kamala Das (1934-2009) was born in Malabar, Kerala. She is recognised as one of India's foremost poets. Her works are known for their originality, versatility and the indigenous flavour of the soil. She has published many novels and short stories. She wrote under the pen name "Madhavi Kutty".

Difficult Words :-

1. Doze - nap
2. Ashen - pale
3. Corpse - dead body
4. Spilling - let out
5. Sprinting - moving fast
6. Worn - dim, weak
7. Pale - dull, colourless

Literary Devices :-

1. **Simile** - The colour of the mother's face has been compared to that of a corpse - ashen, use of 'like' (her face ashen like that of a corpse)

2. Mother's face is compared to late winter's moon - both are dull and lifeless. Use of 'as' (as a late winter's moon).

2. **Repetition** - Repeated use of 'looked'

Rhyme scheme :-

The poem does not follow any rhyme or rhythm. It has been written in free verse.

Poem

Driving from my parent's home to Cochin last Friday morning, I saw my mother, beside me,

doze, open mouthed, her face ashen like ~~that~~ that

of a corpse and realised with pain that she was as old as she looked but soon put that thought away, and

looked out at young trees sprinting, the merry children spilling out of their homes, but after the airport security check, standing a few yards away, I looked again at her, wan, pale as a late winter's moon and that old familiar ache, my childhood's fear, but all I said was, see you soon, Amma all I did was smile and smile and smile

Summary :-

This is a touching poem written by Indian poet Kamala Das who wrote under the pen name of 'Madhavikutty'. In this poem, she describes her feeling of love and attachment towards her ageing mother.

Once the poet went to visit her mother. She was on her way back to the airport to return to Cochin. She looked at her mother who was seated beside her in the car. Her mother

had dozed off to sleep and her ageing face - was smoky in colour like ash. Her mouth was open and she resembled a dead body. The poet realized that her mother was old. She felt pain and sympathy for her. Her mother needed love, affection and care.

In order to come out of the gloom, the poet shifted her glance and looked out of the car's window. There she saw young trees pass by. Little children were running out of their houses into the play grounds. These things were contrary to the ageing face of her mother. They symbolised energy, life and happiness.

As they reached the airport and the poet was about to leave for the aeroplane, she glanced at her mother one more time. Her mother appeared weak and pale just like the moon in the winter season which seems to have lost all its strength. The poet felt the pain and fear of losing her mother. She was reminded of her childhood

when she used to fear losing her mother. As a child she could not bear to be separated from her mother even for a few moments. Now the loss would be permanent as her mother was about to die and she would lose her forever.

The poet did not express her feelings. She smiled and said "see you soon, Amma" because she wanted that her mother should live and they could meet again.

H.W - Write down all
the work given in
notebook. Revise Poem