

VILLAGE SONG

Sarojini Naidu

Introduction to the Poem

Sarojini Naidu (1879–1949), known as the “Nightingale of India,” was a famous Indian poet and freedom fighter. Her poems often portray Indian life, nature, traditions, and women’s experiences. “*Village Song*” is one of her best-known poems. It presents the voice of a young village girl carrying water from the river. Through her fears, thoughts, and prayers, Naidu shows the beauty and struggles of rural Indian life. The poem uses simple language, vivid images, and musical rhythm, making it easy to read and remember.

A Girl’s Journey at Twilight

The poem begins with a village girl speaking in first person. She says her **pitchers are full of water** but she still has **a long, lonely path** to cover before reaching home. She regrets stopping on the way, having been **tempted by the boatman’s song**. This shows the charm of rural life—songs on the riverbank—but also the danger of being delayed at nightfall.

Growing Darkness and Rising Fear

As evening turns into night, **shadows fall quickly**. The girl hears sounds—the **call of a white crane** or maybe the **cry of a wild owl**, which in Indian belief is an omen of bad luck. She notices there is **no moonlight to guide her**, and she worries about snakes or **evil spirits** that might harm her. Out of fear she calls on Lord Rama— “**Ram re Ram! I shall die**”—seeking divine protection.

Family Waiting at Home

In the second stanza, her thoughts shift to home. She imagines her **brother wondering** why she is late and her **mother weeping in worry**, praying to the gods for her safety. The reference to the **Jamuna River** highlights the rural setting; its **deep and fast waters** are both sacred and dangerous. Through these lines Naidu shows the closeness of family bonds and the everyday anxieties of village life.

Nature’s Power and Human Helplessness

The girl notices the **evening shadows growing thicker**, comparing them to **black birds in the sky**. She is also afraid of a sudden **storm or lightning**, asking where she could hide if bad weather strikes. Again, she turns to God, praying, “**Unless Thou succour my footsteps and guide me ... Ram re Ram! I shall die.**” This repetition emphasizes her helplessness and faith in divine guidance.

Themes of the Poem

1. **Fear and Vulnerability:** The poem expresses the fears of a lone village girl traveling at dusk—wild animals, spirits, storms, and loneliness.

2. **Faith and Prayer:** Despite her fear, she calls on God for protection, showing the deep spiritual life of ordinary people.
3. **Family Love:** Her thoughts about her brother and mother show strong family ties and the emotional world of rural women.
4. **Nature's Beauty and Danger:** The river, birds, storm, and nightfall create a vivid picture of Indian village scenery, beautiful but also risky.

Style and Imagery

Sarojini Naidu uses simple, musical words that sound like a folk song. She mixes **visual images** (“black birds in the sky”) with **sounds** (boatman’s song, crane’s call, owl’s cry). The repeated prayer to Lord Rama adds a **religious and emotional rhythm**, making the poem resemble an actual village song.

Conclusion

“*Village Song*” captures the **real-life fears and faith of a rural Indian girl**. It is not just about a journey home but about the journey of life itself—full of dangers, delays, and dark times, but supported by prayer, family love, and hope. With its simple words, vivid images, and emotional tone, Sarojini Naidu gives readers a glimpse into the heart of village India, making the poem easy to relate to and remember.