

Chasing Peacocks

*Our house is encircled
By wooded hills and streams,
Creeks and waterfalls
Appachchi's rice field is there
And mother's gone to world
beyond*

*Appachchi digs and sows
And irrigates the soil.
I tend and milk the cow,
Cook and clean and sweep
And grow some garden crops.*

*In the early dawn
I make him rice gruel
And plain roti to take with him.
I cook the noon-day meal
And place the woven basket
On my head.*

*Near to harvest time
He climbs the high watch-hut
And scans the yellow stalks
And shoots his gun to scare
Fox and deer, hare and boar,
Birds and peacocks too
I help him in the latter task.*

*Gone my brothers two
And sisters three*

*Consumed by and consuming
A machine –oriented world.*

*Why does Appachchi
Not scold the defective five
Who left us in the lurch?
They came each year to get
Their share of grain and garden
crops.*

*Why does Appachchi
Not show his displeasure?
Like feeding pets, he feeds
us all, smiling all the while.
He is like the earth.*

*One day the postman brought
My "A Level" results.*

*I looked and saw the grades.
I can't believe! What a joy!
I go to "campus" now!*

*I felt like jumping up and taking
wings*

*But how to tell my Appachchi
That I must also go,
Fulfill my dreams and drives
And leave him all alone
To chase peacocks?*

