

## 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?*