

Prof. Nandini Sahu

(Professor of English and Former Director, School of Foreign Languages, IGNOU, New Delhi, India.)

Sisterhood

*“Women instinctually know how to nourish each other,
and just being with each other is restorative.” – Tanja Taaljord*

Thus, I talk a lot about solidarity and sisterhood.
My sisters and archetypal sisters may hear me out!
I have been accessible yet peripheral,
non-judgmental, non-indulgent
beyond all glamour, glory and the social scanners
getting into reckless and pointless things yet.

I fancy my sisters to appreciate, in spirit,
that I live alone in the company of others living alone,
each one fortified by a lone ache of the heart.

The fact that I was born in July,
the volatile time of the year—
they need not categorize any much of my temperament.

Now there are mornings when I wake up but
I don't like to get up. Lying on the bed,
I regret my squandered years that I have been that type

who fits in anywhere. Ahh, why I have been just so perfect!

Full of campaign and stratagem, I still believe that
it's possible to change the world, this planet.
My sculpted sisters often look at me and sigh,
'I want to be a woman like you, bold and independent.'

My sisters, I am that imperfectly-perfect-woman,
take me as I am, maybe with a pinch of salt?

I wish they saw some tiresome apprehension in there.

Some enduring experiences utmost.

Why only sisters? Even my mother's isolation
is getting into my nerves. It's a detrimental amalgam.
Some kind of panic of an avoidable panic, some fright.

Yet, the gulf between me and my 'sisters' has told me,
seclusion has its own goodies to offer --I cheer up myself,
which some of them make-believe not to make out.

Seclusion has become my only discipline,
my skill, my dexterity and my mental state.

These days I live in a new home, a newly
constructed house, that is, where no one lived in the past,
no one made love, no one died
nor none got exhausted. Just that,
the highlighted nature of the house makes it look

paradoxically alive and animate.

I call it, 'the power of white!'

Here, in fact yet elsewhere, I sleep poorly,

for forever I am sleep disoriented.

I boast I swank that I take its advantage, to become

so prominent and, well, such distinguished!

I heard that the female combatant

knows how to fight with the world even without a fight.

She discerns when not to raise her sword,

but as a substitute she holds up her heart.

A sister's safeguard is not a resistance

to counter others, but a sanctuary for a wretched heart.

If recuperative of each other is the case with sisterhood,

someone please refurbish, revamp me, be my

special kind of mind-and-body-double,

no matter where and what.