THE BIRD SANCTUARY

SAROJINI NAIDU

In your quiet garden wakes a magic tumult

Of winged choristers that keep the festival of Dawn,

Blithely rise the carols in richly cadenced rapture,

From lyric throats of amber, of ebony and fawn.

The bulbul and the oriole, the honeybird and Shama

Flit among high boughs that drip with nectar and with dew,

Upon the grass the wandering gull parades its sea-washed silver,

The hoopoe and the kingfisher their bronze and sapphire blue.

Wild gray pigeons dreaming of a home amid the tree-tops,

Fill their beaks with silken down and slender banyan twigs,

But the jade-green gipsy parrots are only gay marauders,

And pause upon their sun-ward flight to plunder red ripe figs.

In your gracious garden there is joy and fostering freedom,

Nesting place and singing space for every feathered thing,

O Master of the Birds, grant sanctuary and shelter

Also to a homing bird that bears a broken wing.

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**Analysis of the poem**: Named as the nightingale of India, Sarojini Naidu , is essentially a poetess of Indian flora and fauna. Nature was a spring of perpetual bliss to her. ‘The ‘Bird Sanctuary’ depicts the ideal refuge of God that offers ideal fostering space and nurturing place for every bird regardless of its identity. The poem is addressed to the Master of the Birds. There is festive joy as the birds sing tumultuously. The enchanting aura they craft herald the Festival of Dawn. Birds of multitudinous colors produce music entrancing and melodious.

The birds strive to sing carols from their throats of amber, ebony and fawn and passionately evocate the pastoral arena of India. The bulbul, the oriole, the honey bird and the shama are perceived fluttering from the high boughs sodden with nectar and due. As the atmosphere is animated with colour and movement, the gull exhibits its silver sea-washed coat, and the hoopoe and the kingfisher their sapphire-blue. The wild gay pigeons envisage a home, amid the tree tops and endeavour to achieve the same, filling their beaks with silken down and banyan twigs. The pervading greenery is reflective of fertility and prosperity in the lives of the birds. Their ascent phrased as “sunward flight” signifies their aspiration to accomplish new heights. The green parrots pose themselves as marauders who loot the ripe-red figs.

With personal and autobiographical ramifications, the poetess asserts that God grants sanctuary and shelter even to a bird with a broken wing. The poet indubitably refers to herself as a bird with a broken wing. The poet persistently battled against ill-heath that plagued her throughout her life. Nevertheless, she seeks solace in the fact that THE Almighty will never desert her.

**Summary:**

In the poem **“The Bird Sanctuary”**, the poet Sarojini Naidu evokes the delightful imagery of different kinds of birds living happily in a sanctuary. There are birds of varying colours – from amber and ebony to jade green and sapphire blue. Small birds like the bulbul and the oriole fly around happily. There are colourful birds like the kingfisher and wandering birds like the gull. The pigeons are trying to build a home while the parrots are out to eat ripe figs.

The poet portrays the bird sanctuary as a gracious and generous place where all kinds of birds live freely and joyfully. She ends the poem with a prayer to God asking him to grant shelter to a homing bird with a broken wing.

This beautiful poem is an allegory to a safe place in Nature where all kinds of people can live freely and happily. The poet’s prayer to God asking for shelter for a “homing bird with broken wings” is in fact a prayer for herself. She longs for a resting place and solace from her pain, and prays to God to provide her shelter in his sanctuary.