



## POETRY: SYAMALA KALLURY

### *Nirbhaya...*

You are a heart burnt in sorrow...

Tears tirelessly falling, your signature

Constant flow of sympathy

Cannot be of any solace

You have to learn to comfort yourself

And face life fearlessly

Learn you must, to hold your head high

Go out into the world,

Cross the complex roads

You must learn them all afresh!

No one will stand by you, hold your hand

Help you to cross the road.

Your going out itself will attract

The ire of the society

Whatever you enjoyed wearing

Should be yours all your life,

Your right it is

To apply kumkum on your forehead  
Adorn your wrists with colourful bangles  
Wear the saris that you always wore passionately  
Hand woven cottons from Bengal, Bihar,  
And pure silks from Kashmir and Kanya Kumari.  
Each one comes with fond memories  
Hands, henna painted cool green and bright red.  
Do not leave anything!  
Except those that trumpet your lonely life.  
If it is a lifetime's loss to live with  
Memories of someone you love  
It is more than a torture to listen to  
The ones around you  
Not your fault nor is it a crime  
To lose a dear one  
Be your own comfort,  
Adorn your face with kajal and kumkum  
And walk head upright, fearlessly!  
The show must go on!

**Prof. Syamala Kallury** (Retd.) worked as SSOI at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Delhi. Prior to that she taught in Delhi University and the colleges of Andhra Pradesh for over a decade.

Her research areas are Indian English Poets, and translation studies. A bilingual writer and translator she enjoys translating from Telugu to English and vice versa. Her publications include Telugu Short Stories: Women's Voices - An Inner Voyage (1930-2000), 2000, Godavari Tales, 2004, Twentieth Century Telugu Poetry, 2006. She also contributes short stories to reputed Telugu journals.

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