

A many-splendoured creation called woman

The woman's world is a small world. It has its peaks, ~~and~~ valleys and plateaus too. In it life is a struggle, a trek up a bouldered path - a fight for survival.

Look around for the complete woman. You won't find her but she is there, every where; only you have to look. In hen parties? Under the crushing head load of bricks? Behind the starched, white uniforms? In the sweaty kitchens? - Take your pick.

We see different facets of a complete woman in different women. And in many a woman there is (no denying that!) a complete woman with that indefinable magic and mystique - everything.

Those days when night schools and Adult Education classes were not heard of,

somebody's illiterate aunt in her late forties took the trouble of learning the English alphabets and reached the Everest of happiness in showing off her inability to read her son's letter from Bombay - was it some sort of personal fulfillment or a filial penance or an expression of love of God?

A Keralite lady - widowed at 23 and mother of two baby girls did, privately, her matric and then BA and then MA and immersed herself in the work of an orphanage in a honorary capacity. Her way of paying back society and its cruel, unwritten conventions? Or was it a "Thank you" to God?

On the way to the operation table for cervical cancer a young, childless neighbour took time off from certain doom to admire the beauty of

a butterfly sitting on the bonnet of the taxi. Was it a triumph over the mundane? Or was it inner beauty mirroring love of God?

A grandmother (who could take her bath without help at the ripe, young age of 87) presided over a colossal family comprising people of different ages, sizes and temperaments and kept them all under her benign thumb by following the simple adage "Never let the sun set on your wrath." When the sun rose again, fresh battles!

St. Augustine put it all succinctly when he said, "Love God and do what you like!" An abiding catch-phrase for women? Why only for women? Let's emblazon it across the sky!

- Vengrai Parthasarathy