

# DANCE OF THE EUNUCHS (KAMLA DAS)

ANUSHMA SHARMA

UNACADEMY EDUCATOR

Kamala Das, Malayalam pen name Madhavikutty, Muslim name Kamala Surayya, (born March 31, 1934, Thrissur, Malabar Coast [now in Kerala], British India—died May 31, 2009, Pune, India). She was a confessional poet.

Das's poetry collections included *Summer in Calcutta* (1965), *The Descendants* (1967), and *The Old Playhouse, and Other Poems* (1973).

**Summer in Calcutta(1965)** is her first poetic collection. The dance of Eunuchs included in this collection. The Dance of Eunuchs is included in this collection. It contains only 50 poems.

The descendants(1967); it contains 29 poems, which are mostly about love. Two poems are exceptions which are about her sown sons "Jaisurya" and "the white flowers."

The old play house and other poems(1973): it contains 33 poems in all .

It was hot, so hot, before the eunuchs came  
To dance, wide skirts going round and round,  
cymbals  
Richly clashing, and anklets jingling, jingling  
Jingling... Beneath the fiery gulmohur, with  
Long braids flying, dark eyes flashing, they danced  
and  
They dance, oh, they danced till they bled... There  
were green  
Tattoos on their cheeks, jasmines in their hair, some  
Were dark and some were almost fair. Their voices  
Were harsh, their songs melancholy; they sang of  
Lovers dying and or children left unborn....

Some beat their drums; others beat their sorry  
breasts

And wailed, and writhed in vacant ecstasy. They  
Were thin in limbs and dry; like half-burnt logs from  
Funeral pyres, a drought and a rottenness  
Were in each of them. Even the crows were so  
Silent on trees, and the children wide-eyed, still;  
All were watching these poor creatures'  
convulsions

The sky crackled then, thunder came, and  
lightning

And rain, a meagre rain that smelt of dust in  
Attics and the urine of lizards and mice....

# Figures of speech-

**ONOMATOPEIA**- richly clashing, and anklets jingling, jingling  
(formation of a word from a sound associated with what is named)

**Similie** - like half burnt logs

**Oxymoron**- a figure of speech in which apparently contradictory terms appear in conjunction (e.g. faith unfaithful kept him falsely true ).  
**vacant ecstasy**

The theme here in the poem is love and failure in love.