

## An Unknown Girl

In the evening bazaar  
Studded with neon  
An unknown girl  
Is hennaing my hand.  
She squeezes a wet brown line  
from a nozzle.  
She is icing my hand,  
Which she steadies with hers  
On her satin-peach knee.  
In the evening bazaar  
For a few rupees  
An unknown girl  
is hennaing my hand.  
As a little air catches  
My shadow-stitched kameez  
A peacock spreads its lines  
Across my palm.  
Colours leave the street  
Float up in balloons.  
Dummies in shop-fronts  
Tilt and stare  
With their western perms  
Banners for Miss India 1993,  
For curtain cloth  
And sofa cloth  
Canopy me.  
I have new brown veins.  
In the evening bazaar  
Very deftly  
An unknown girl  
is hennaing my hand.  
I am clinging  
To these firm peacock lines  
Like people who cling  
to the side of the train.  
Now the furious streets  
Are hushed.  
I'll scrape off  
The dry brown lines  
Before I sleep,  
Reveal soft as a snail trail  
The amber bird beneath.  
It will fade in a week.  
When India appears and reappears  
I'll lean across a country  
With my hands outstretched  
Longing for the unknown girl  
In the neon bazaar.

**Comment [N1]:** The entire poem is one long stanza. There are no breaks. This creates one long flow of her story that she doesn't want to end and it never will. It's a cycle that will continue to repeat and has no defined beginning or end suggesting she will never fully get to know India and that this process is one that she is doomed to repeat again and again. More positively it might suggest that she will be able to enjoy continuing to return to India

**Comment [N2]:** Repetition of an unknown girl. Highlights and emphasizes the main point of the poem suggesting both that the persona is curious about India but the girl also represents a the Indian side to the persona that she is trying to discover / find out more about

**Comment [N3]:** ICING! Icing is temporary decoration that will fade and soon reveal what she really is. It is also a reference to beauty.

**Comment [N4]:** Many references throughout the poem to colours which might represent the brightness and exotic colour that can be found in India. The contrast between brown and colours might highlight the two different sides of her – her English side vs. the Indian side

**Comment [N5]:** ENJAMBMENT. PERSONIFICATION. This is more description and enjambment changes the tone and mood in which this is said, it's not as strong an impact as one short sentence which makes the tone of this part softer creating a sense of nostalgia or

**Comment [N6]:** The peacock lines are entangling her in an Indian world that she loves and wants to be in. Slowly the Indian in her is growing as a symbolic tattoo gets larger. Indian culture has captured her hand as if entering as newfound blood.

**Comment [N7]:** One short sentence creating a greater impact and putting importance to this sentence. The tone would be very proud - she's just made a huge realisation or accomplishment!

**Comment [N8]:** TONE! -> Very desperate and frustrated that she cant hold on forever and that soon she'll have to let go.

**Comment [N9]:** ALLITERATION -> the 's' sound is used in contrasting ways. It is used to get a soft effect and then a harsh effect. ie. Scrap and soft.

**Comment [N10]:** This is a recurring cycle – either she will always be able to come back or she will never be able to fully discover India or her Indian side so she is doomed to keep coming back only to have whatever she has found fade on her return to England

**Comment [N11]:** The TONE of loneliness and the slow pace suggests her sadness. It's still one long sentence taking up many lines, making an unending effect! She is going to be looking for that unknown girl to renew her brown veins that will soon fade away.

**Comment [N12]:** RHYME! There is no rhyme in the poem. This takes way from the childlike sound of a poem. Also, this means that this story can't follow a pattern because this poem is different and talking about something that isn't "normal" or Westernised such as a patterned poem.