**Goodbye Party for Miss Pushpa T.S. by Nissim Ezekiel**

**About the Author**

Nissim Ezekiel (1924-2004) is a very well-known post-independent poet. His poems depict Indian life from various perspectives. For his contribution to Indian poetry, he has been awarded with the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Award in 1983.

In addition to ‘Goodbye Party for Miss Pushpa T.S.’, Nissim Ezekiel is also famous for poems like ‘The Night of the Scorpion’ and ‘Enterprise’.

**The Poem**

Friends,

Our dear sister

Is departing for foreign

In two three days,

And

We are meeting today

To wish her bon voyage.

You are all knowing, friends,

What sweetness is in Miss Pushpa.

I don’t mean only external sweetness

But internal sweetness.

Miss Pushpa is smiling and smiling

Even for no reason but simply because

She is feeling.

Miss Pushpa is coming

From very high family.

Her father was renowned advocate

In Bulsar or Surat,

I am not remembering now which place.

Surat, ah, yes,

Once only I stayed in Surat

With family members

Of my uncle’s very old friend –

His wife was cooking nicely…

That was long time ago.

Coming back to Miss Pushpa

She is most popular lady

With men also and ladies also.

Whenever I asked her to do anything,

She was saying, ‘Just now only

I will do it.’ That is showing

Good spirit. I am always

Appreciating the good spirit.

Pushpa miss is never saying no.

Whatever I or anybody is asking

She is always saying yes,

And today she is going

To improve her prospects

And we are wishing her bon voyage.

Now I ask other speakers to speak

And afterwards Miss Pushpa

Will do summing up.

**Summary of the Poem**

Written by Nissim Ezekiel, ‘Goodbye Party for Miss Pushpa T.S.’ is actually a farewell speech by one of the colleagues of Ms Pushpa in the office. Like any other farewell party, here also, the speaker wishes her a happy voyage and appreciates her for her nature and dedication to work.

However, the speech becomes a mirror to the mistakes committed by Indians who do not have adequate language yet are fond of using it.

The speaker starts the farewell speech with the best wishes for Ms Pushpa’s visit to a foreign country. The speaker refers to Ms Pushpa as a ‘dear sister’ and mentions that Ms Pushpa is leaving India for better prospects in some foreign land.

It is to her honour that the farewell party has been organised.

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| **Indian expression used in the poem** | **More appropriate expression** |
| Goodbye party for Ms Pushpa TS | Farewell party to Ms Pushpa TS |
| Our dear sister | Our dear colleague |
| Is departing for foreign | Is leaving for a foreign land/country |
| In two three days | In a couple of days |
| We are meeting today | We have met today/we have gathered here |
| You are all knowing, friends | Friends, you know it very well that |
| What sweetness is in Ms Pushpa. I don’t mean only external sweetness but internal sweetness. | Ms Pushpa is a charming lady. She is not only pretty but is also someone who possesses a very friendly and helpful nature. |
| Ms Pushpa is smiling and smiling even for no reason but simply because she is feeling | She has an ever-smiling face and is full of positive attitude (Here is an unintentional pun. The speaker probably wishes to appreciate the cheerful nature of Ms Pushpa but he conveys that Ms Pushpa keeps on smiling even without reason) |
| Ms Pushpa is coming from very high family | Ms Pushpa belongs to/comes from a very reputed family. |
| Her father was renowned advocate in Bulsar or Surat. I am not remembering now which place. | Ms Pushpa’s father was a renowned advocate.  (In Gujarati and Hindi, use of article is not required. However, in English every countable noun and an adjective in English language requires it. Under the influence of mother tongue, the speaker her has forgotten to use an article before the adjective ‘renowned’).  (Moreover, the speaker, here, is supposed to collect all the necessary information that he wishes to include about the person in the speech beforehand. Due to the lack of adequate information or faulty information, he is likely to hurt the person being referred to. Moreover, it shows lack of preparation on the part of the speaker). |
| Surat? Ah, yes, once only I stayed in Surat with family members of my uncle’s very old friend – his wife was cooking nicely…that was long time ago. | This is a digression in the speech. A good speaker should avoid this. There is no point in referring to your experience until and unless they are naturally connected to and/or enhance the effect of the speech you are delivering. |
| She is most popular lady with men also and ladies also | She is very popular among all the staff members (Superlative degree is used while referring to her popularity but ‘the’ is missing before ‘most popular’.  In addition to this, the line is an unintentional pun.  Ms Pushpa’s popularity with men and ladies gives a different meaning than what is actually intended by the speaker. |
| Whenever I asked to do anything, she was saying, ‘Just now only I will do it’. | She was always very prompt in her work. Whenever she was assigned any work, she readily accepted it and completed it in time. |
| That is showing good spirit | This shows her good spirit. |
| I am always appreciating the good spirit. | I have always appreciated her zeal for work. |
| Pushpa Miss is never saying no. | She never says no to any office work. |
| Whatever I or anybody is asking she is always saying yes, and today she is going to improve her prospect and we are wishing her bon voyage. | She is always ready to do work whether it is assigned by me or anyone else from the office. We heartily wish her bon voyage when she is leaving this country for better prospects. |
| Now I ask other speakers to speak and afterwards Miss Pushpa will do summing up. | I, now, invite other colleagues to share their feelings on this occasion. Thereafter, Ms Pushpa will respond and express her feelings. |

**Theme of the poem ‘Goodbye Party for Miss Pushpa T.S.’**

The poem is in the form of a farewell speech delivered by a colleague of Ms Pushpa. However, the focus of the poem is not the loss of a good friend or colleague. Actually, the poem makes gentle fun of those Indians who do not know English but are very fond of using it.

The poem highlights the errors caused by the wrong translations from Indian languages into English. The errors include grammatical mistakes, arrangement of words, unintentional puns and idioms.

It also satirises the skill of delivering a speech because of the irrelevant information added. The major things satirised here are:

**Incorrect Use of Present Continuous Tense**

Miss Pushpa is smiling and smiling

Even for no reason but simply because

She is feeling.

In Indian languages like Hindi and Gujarati, it is very common to repeat a word to emphasise it, however, it is not the case with English. Here, the speaker’s English is influenced by the mother tongue so ‘smiling’ is used twice.

In the last line, she is ‘feeling’, the worst use of present continuous tense is shown. Verbs denoting feelings do not take the present continuous tense. The speaker should have used simple present tense as the sentence refers to the nature of Ms Pushpa and not something, which is true of the present moment only.

**Ungrammatical English used by the People of India**

***Whatever I or anybody is asking***

As per the rules, whenever, there are more than one subjects, the sequence would be third person, second person and first person. However, here the speaker first refers to ‘I’ and then the third person ‘anybody’.

This shows the tendency to translate things from mother tongue to English.

***She is the most popular lady with men also and ladies also***

Superlative degree is used while referring to her popularity but ‘the’ is missing before ‘most popular’.

***I am always appreciating the good spirit.***

Here, the speaker refers to the good nature of Ms Pushpa. Nevertheless, the speaker should have either used present perfect tense (I have always appreciated her zeal for work) or simple present tense (I always appreciate the good spirit).

**Unintentional pun**

***She is most popular lady with men also and ladies also***

Here the speaker intends to appreciate Ms Pushpa but unknowingly, his words may convey something else too.

**Digression in the speech**

Surat? Ah, yes, once I stayed in Surat with family members of my uncle’s very old friend – his wife was cooking nicely…

That was long time ago.

This is a digression in the speech. A good speaker should avoid this. There is no point in referring to one’s experience until and unless they are naturally connected to and/or enhance the effect of the speech being delivered.

Thus, the poem becomes a satire on Indian English as well as the way of delivering a speech.

**Title of the Poem**

The title of the poem ‘Goodbye Party for Ms Pushpa T.S.’ by Nissim Ezekiel is very significant. The title suggests two things:

The party is for someone who is leaving the organisation. Also, since it is a farewell party there will be speech too.

The poem apparently is about a farewell party thrown by the colleagues of Ms Pushpa as she is leaving for some other country. The farewell speech by one of the colleagues is the main content of the poem.

However, the poem gently makes fun of all the speakers who are very fond of using English but cannot speak it correctly. This is evident from the title itself, which says ‘Goodbye Party’. However, a better word expression could be ‘Farewell Party’.

Throughout the poem, the poet satirises Indian English in terms of incorrect use of grammar, unintentional pun, arrangement of words etc.

There is also a reference to the farewell speech delivered by people on such an occasion. The speech has digressions and sometimes the speaker starts referring to his experiences also. This throws light on the tendency of the speaker to refer to oneself unnecessarily.

Thus, the title of the poem is very appropriate and meaningful as the poem talks about the farewell party organised for Miss Pushpa and the speech delivered by her colleague.