Poems of Akkamaha Devi

1

Sunlight made visible  
the whole length of a sky,  
movement of wind,  
leaf, flower, all six colours  
on tree, bush and creeper:  
all this  
is the day's worship.  
  
Night and day  
in your worship  
I forget myself  
O lord white as jasmine.

2.

People,  
male and female,  
blush when a cloth covering their shame  
comes loose  
When the lord of lives  
lives drowned without a face  
in the world, how can you be modest?  
  
When all the world is the eye of the lord,  
onlooking everywhere, what can you   
cover and conceal?

3.

Don't despise me as  
She who has no one  
I'm not one to be afraid,  
Whatever you do.  
I exist chewing dry leaves.  
My life resting on a knife edge  
If you must torment me,  
Chennamallikarjuna,  
My life, my body  
I'll offer you and be cleansed.

4.

You're like milk  
In water: I cannot tell  
What comes before,  
What after;   
Which is the master,  
Which is the slave;   
What's big.  
What's small.  
  
O lord white as jasmine  
If an ant should love you  
And praise you.  
Will he not grow  
To demonic powers?

5.

I have Maya for mother-in-law,  
the world for father-in-law;  
three brothers-in-law, like tigers;  
and the husband’s thoughts  
are full of laughing women;  
no god, this man,  
And I cannot cross the sister-in-law.  
But I will  
give this wench the slip  
and go cuckold my husband with  
Hara, my Lord.  
My mind is my maid:  
by her kindness, I join  
my Lord,  
my utterly beautiful Lord  
from the mountain peaks,  
my lord white as jasmine,  
and I will make Him  
my good husband

6.

Like a silkworm weaving  
her house with love  
from her marrow,  
and dying  
in her body's threads  
winding tight, round  
and round,  
I burn  
desiring what the heart desires.  
  
Cut through, O Lord,  
my heart's greed,  
and show me  
your way out,  
  
O Lord white as jasmine

7.

Would a circling surface vulture  
know such depths of sky  
as the moon would know?  
  
would a weed on the riverbank  
know such depths of water  
as the lotus would know?  
  
would a fly darting nearby  
know the smell of flowers  
as the bee would know?  
  
O Lord white as jasmine  
only you would know  
the way of your devotees:  
how would these….  
these   
mosquitos  
on the buffalo’s hides?

8.

Oh! Lord your Maya does not give me up even  
When I have given it up. In spite of my   
resistance it clings to me and follows me.  
  
Your Maya becomes Yogini to the Yogin. It   
becomes a nun to the monk, it becomes a   
herald to the saint. It adapts itself to  
each according to his nature.  
  
When I climbed up the hill, your Maya too  
came up; when I entered the forest, your  
Maya too entered behind me.  
So the world does not take its hand off  
my back even now!  
  
O, Lord of infinite mercy, your Maya frightens   
me. O Lord Mallikarjuna, bestow your grace on me.

9.

I have seen Him in His divine form,  
Him with the matted locks,  
Him with the jewelled crown,  
Him with the gleaming teeth,  
Him with the smiling face,  
Him who illumines the fourteen worlds with   
the light of His eyes.  
I have Him and the thirst of my eyes is   
quenched.  
I have seen the great Lord whom the men  
among men serve but as wives.  
I have seen the Supreme Guru Chenna Mallikarjuna  
sporting with the Primeval Sakti,  
And saved am I.

10.

O Lord, listen to me if you will, listen not  
if you will not: I cannot rest contented  
unless I sing of you.  
  
O Lord, accept me if you will, accept not  
if you will not: I cannot rest contented unless   
I worship you.  
  
O Lord, love me if you will, love not  
if you will not: I cannot rest contented unless I hold  
you in my arms  
  
O Lord, look at me if you will, look not  
if you will not: I cannot rest contented unless  
I gaze at you in overpowering longing.  
  
O Lord Chenna Mallikarjuna, I worship you and revel in a thrill of pleasure.