

Poem No.

9

The Feed

(Ahmed Nadeem Qasmi)

Holding a grain of millet in her beak
 The mother sparrow has come to feed.
 The young ones are so tiny and small
 From head to toe they are beaks
 When they cry.
 One grain to be fed to the ten young ones

To whom the mother sparrow should feed?
 Conjoining beak with beak
 With whom should she solace?
 Fissuring the atom,
 You have learnt to weep and wail in a loud tone,
 Splitting the grain,
 You have learnt to set life on foot
 Could you split the grain?
 One grain to be fed to the ten young ones.

About the Poet

Ahmed Nadeem Qasmi is a Pakistani poet and he has written several poems in Urdu and also in English. He was born in 1916 in a small village Anga in Khushab District. He started writing poems in the late thirties. He published more than a dozen books. Some of his works have also been translated into foreign languages, winning applause for him in foreign countries.

Theme

This poem is very simple. Here the poet depicts the love of a mother bird for her young ones who are very small and only a few days old. They are in the nest. The mother sparrow goes out and brings a grain of millet in her beak to feed them. They are ten in number.

Glossary

millet	a small grain of a cereal
tiny	small
conjoining	joining together

fissuring	breaking
split	break

EXERCISES

- Answer the following questions.**

 - What does the sparrow hold in her beak?
 - Which line in the first stanza tells us that the young ones have no feathers?
 - How many young ones are to be fed?
 - What has the poet described in the poem?
- Choose the correct answer.**

 - What was the mother sparrow holding in her beak?

a) wheat b) rice

c) millet d) maize
 - The young ones are tiny and _____.

a) big b) small

c) white d) black
 - How many young ones are there in the nest?

a) three b) ten

c) twelve d) nine
 - Name the bird that has come to feed her young ones.

a) crow b) pigeon

c) sparrow d) parrot
- Read the poem and write down the missing word in each line.**

 - From head to toe they are _____.
 - The mother sparrow has come to _____.
 - One grain to be fed to the _____ young ones.
- Mark the statements true or false.**

 - The young ones are tiny and small.
 - The mother sparrow holds a grain of rice in her beak.
 - The young ones do not weep and wail in a loud tone.
 - One grain is to be fed to the six young ones.
- Explain the last three lines of this poem with reference to the context.**
- Write a critical appreciation of the poem.**
- What do you feel after reading the poem?**