



**SCIENTIFIC AND SYMBOLIC ELUCIDATION OF BAKULA TREE IN SUDHA  
MURTHY'S "GENTLY FALLS THE BAKULA"**

**D.Uma Maheswari<sup>1</sup> & Dr.B.Rajesh<sup>2</sup>**

*<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Dept. of Translation, Tamil University, Thanjavur*

*<sup>2</sup>Associate Professor, Dept. of Translation, Tamil University, Thanjavur*

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**Abstract:**

This paper attempts to bring the scientific and symbolic elucidation of Bakula tree in Sudha Murthy's "Gently Falls The Bakula". Let us explore the scientific and symbolic approach of Sudha Murthy for better understanding. She has a unique style of simple narration that seems easy readability at the same time symbolic and scientific paralleling to the seasonal happening with that of family situations are immensely weaved. This paper focuses on the thinking process of Shrimati, her early days, her studies, love life and marriage life her emotional connect with the falling of Bakula flowers seems symbolic with that of love. It is as if love started to fade or fall off or one-sided. This paper deals with the inner cognitive and emotional connectivity of Shrimati with Bakula flowers exploring it scientifically and symbolically.

**Keywords:** bakula, cognitive, scientific and symbolic elucidation

**Introduction:**

Indian English literature came a long way with lot new changes. The most famous trio are Raja Rao, R.K.Narayan and Mulk Raj Anand. They all created their own unique identity in Indian Literature as well as in world literature in 1930's. Women writers started emerging from

the second decade of the eighteen century. Women writers started evolving in such a way they started breaking all the hurdles set by the society .They truly expresses their ideas, experiences and feelings of the women in an exceptional way. Patriotic themes were brought out in literature at the time of independence struggles. The Nightingale of India, Sarojini Naidu started expressing her ideas, aesthetic sense towards poetry at the same time she showed concern for the nation. Later on many feministic themes were put forth by Indian feministic writers like Nayantara Sahagal, Kamala Das, Kamala Markendaya, Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy, Ruth Pawar Jhabvala, Kiran Desai, Shashi Deshpande and many more. One such prolific writers of contemporary literature is undoubtedly Sudha Murthy, she portrays the new women who is educated, intelligent and self-sufficient yet they are more self-sacrificing in this present era. At one point they ascertain their individual identity and become self-assured and ambitious.

Sudha Murthy completed her engineering from BVB College of engineering. She scored overall first rank from all the branches in engineering. She finished her M.Tech in Computer Science in Bangalore at Indian Institute of Science .She was the only girl in her classroom while she was in college. She was the first women engineer in Telco. IIT Kanpur awarded her honorary doctorate degree in 1969. She is the co-founder of Infosys. Her husband is Narayana Murthy chairperson of the Infosys foundation.

She is fluent in three languages such as Kannada, Marathi and English. She had philanthropically contributed to the society. She is the recipient of the prestigious PadmaShri and Padma Bhushan award. Sudha Murthy emphasizes on new conflicts that emerges in family relationships, particularly the relationship between husband and wife. The most significant aspect that the title suggests is the scientific and symbolic elucidation of Bakula is to be examined. Sudha Murthy's protagonist Shrimati explores a new perspective to compare her with the current situation like that of the Bakula tree sheds its fragrant flowers with that of her husband's love relationship that started to fall apart. Thus Sudha Murthy enchantingly explores the basic state of women psyche very minutely.

Sudha Murthy's Shrimati seems to be a shy type and intelligent personality. Later after an elongated journey of self-sacrifice and dedication that too without any complaints, she manages to discover her true self to reach out her dreams. Thus she portrays the real issues faced by the new generation women of modernity world that's keeps on changing. This present paper highlights the cognitive issues of Shrimati's love with her husband Srikanth's love and vice versa as well as taking into account the scientific and symbolic elucidation of Bakula tree in Sudha Murthy's "Gently Falls The Bakula".

**Scientific study of Bakula tree:**

Bakula tree is scientifically named as *Mimusops Elengi*, it belongs to the family of Sapotaceae. It is now considered as an exotic species. The other names are Spanish cherry, bullet wood, Indian Medlar, Maulsari, Madhu Gandha etc. Bakula is seen widespread in India and in others places also. It is considered as the provincial flower of Thailand and country flower of Malaysia. Its trunk has heavy timber, dark grey in colour, reaches the height of 16 to 18 meters .It has a shiny, broad and smooth pointed leaves.

Bakula tree has a wide range of uses, every part is been used effectively. Let us list out some of the common uses. Its flower, fruit, seeds, bark and timber are used as coolant, astringent, anthelmintic and tonic. It is used for treating loose teeth, pyorrhea, and dental caries and bleeding gum fixing. Its timber is very strong and tough with reddish tone as it is rightly called commonly as Heartwood or Sapwood.

### **Chirapushpa:**

English people call bakula tree as Indian Medlar, Hindi it is called as Maulsiri, and in Tamil it called Makilam, Bagulam or Alaku, in Kannada it is Bakula, Pagade or Bakulada hoovugalu. The most important aspect of the name Bakula means the tree that grows quickly in Sanskrit.it is also termed as “Chirapushpa” as it remains for many days. ‘Spatika’ is yet another name adorned to bakula which means crystal, specifying its purity and meant to be utilized for spirituality. Its flowers season is the indicator of the arrival of spring or Basant in India. The bakula flowers are star shaped highly aromatic slight yellowish white in colour with the crown rising from the center. During the evening hours these blossoms fall on ground but the fragrance remains for few more days. In Indian Hindu mythology it is said to be Vakula.it is believed that when the flowers begin to bloom, it is been sprinkled with nectar from the mouth of lovely woman. Its scent is such aromatic and divine.

Bakula flowers are very small white in colour with two diameter. It blooms and falls in ground the next day spreading its heady fragrance allover. It is opted to be planted in gardens and parks as it provides much shade, shelter for birds and above all the scented flowers fill the will aroma that is very pleasing and pleasant. Though its colour is little dull and not bright it is used in between the garlands for its rich aroma, it enhancing the beauty with its star shaped blossoms. The floral sun dried flowers that are fully bloomed are infused in preparing aromatic green tea in Thailand for its rich benefits.it contains Quersitol, Lupeol, Linoleic acid and Oleic acid.

### **Symbolic study of Bakula:**

Symbolic representation of the falling of the aromatic bakula flowers are compared to the fading of love in the love marriage of Shrikant with Shrimati. In the same way Shrimati’s

sweet-scented love life has also started to disappear or fall, losing all of its hope. Now she has attained only the subordinate position and the first place being occupied by the carrier accomplishment of Shrikanth in his profession. Shrimati's funded much of her time, ideas, and energy only for her husband's advancement, thereby she dedicated her personal desire. As the bakula flowers fall to ground, her love life started to lose its fragrance slowly and unnoticeably. One more thing that Sudha Murthy implies symbolically is the placement of the bakula tree, that it is placed near their bedroom. This specific placement location of the bakula flowers that's near their bedroom is the true symbolic representation of spreading its exotic fragrance and later falls gently fading its aroma.

Shrikanth room faced the bakula tree. Throughout the year, the mild scent of the bakula wafted in through his window. He had developed a special attachment to these flowers and so he opposed his mother's idea of cutting the tree. (17)

Shrikanth was literally concerned for the bakula tree which too is the symbolic representation of his care and affection towards her love of life .later for career advancement he has no time to spent with her wife Shrmati, their love started to fade like that of the fading aroma of bakula flowers.

Sudha Murthy points out that,

“Someone like Shrimati, who never ever demanded anything from her husband, was rare” (142).

Characters like Shrimati are one in thousands, she is intelligent and competent enough to tackle all the life situations. She remains calm and composed keeping aside her dreams and goals leading to the loss of self-identity. The conservational familial pressure is also one of the reason that they forget their actuality and keep on working for their family members regularly.

### **Conclusion:**

Many of the new upcoming young generation women are equally resourceful, refined, and exclusively competent, even though they still suffer of suppression and abandonment. Moreover they are taken for granted without any appreciation for the work they provide for the betterment of the family. Thus Sudha Murthy symbolically equates the true psychic feelings of Shrimati to that of the gently falling of the bakula flowers to the love attachments that are intentionally losing its fragrance as that of bakula flowers. Thus undoubtedly Sudha Murthy brings the real picture of today's women and the way they handle their inner thoughts in a symbolic representation from the nature to convey the real feelings of a women.

Let us conclude this paper with a little trial of bakula poem of mine,

*Breezing gentle airflow  
Beauty at its fullest grow.  
Bounty trunk grown tall,  
Bakula flowers bloom and fall  
Before flowers fragrance fade  
Beneath they lays in shade  
Bestowing its fragrance in the air  
Beneficiary bond of Shrimati with Shrikant heir  
Be it a fragrance of bakula sheds its flower  
Belittled Shrimati sheds her tears,  
Best is the time to rediscover her  
Born are women with sheer desire.  
Being more sacrificial in attitude  
Both men and women attribute,  
Better they reciprocate with gratitude.  
Being alive as housewife is not true life  
Bounce back to re-discover and realize,  
Bright future seems to rise  
Begin with a new inner drive  
Blissfully it's time for self- strive.*

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