

# Meena Kandasamy

(1984 – Present)





## Meena Kandaswamy

### Books:

- When I Hit You: Or, A Portrait of the Writer as a Young Wife
- The Gypsy Goddess
- Touch
- AYYANKALI: A Dalit leader of Organic Protest
- Ms Militancy
- Exquisite

- Ilavenil Meena Kandasamy is a modern Indian poet, fiction writer, translator and activist who is based in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India. Most of her works are centered on feminism and the anti-caste Caste Annihilation Movement of the contemporary Indian milieu.
- Meena Kandasamy has actively sought to combine her love for the written word with the struggle for social justice through poetry, translation, fiction and essays for the last fifteen years.
- From 2001-2002, she edited The Dalit, a bi-monthly alternative English magazine of the Dalit Media Network.
- Apart from her literary works, she is vocal about various contemporary political issues relating to caste, corruption, violence, and women's rights in more ways than one. She has an influential and regular social media presence, through her Facebook and Twitter handles. She also writes columns for platforms like Outlook India and The Hindu, occasionally.

“Let me tell you something that goes against popular wisdom. Love is not blind; it just looks in the wrong places.”

– **Meena Kandasamy**

Born: 1984

Pen name: Meena

Occupation: writer, activist, translator

# Lines Addressed to a Warrior



- The central image of the poem is the metaphor of the human body in relation to a country. Violence is a recurring element in the poem, ‘machine guns’ ‘the songs of wrath and those of war’, ‘ words that echo of gun fire’. Violence is inevitable in conquests and invasions. Colonisation is synonymous with wars and battles. This violent imagery in the country is also resonant with physical violence and abuse.
- Another important element is the metaphor of writing, making history and recording it – ‘set up your home your office the writing desk’, ‘so script your stories here’, & chronicled across my line of down.
- The poem is dedicated to a soldier of the colonial world. The poet is addressing him in a bold yet amorous way to colonise her as if she is a country who has been conquered by the brutal colonisers.
- Lines like “If everything comes crashing down” are replete with the trope of body and corporeal images used to portray the entire spectrum of emotions like love, desire, passion, dejection, despair and scorn, making the body not just the vehicle for physical gratification but something sublime.

## More places to check out:



- **YouTube - Indian feminist poet Meena Kandasamy on resisting patriarchy and the caste system :**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=elqAzL1Dcxl>
- **YouTube - Meena Kandasamy at Poetry Africa, Durban:**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kCmQGGJosTM>
- **MEENA KANDASAMY - POET & WRITER:**  
<https://www.kandasamy.co.uk/>
- **Similar Poets:**
  - Tishani Doshi
  - Arundhati Subramaniam
  - Kamala Suraiyya Das