An Unknown Girl

In the evening bazaar studded with neon an unknown girl is hennaing my hand. She squeezes a wet brown line from a nozzle. She is icing my hand, which she steadies with hers on her satin-peach knee. In the evening bazaar for a few rupees an unknown girl is hennaing my hand. As a little air catches my shadow-stitched kameez a peacock spreads its lines across my palm. Colours leave the street float up in balloons. Dummies in shop-fronts tilt and stare with their Western perms. Banners for Miss India 1993, for curtain cloth and sofa cloth canopy me. I have new brown veins. In the evening bazaar very deftly an unknown girl is hennaing my hand. I am clinging to these firm peacock lines like people who cling to the sides of a train. Now the furious streets are hushed. I’ll scrape off the dry brown lines before I sleep, reveal soft as a nail trail the amber bird beneath. It will fade in a week. When India appears and reappears I’ll lean across a country with my hands outstretched longing for the unknown girl in the neon bazaar.

Comment [U1]: These are repeated 3 times – Divide poem into 3 three sections:
-Girl + Henna process
-India + Where she is
-How she wants to stay

Short lines (spontaneous) + No stanzas
-Different = Non western
-Short time in India
-Doesn’t want to end = No stanzas

It is also a cycle because first words similar to last words – coming and going, process will happen again and again

Comment [U2]: Hennaing = trying to adopt Indian culture but it is only temporary, like the henna it won’t last

Comment [U3]: Enjambment
-Everything is so fast – her time in India is running through her hands
-So full of energy, it runs over the lines

Comment [U4]: “Specifically India” Exotic – represents India, beautiful needs to be explored, opened up, lively and colorful

Comment [U5]: Possibly Indians influenced by the west, or Western tourists who look out of place, or mannequins modeling Western clothes which look awkward and don’t belong there

Comment [U6]: -Artificial
-Fake = ‘Miss World’ one of the worst examples of western influences
-Out of place, West is intruding India

Comment [U7]: All the things surrounding her represents India. The word “Canopy” suggests how she feels India is protecting her

Comment [U8]: 1 sentence – short, definite and imply sense of pride
-Discovered new things as if India is a part of her, in her ‘vein’
-New life in India

Comment [U9]: Repetition of “an unknown girl” to emphasize the fact that she is mysterious like India, it also the ‘unknown’ side of the persona

Comment [U10]: Feeling of desperation to hold on
-wants to find out more
-can’t let go

Comment [U11]: Simile compared to the people who cling to the train sides, those people usually hold on very tightly because if they let go they would die

Comment [U12]: Digging Deeper into “India”
-Scraping pass the surface

Comment [U13]: Sibilance = soft, gentle, smooth, time not going fast

Comment [U14]: Although she is desperate to hold on to the memories about India, it will still fade because henna suggests that it’s temporary, she will not have enough of it
-Tone = Regret

Comment [U15]: Begging, Desperate to stay