

I BELIEVE

Before we go to a line-by-line analysis of the poem, we should note some crucial points about the structure, style and the theme of the poem.

Structure: The poem I Believe is a very simple poem of some 18 lines, consisting of six stanzas of three lines each.

Style: The poem is written in Free Verse with no particular rhyme or metre followed in writing the poem. The poem is also full of imagery and symbolic expressions, metaphors and alliteration.

The Theme: The poem is about the **limitless possibility in a man** – the things that the poet think or rather believe, we human beings can do, can achieve, can dream of and can aspire for. Hence, **the title** of the poem is “I Believe”.

Since the poetess is coming from a primitive tribe and is a woman, this also indicates to the theme of **women-empowerment**, especially of those coming from his tribe or the likes. A woman is trying to get rid of the typical role of a cook and the sole aim of getting married. She wishes that the women take inspiration from the other women who have already achieved success.

The Message: The poem is a very inspiring poem. All the first five stanzas of the poem begin with the expression “I believe” and the last stanza with “But I firmly believe”. This very expression strikes the positive keynote of the poem. The poet Sangma motivates the readers with her ideas, and makes us believe that we really can do wonders, if we wish to. So, the message? Believe in yourself; you can do wonders.

Summary and line by line analysis of the poem “I Believe”

I believe if a pebble is thrown upwards
I can pierce the heavens
And see the angels at play

In this first stanza, the poet-speaker says to have developed a self-belief that if she throws a pebble upwards, she can pierce the heaven and watch the angels at their play.

The lines also have a symbolic layer of meaning. “Pebble is thrown upwards” symbolizes our desire to achieve higher goals and reach higher positions in life. “Pierce the heavens” means reaching the top. The poet believes if she wants and works accordingly to reach great heights in life, she can reach the top. “see angels at play” symbolizes attaining the unattainable. To make it easy, the poet says that she can even do such things that may seem impossible in reality.

I believe I can soar to the heights
Touch the silky clouds
And feel the stars

Again, In the second stanza, almost identical ideas are expressed. The poet believes that she can reach the sky to touch the soft silky clouds and to feel the stars.

Actually the poet is highly ambitious. She desires to achieve great heights in her life by her works. “Touch the silky clouds” indicates the pinnacle of our achievement. Touching the silky clouds also brings a sense of pleasure and glory that we get when we succeed in reaching such great heights. “Feel the stars” indicates being among the achievers (stars) in human history by elevating herself to that status.

I believe I can dive
Right into the depths
And swim with the sharks

The poet Sangma also believes that she can dive deep into the oceans and swim with the sharks.

All these are symbolic. “Dive right into the depth” signifies getting involved in the struggle and race of life. “Swim with the sharks” means facing the challenges on the way of life. The poet means to say that she wishes to swim in the ocean of life, go beyond all hurdles in life and reach the shore safely, i.e., to succeed in the end.

I believe I can claw into the earth's belly
Pick up the priceless gems
And adorn myself with them

In the fourth stanza the poet believes that she can go digging into the “earth’s belly” to pick up the precious gems to adorn herself, that is, to beautify herself.

It means that we should strive to explore the world and find out the natural resources like petroleum and gold that lie hidden and unused. Therefore, we should use those resources to make ourselves happier and our life more colourful. But this is only the surface level meaning.

It may have more than one symbolic meanings. ‘Earth’s belly’ may symbolize our society and the ‘priceless gems’ may refer to the good human qualities such as honesty, sincerity, love, affection, care, trust, etc. The poet may want to pick the good qualities from our society and adorn herself with those to become a woman to be cherished.

In a different interpretation, it may hint at a deeper idea of hunting inside the heart of oneself. If one sees what is inside their heart, one may discover one’s hidden qualities or strengths inside, which can be considered as priceless gems. Then she would be able to ‘adorn’ herself with those qualities that lay hidden inside her.

I believe I can do many things
Amidst the human angels
Surrounded by the world's treasures

In the fifth stanza Brucellish k Sangma, the poet says that she believes that she has the potential to do wonderful things like the “human angels” who have achieved success in life. She also regards those successful angelic human beings as ‘world’s treasures’. As she is here

amidst so many great achievers, she can do “many things” taking inspiration from them.

But I firmly believe I've to complete
The role assigned to me here
Where I dream and breathe

In the last stanza the poet-speaker's self-belief is very strong. She wishes to complete the duties she has got here on this earth, where she dreams and breathe. So, here is a hint about the importance of this wonderful life that we are gifted with. So should make a good use of it.

Thus the poet goes on to make us feel inspired in performing our duties with a smile, in an otherwise dull and passive life.