**Empower women to make India truly independent.**

**Why always the petite figure in the prim and proper dress**

**Or the docile damsel in distress**

**Why always the stoical spirit who prefers to wait**

**For a Prince Charming to decide her fate**

We breathe in a nation that boasts of more than 70 years of independence while conveniently ignoring half of its population and its perpetual struggle against our deep rooted patriarchal norms.

A 2017 report by the National Crime Records Bureau revealed that as many as 37 crimes against women were reported every hour in India.

The irony of the day and age comes into focus as on one hand, our women are titled as the pride and honour of the country while on the other, the same pride is attacked every second through monstrous acts of sexual abuse, acid attack, infanticide, foeticide and so on.

Women have had their aspirations stifled, their voices suppressed and their dreams trampled upon for ages and we are unabashed to the extent of calling ourselves a liberated nation.

 Baseless notions of gender bias are so deeply etched in our minds that every woman faces discrimination and male dominance in some sphere or other.

 Absolute parity in education and employment opportunities seems a distant dream as most women are still deprived of the basic right to govern their own minds and bodies. They live with the constant fear of being judged and attacked and lead lives that are dictated by the men around them.

 At the age when our girls should be curiously viewing the world, asking questions and discovering their calling, they are gradually conditioned to adapt themselves to the society’s bigoted definition of an ideal woman.  At the age when   they should be raised to fly or at least to stand their ground, their wings are clipped. At the age when their thoughts can be moulded in the most wonderful ways to make them achieve all they desire, they are turned into unquestioning, unassertive and compliant beings.

Empowering women is instrumental not only for them but for the whole country. We have an entire population that is untapped. An entire chunk of our society with concoctions of ideas bubbling within that are waiting to be heard. Malala Yousafzai accurately said

***"We can not all succeed when half of us are held back."***

Now it is upon us whether we want to be limited and inhibited by the fetters of convention or empower our women and become a nation that goes down in history as one where the woman's role in up building the society will astound the world.

**It's time for the trapped soul to flap its wings**

**Time to break free from the shackles and strings**

**It’s time for her to end the wistful wait**

**Time to become the Empress of Her Fate**

* **Mohika Sachdeva**