

# Thee Gouri Narayani — Who art three-eyed

If you are thinking this is yet another piece on our fantasy regarding the quintessential Bengali belle and their mesmerising eyes, then pause. This is exactly that...and perhaps, a little more.

Her eyes are fiery; powerful. The Bengali girl is known for her 'dusky' complexion, the doe eyes; someone with a profound understanding of her culture, which she must carry in her every day affairs.

She is the torchbearer of her roots, a personification of the mother goddess Durga, and anything that falls short is sacrilegious.

Krishnokoli is the doe-eyed girl of Tagore. The girl with unmatched simplicity, yet an epitome of beauty.

To the wanderer who has walked across strange lands, the eyes of Bonolata Sen are as warm as the nest of birds, as both the bird and the wayfarer have been on ceaseless flights, with few stops in-between.

Mystics go silent, but their beating drums proclaim the arrival of the deity, but before devotees can look at the 'protima' — a rite must first be complete.

The effigy that took shape at the dexterity of the *kumar*, must now take form of the goddess!

With a touch of kohl from the priest, as he simultaneously chants hymns in utter seclusion from any mortal other than the pundit himself, the eyes of the effigy are widened with a sharp stroke of *kajol* — the famed kohled eyes.

The inner eye, or the third eye is sharpened and once the process is complete, a creation of the sculptor becomes the deity that is Durga — for all to behold, love, and worship!

It is taken that the image we envision of Durga is what we expect from womanhood. Yet, few can empathise with the burden of carrying divine attributes within a mortal shell.

In figments of our imagination and romances, Bengali women with deer-like eyes speak in submission; they have a naïve glaze that asks questions, but is too meek to seek answers.

