

Adela Zamudio
By Norah

Adela Zamudio was born in Cochabamba, Bolivia, on the 11th of October 1854 and died on 2nd of June 1928. She attended a public elementary school and her father was her tutor. Her mother also taught her literature at home.

She was a playwright, poet, novelist and tutor. She published her first poem at the age of 15 – the name of the poem is ‘Two Roses’. Twenty years later she published her first book. She dedicated herself to writing and teaching. She was a famous writer and a great poet. Her face is on the \$5 Bolivian note and the government named a school after her. She was awarded the Bolivian Crown of Distinction.

She wrote under the pseudonym of ‘Soledad’ which means solitude in English. It reflects her loneliness. She promoted democratic reforms and women’s’ rights and the legalization of divorce. She created the first School of Arts in Bolivia. The government has designated October 11th in remembrance of her birthday as the Day of Bolivian Women. Below is an example of her poetry in an English translation:

To be born a man

She works so hard
to make up for the sloth
of her husband, and in the house
(Pardon my surprise.)
he's so inept and pompous,
that of course he's the boss
because he's a man!

If some poems get written,
a person must have written them,
but she just transcribed them.
(Pardon my surprise.)
If we're not sure who's the poet,
why assume it was him?
Because he's a man!

A smart, classy woman
can't vote in elections,
but the poorest felon can.
(Pardon my surprise.)
If he can just sign his name
even an idiot can vote
because he's a man!

He sins and drinks and gambles
and in a backwards twist of luck
she suffers, fights, and prays.
(Pardon my surprise.)
That we call her the "frail sex"

and him the "strong sex"
because he's a man!

She has to forgive him
when he's unfaithful;
but he can avenge himself.
(Pardon my surprise.)
In a similiar case
he's allowed to kill her
because he's a man!

Oh, privileged mortal
you enjoy lifelong
honor and perfect ease!
For this, to get all this,
it's enough for you
to be born a man.

<http://liz-henry.blogspot.co.uk/2008/11/translations-bolivian-poet-adela.html>

