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OVERCOMING THE PERTURBED MIND: A STUDY ON SHASHI DESHPANDE'S NOVEL "THE BINDING VINE"



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ABSTRACT

Deshpande's "The Binding Vine" shows a realistic picture of Indian society whose life is a series of misfortunes and mishaps. Even though the women are sensitive, intelligent and career-oriented. They express only frustration and disappointment and also their bitter experience. The story has encompassed of women sufferers and how they overcome their distressed mind.

Keywords:

Distressed mind, happiness, sufferings, passive acceptance, and compromise.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Will power is the key to success successful people strive no matter what they by applying their will to overcome apathy, doubt or fear

-Dan Millman

The central consciousness in the novel is that, the narrator Urmila, is a college lecturer, is married to a Navel officer, Kishore. Urmi is been a constant struggle for selfhood and self-definition. Urmi's displeasure with her mother, Inni is deep rooted in her separation from an early age. Right from her childhood days she has sent to her paternal grandmother because of her father is a foremost patriarch and a domineering husband. Urmi's mother has to bear the burnt and blame. She has to survive the rest of her life to brought up her child, Urmi. But urmi has misconstrued ideas that her mother has deliberately sent her child to her mother-in-law for her own convenience .So this separation from her mother imposes on the girl child exactly her own fate, that imparts Urmi's vague relationship with her mother, Inni. This particular state of bonding wheels being out of alignment in Urmi's life, which makes her to lost control and crashed with her inner conflict. But Inni's revelation dispels the lightless of Urmi's misunderstanding, "A sense of being vulnerable and naked, as if some armour I've been wearing all there years- against what?-has fallen off" (200)

Lately Urmi disenchant herself and feels frightened to think of her father's unkindness to her mother, who was carrying the child in her womb. Urmi feels extremely sorry to her mother who is deprived of the right to decide what would be the best for her baby. Therefore Urmi understands her mother and her psychological association has been renewed through her mothering a daughter, at which she is happy to prevail over her distressed mind against her mother Inni. Then Urmi overcomes the state of imbalance stems from the unresolved love-hate relationship between Urmi and her husband Kishore, which she tries to reveal her emotional insecurity, Whenever Kishore goes away from her. He asserts himself sexually rather than understanding that her. But her desires are not physical what she needs a something else. Urmi says, "Each time you leave me the parting life death", she tries to tell two times and both times he finds solution in the physical relationship. So she has bottled her feelings within herself and she evolves an erotic feelings growing within herself, which she deprived of true love and she finds it hard to control her wishes. Urmi is mentally deranged an instance of his image. She says, "I find in myself a frantic grappling for his image, as if in going he has taken that away as well" (164).

The absence of Kishore chip in frustration and loneliness to her life, but she is intelligently overcome the problems. She has realised how vulnerable she is and she has tried to control her erotic delusion that foray into her and she has drowned her thought of love making with Kishore and has recognized that it is no longer necessary. She says, "I soon realised the only way I could come to terms with my sexuality was to recognise it. Now it is no longer necessary"(165).

And she becomes capable of looking after her family with her job in the absence of her husband. At the same time Urmi is in the grief of the death of her daughter, Anu. It is mourn and anguish at the loss of her child and her dreams also has devastated when Anu died. So her desires have shattered and she is tried to suppress everything, even she has felt to die. Though she is educated and financially set up, she finds her lives is meaningless and frazzle. Urmi says, "It was the smell of hopelessness that's what haunts me now, the smell of hopelessness, I've lost hope entirely"(21). Urmi hope is a fragile and she finds there is nothing left, when Vanna talks of a small incident of their girlhood days. When one day Urmi was learning cycling she has fallen of the bicycle and hurts her knees. At this Urmi angrily asked her "what are you trying to say Vanna? why don't you say it straight off"(8). Actually, Vanna is trying to change her mind from her grief, but Urmi is not in the position to listen to her words. She refuses to let go of her pains. She replies to Vanna that the fell off from the bicycle is a lesser pain when it compares to the death of her daughter, Anu. "This pain is all that's left to me Anu. Without it, there will be nothing left to me of her. I will lose her entirely"(9).

Urmi finds it almost impossible to get out of the memories of her dead daughter. She fights with the reminiscences of her daughter. But also she realizes that forgetting is unfaithfulness. She says, "I must reject these memories. I have to conquer them. This is one bottle. I have to win if I am to go on living. And yet my victory will carry with it the taint betrayal. To forget is to betray" (21). She also realizes her accountability and responsibility towards her son who desires her love and affection and watches her anxiously. Urmi says, "we dream much more for our daughter than we do for our sons, we want to give them the world we dreamt of for ourselves"(124).

Then she has taken stern decision to stand strong and live for her boy child, Karthik. She believes that she can manage everything. Her mind tell in a very strong and definite way that something will happen to her that she can holds strong, brave and courage to live her own. As much as 'The Binding Vine' present it is also the story of Mira and Shakutai. One day, Urmi goes to the hospital to meet Vanna, her sister-in-law and friend, who is working in medical social worker. So here Urmi learns of the rape case of Kalpana. While Kalpana admits in the hospital, the outside world moves around her. Shakutai, is the mother of Kalpana, does not want the case to be reported to the police. Because she is afraid that it will spoil their family name and also it will affect the marriage of her second daughter. Shakutai says, "If a girl's honour is lost, what's left? The girl doesn't have to do anything wrong, people will always point a finger at her. Doctor, she turns to him, 'even if it is true, keep it to yourself, don't let anyone know of it, I have another daughter, what will become of her...?'(59).

Shakutai is torn between her motherly feelings for Kalpana, and the same time she is afraid of the dishonor that this incident would bring to her family. Shakutai is in the chaotic state about her daughter because sometimes Shakutai has considered Kalpana as a self-willed person and she says, 'she was good girl, I swear to you, my Kalpana was a good girl', at the other times she talks as if the girl is to blame for what has happened to her due to her stubbornness, she says, "she is stubborn, you can't imagine how stubborn she is", "she didn't even tell me how much her pay was, can you imagine that? Me her own mother"(92).

Being a disappointed woman, she fails to understand her daughter's sense of freedom. Shakutai has a different idea that the girls should not use any cosmetics because it would attract the boys, says "Here boys are like.... They're like dogs panting after bitches. And if you paint and flaunt yourself, do you think they'll leave you alone?"(146). But Kalpana's ideas of life are different from those of her mother's; she loves to dress well and moves around freely. She is on the threshold of her youth and has her own income. But her mother feels that it would attract the male attention. So Shakutai fears come true because Kalpana becomes the victim of lust. Besides its Shakutai who bares the agony, anger, helplessness and fear towards her daughter marriage. Even Urmi tells Shakutai that Kalpana is hurted, injured and wronged by man therefore she is not responsible for anything that has happened to her. But Shakutai fails to understand the logic behind her words. Urmi is shocked to find everyone wants to hush up a rape case, and in the process the rapist is able to get away scot-free. Shakutai says, "Even if it is true, keep it to yourself, doctor, don't let anyone of it"(59).

At last, Urmi gives out Kalpana's story to her journalist friend in order to get justice and it is published. Shakutai gets social attention and many questions are raised. Owing to that Shakutai is hurted and troubled. Even she wishes for her daughter's death, she says to Urmi, "But sometimes I think the only thing, that can help Kalpana now is death"(178).

Then Urmi has managed to get justice for the Kalpana by bringing the culprit to be booked. She gets the case to reopened and with this the identity of the rapist is revealed who is none other than Prabhakar, Shakutai's sister husband. Therefore Urmi has tried to bring some sought of relief to Kalpana by getting the accused punished for his brutal act. Therefore Urmi put whole burden flopped over her shoulder and helped to overcome the problem of Kalpana.

Yet another tale of submission, grief and unhappiness is that of Mira, who is Urmi's mother-in-law. When the novel opens Mira is already dead. She exits her presence through her writings. Urmi becomes familiar with her when Akka, Kishore's step-mother gives Urmi her writing masterpiece. The journals and poems of Mira reveal the pain of a vibrant woman has trapped in an unhappy married life. Mira has an abominable and aversion to sexual relation with her husband, which is stated by her voices to her inner self in her poems and runs through all her writing. Urmi says, "It runs through all her writing, a strong, clear thread of an intense dislike of the sexual act with her husband, a physical repulsion from the man she married"(63).

As a result there has been no place for Mira's sentiments and emotions as a consequence of her encounter with her husband becomes rape within the institution of marriage, she adopts silence as a part of endurance. Her silence and compromise seems to be her tools and she bores everything. From her entries Urmila understands that right from the childhood days Mira hates her Mother who always surrenders to her husband. As a traditional mother, she has her own world of dreams about her daughter and hence she remains content with seeing Mira married and pregnant. So Mira doesn't want to share her feelings to her mother, she puts all her thoughts and sufferings within herself. Hence she opposes every inch of her mother. Even her diary entries tell that when Mira came to her mother-in-laws house, she is christened as Nirmala, the first estrangement from her individuality. Then her meeting with Venu, a poet. His opinion are quite perceptive of the drawback and hardships that women writer have to undergone, so Mira is hurt When she gives him some of her poems to read ,he says "why do you need to write poetry?it is enough for a young woman like you to give birth to children"(127).

Mira plight, her suffering and every flicker of her emotion she confesses frankly and also records her intimate feelings in her dairy. She exhibits her feelings , disapproval and her clear perception of things through her writing which link with happier and light hatred times, she communicates within herself, Urmi says" this is not a daily account of her routine life, but a communion with herself"(51).

Through Mira's poem,Urmi learns a lot of things about her and brings to the light the feelings of Mira which Mira unable to overcome her miseries. Besides, she exposed her inner conflict through her writing and she has convinced herself. Urmi thinks that, "perhaps it was her writing that kept her going that kept her alive"(127)

At last, the poems of Mira resort Urmi so much that she decides to bring her thought back to life by publishing her poems.

2. CONCLUSION

A women should be aware, self-controlled, strong willed, self-reliant and rational having faith in the inner strength of womanhood. An eloquent change can be brought only from within by being free in the deeper psychic sense .Deshpande's novel "The Binding Vine" is a stock of women characters having different perceptions causing difference of opinions among themselves. It causes miseries and unhappiness to them. Mostly women are passive acceptance and they give their voice to inner self and they are not ready to solve the problems, sufferings. But Mira, Urmi and Kalpana have overcome their perturbed mind by solving their problems.

3. REFERENCE

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