

## ***Inferiority Complex as a Cause of Destruction of Happy Married Life in Shashi Deshpande's "The Dark Holds No Terror"***

***Mamta Sharma\****

*The present paper is based on a famous novel, "The Dark Holds No Terror" by Shashi Deshpande. In this paper, efforts have been made to present how Sarita's financial self dependence hurts Manohar's ego. It is also highlighted that to what extent, a husband can go to hurt a financially superior wife. Marriage is a bond of trust, love and equality but it is widely observed that monetary independence of a wife hurts the ego and self respect of a husband. Same thing has been presented in the paper that how a wife's financial superiority hurts a husband mentally in the novel "The Dark Holds No Terror".*

[**Keywords** : Husband's ego, Inferiority complex, Superior wife, Depression, psycopath husband]

The present paper describes the story of Sarita and Manohar's married life. In this paper, deep study of Shashi Deshpande's novel,

---

\* Associate Professor & Officiating Principal, Department of English, D.N. (PG) College, Gulaothi-245408, Uttar Pradesh (India) E-mail: <drmantasharma29@gmail.com>

“The Dark Holds No Terror” has been made. The paper throws light on the mental condition of a neglected husband who is a complete failure and whose wife is a successful self dependent working lady. It has been shown that how a happy married life becomes a living hell when Sarita becomes a famous and good doctor and gets respect from everyone in the society to such an extent that Manohar was known by the name of his wife Doctor Sarita. This is a very famous novel, and theme of the novel is very deep and heart-touching. Shashi Deshpande comments about her novel, “The Dark Holds No Terror is, of all my novels, the one dearest to me. Perhaps this is because it is the one that came closest to the vision I had of it when I conceived it. Perhaps it is because it was this book that gave me the never-to-be-experienced-again happiness of a first acceptance” (Deshpande).

In this novel, Sarita is an aspiring doctor who works very hard to fulfil her desire of being a doctor. In her college days, she comes in contact with a boy, Manohar, and she falls in love with him at the first sight. He became so important for her that she kept on thinking about him only. But, she was a brilliant student and never forgot her aim of being a doctor and help people. As the exams approached, she worked hard and finally qualifies the exam and becomes a successful doctor. Meanwhile, she and Manohar kept of meeting and these meetings made them come close to each other and they finally got married together. Manohar was a caring husband in initial years of marriage, their life was happy and smooth. After few years of marriage, when Sarita got busy with her duty of being a doctor and serve the patients, Manohar felt neglected. Due to her work, Sarita was not able to give proper time to Manohar which resulted in destruction of their married life. Any relation is successful only when time is given to it and when both the people equally share responsibilities of their relationship. Lucretia Mott in her quote aptly supports the above thought as she says, “In the true marriage relation, the independence of the husband and wife is equal, the dependence mutual and their obligations reciprocal.”

In the marriage relation of Sarita and Manohar due to Sarita’s busy schedule, the closeness turned into distances. They do not find time to make love to each other because whenever Manohar was eager to make love to Sarita, she always used to express her disinterest in love making due to whole day’s busy schedule and tiredness. Sarita wanted to relax and have sound sleep at night

while, on the other hand, Manohar insisted Sarita for love making. This attitude of Sarita towards her married life created frictions between them. Manohar used to feel neglected and unwanted. Slowly, as time passed, Sarita got promotion in her work and she got more and more busy and more and more famous. In the locality also, people used to respect her more than Manohar. They used to greet her everywhere addressing her as doctor sahab. Manohar's ego was already hurt because of negligence of his wife Sarita, which increased a lot when people used to know Manohar by the name of his wife Doctor Sarita. It has been observed and is very common when a husband is known by the name and fame of his wife, he gets hurt, depressed and his ego gets hurt. He used to feel like an object or like a slave to his wife. The same thing is said by Plutarch in a quote, "Men who marry wives very much superior to themselves are not so truly husbands to their wives as they are unaware made slaves to their position." It is seen that husbands do not want their wives to be superior to them. Martial also supports this thought as he says in a quote, "Do you ask why I am unwilling to marry a rich wife? It is because I am unwilling to be taken to husband by my wife. The mistress of the house should be subordinate to her husband, for in no other way, Priscus, will the wife and husband be on an equality."

However, there was no such intention of Sarita to hurt Manohar's feelings and ego but along with the time, as her fame increased she unknowingly, hurt Manohar's ego. It has been observed, that according to society if a husband earns more than his wife it is normal but if wife earns more than her husband, it is seen like something strange and illogical. The same thought is supported by SukanyaShil as she rightly questions, "If the husband earns more that is natural...But if the wife earns more than the husband it is unnatural... It hurts the ego of the man. Why?"

In society, people talk about giving equal rights to women as to men. On one side, they talk about equality and women empowerment but when the woman tries her best in her career or work field and surpasses male race, the same society tries to bring her down by negative thoughts like if a wife will earn more than the husband she would get control of all the household and she would treat her husband like a slave and this will lessen the respect of a husband in society and he would not be able to face the people because they will call him a failure as compared to his wife. This thinking of the society that the control of the house should be in the hands of husband only

and not in the hands of the wife, has destroyed many homes and has burned many married lives, turning happy couples into enemies who start hating each other. Same thing happened in married life of Sarita and Manohar.

As time came, when she started earning more money than Manohar, this added fuel to fire. At night time, Manohar used to hurt Sarita during love making. He used to hurt her by nails, bites her and hurts her even by hands. He used to act like a complete unsatisfied beast in bed at night, and a normal caring husband the next morning. This was the result of Sarita's negligence towards Manohar and his emotions and feelings, which turned Manohar who was a caring husband in the starting to a psycho, with split personality who is a wild beast at night and normal husband the next morning. But Sarita's attitude towards Manohar was not at all intentional. She, too, wanted to give time to her husband but her working hours and responsibilities of a doctor kept her busy all the time. She, too, wanted to discuss the problems of a working wife in career with Manohar but finds herself unable to do it. Dr. Prem Sagar and Smt. Raka Varshney comments in relation to the aforesaid lines as they say, "She wanted to talk to her husband about the difficulties she was facing due to lack of support, a working wife required from her husband, but she could not speak of it due to a strange hesitation." (Sagar & Varshney, p. 40)

Slowly and gradually, Sarita unintentionally started to dominate her husband and things got worse. Herbert Spencer aptly comments about the situation, "The present relationship existing between husband and wife, where one claims command over the actions of the other, is nothing more than a remnant of the old leaven of slavery. It is necessarily destructive of refined love; for how can a man continue to regard as his type of ideal a being whom he has, by denying an equality of privilege with himself, degraded to something below himself?" Dominance of Sarita and negligence towards married life turned Manohar into a psychopath. He went into depression and used to hurt Sarita so much that Sarita wished to escape anywhere from the home, away from her husband. She had no-one to share her feelings because she was a kind of abandoned by her family because of an accident in the childhood years when by mistake his younger brother, Dhruva, was drowned and her mother called Sarita responsible for the death of Dhruva, her younger brother. The time went by and relation of Sarita and Manohar kept

on decaying. One day, when Sarita came to know about her mother's death, she went to meet her father. This was a good chance for Sarita to escape away from home, escape away from the tortures and beatings of Manohar, where she could breathe freely for few moments. But when she reached her parental home, she felt like an unwanted guest as her father did not welcome her and infact, he was shocked to see Sarita as if she is an unwanted person who visited the house. Sarita felt as if her father is behaving like a stranger with her initially. But she, somehow, collected all her courage and stayed for few days in her father's house but still she felt as if she has done some mistake by coming to her parental home because of the cold response from her father's side. She, then, started missing her children, Abhi and Renu. But this was the time when she got some time from her busy schedule for herself for her family's welfare. This was the time when she deeply thought about her husband, Manohar, that what forced Manohar to turn from a loving and caring husband into a monster who tortured her wife in bed. It is rightly said that it is in our hands in which direction we take our life to. Life is full of struggles. Everyone has two choices, one is to face them as they come and second is to escape from them. Dave Willis aptly supports this idea as he comments, "Every struggle in your life will become a story someday. It will either be a story about how you got stronger and persevered or a story about why you gave up. You can't always choose your struggles but you can choose which story becomes true."

Sarita also decided to give her marriage another chance. She decided to return back to home to Manohar and her children, Abhi and Renu. She finally makes her mind to treat depression and split personality problem of her husband, Manohar, with her love, time, care, attention and affection. She decides to save her married life and gets filled with new hopes and a new morning.

**Conclusion :** Efforts have been made in this paper to bring out the theme of the novel, "The Dark Holds No Terror". Psyche of a male is discussed very deeply, which suggests that a husband's ego gets hurt when her wife earns more money and more respect than him in society. On one hand, society gives importance of equality between husband and wife on the other hand, it cannot see a wife earning more money, name and fame as compared to husband. As always is seen, the society is chauvinistic and biased, where there is one set of rules for men and other set of rules is for women. However, it is mutual understanding, support and cooperation that is important in

a married life. A successful marriage depends on the mutual understanding of the couple and patience from both sides. It is in our hands where we take our life and what story we create in our life.

## References

Davewillis, “A Quote on Pintrest”. <http://www.DAVEWILLIS.ORG>

Deshpande, Shashi. “Note from the author”, *The Dark Holds No Terror*, New Delhi : Penguin Books, 1990. Print.

Martial. In Libquotes. <http://www.libquotes.com>

Mott,Lucretia. In her quote in Libquotes. <http://www.libquotes.com>

Plutarch.<http://www.quotefancy.com>

Sagar, Prem & Varshney, Raka Chapter wise Summary in “The Dark Holds No Terror”. Laxmi Narain Agarwal Publishers. Agra. Print.

Shil, Sukanya. Quotes & Writings by Sukanya Shil, in Your Quote. <http://www.YourQuote.com>

Spencer, Herbert. Quotes about Love between A Husband And Wife, *Famous Quotes*. <http://www.morefamousquotes.com> ★