CHAPTER – III

THE EXPANSE OF POETIC WORLD:
UNRAVELING POETIC SENSIBILITY
THE EXPANSE OF POETIC WORLD:
UNRAVELING POETIC SENSIBILITY

A poem is a composite art symbol and is a signature of aesthetic competence. Gauri Deshpande excels in her poetic creativity and the fabric of sensibility that she articulates is not only significant but also innovative. The enduring quality of her poetry is not only a sum total of past heritage but is also referential, expressive and connotative. Gauri Deshpande is a name that the critic and the reader of Indian English Poetry cannot by-pass without leaving a conspicuous lacuna in his repertoire. As for her post of prestige in the tradition of the genre, she is, no doubt, with Toru Dutt, Sarojini Naidu and Kamala Das, comfortably bolstered up by the merit and the body of work that she has to her name. The structural manipulation of a poem is equally interesting and the canon of her English Poetry so far includes three collections, namely, Between Births (1968), Lost Love (1970), and Beyond The Slaughter House (1972) with a total of eighty poems, presumably and hopefully excluding the ones not published and not anthologised so far, depict the female psyche as well as the imagery with which her primary concerns are underlined. To mark out the singular features of each of these collections, separate slots are assigned to each.
Between Births was published in 1968 and has twenty-six poems. The first poem Death explores the heart of the beloved who is impatiently waiting for her “a tardy lover for surrender”. The beloved knows that love is a route to death – death of freedom, death of individuality and death of one’s peculiar whims but still she is determined for the holy seven steps that will “Make him/my ally” (18-19). Unlike feminist poets like Kamala Das, Gauri Deshpande believes that love is conjugality, bliss, togetherness as says “Slipping on this death” (9). In the succeeding canto of the poem the “frantic effort” to reach out to one’s lover is still maintained. The female and the feminine are juxtaposed. The female is defined in terms of role that of a wife, of a mother and above all that of a human being whereas feminine in terms of love, tenderness, affection, generosity and sacrifice which is innate and inherent in Indian tradition. The negation of oneself is also suggested by expressions like “Here’s where you’ve brought me, my meager brown path/This is the end” (34-5). The willingness to merge one’s identity with the domesticity at large is suggested with noticeable modesty and equal amount of humanity:

My brother who held my hand at every bend,
My lover about whose neck I must fall now
Must fall on my shadow, end this duality now.

(31-3)

In the third canto the woman in the poet recollects all that it longed for. The commitment of a woman to her expansive social realm has reduced her personal demands
to a decipher. The longings are conveyed through the cycles of seasons, where she feels sorry for the poor summer that has disappeared so early and the quick winter that interrupted her love making with a shocking suddenness. Nevertheless she reconciles to her fate and re-assures her weary self that the 'self' now accepted is her 'real self' and the 'glorified self' would never merge with her real existence and that death would end the two selves when she becomes the same brown path. The pangs of lost love is romanticised in the fourth canto where she debates her walk through “long and windsome streets” to her final union with her lover. There is a sense of resignation and a note of despair denoted through “a starred black sky” and the poet questions her own memory about the cognition of a goal recognising the steps of her lover.

A strong vein of sexuality is equally noticeable in Gauri Deshpande’s poetry- a trait that she shares with Kamala Das. For example in the last stanza of the poem she recollects the infatuations and the carnal pleasure she enjoyed as play of sexuality .The poem also defines the intensity of passionate love which makes a soul weary even after the elapse of ages. The search of the lover is the angst of the soul where by the lonely heart, “return to beg for the sanctuary/not of love only of your arms”(71-2).

The Hangman Awaits resonates with the aftermath of sexuality. The beloved is afraid of social harassment and is deadly afraid of social ostracization. The noose frightens her as nightmare and she ventures into terrifying
regions of fear and shame. The fear of noose haunts her like a cruel passion and she feels murder chasing her day after day. The feminine soul imagines her ugly fate and she fears public laughter every midnight. The soul is so agonized that it visualizes horrid images:

That's one murder too many.
So night in night out
I can see the noose wait
but fear to tremble,
as I may quake the house.

(19-23)

The poem details the venture of a soul, which is none other but a ‘reflexive subject’. The soul wallows in self-pity and the poem details an intellectual compassion through objectifying the nagging sorrow. Nevertheless the poem intellectually delineates the problems of female community at large.

Sexuality for women is still a hush-hush issue. A woman also suffers from the longing of love as her counterpart but is forced to suppress her urge and suffer from want of love in total privateness. The problem of not expressing one’s love in open as a male counterpart does, a woman’s suffering gets subjected to social disparity. Such problems are interestingly defined by Gauri Deshpande in her poetic verses. The nature of such a problem can be substantiated as the ultimate subject of a creative objective. Kauffmann’s essay brings this idea full circle when she states:
Writing about your self does not liberate you. It just shows how ingrained the ideology of freedom through self-expression in our thinking. (Feminisms, 1102)

The sense of guilt that Gauri Deshpande subtly hints is the public private dichotomy related to sex. The dichotomy of a woman in Gauri Deshpande calls for a bargain in love with a male in order to realise the glory of womanhood but the social dictates, suppresses her urge and names shame as a filthy urge. The psyche of a woman therefore gets interestingly represented as a generalised notion in the body of the text.

'Thinking Disgustedly' is a widely appreciated poem of Gauri Deshpande. The poem is dramatic in essence for it celebrates a situational irony to attack the self-centered sexual perspective of the male society. Here the wide gap between the male and the female in the approach to love is interestingly suggested. The poet once again recalls how she escorted a blind man with "Pale blue eyes"(6), "dark lashes"(7), and "beauty in his eyes"(10) across the street. The dragging was done with a force "A fury" and "with rage"(15). The poet was thanked gropingly for the same but her beauty was not realised through her touch which was offensive to her woman image and the feminine self in her was lost in despair. The poem intelligibly elaborates what Yusula L Guim speaks in one of her essays:

The essential gesture of the father tongue is not reasoning, but distance- making a gap, a space,
between the subject or self and the object or other. .... The father tongue is spoken from above. It goes one way. No answer is expected or head.

The mother tongue, spoken or written, expects an answer. Its conversation, a word the root of which means 'turning tongue'. The mother tongue is language not as mere communication, but as relation, relationship. It connects.... Its power is not in dividing but in binding."(Feminisms, 1107)

The poem projects male dominance in terms of gender identity where a woman is deprived of 'a core identity' that a man continues to enjoy from ages and still wants to retain it as a prized trophy. Gauri Deshpande attempts to debate the ambiguity and division related to gender roles in the sphere of life at large whether it is the psychological, biological, economic or social realms.

The Female of the Species maintain the spirit of the poem Thinking Disgustedly. The poem marks the distinction between a male and a female gaze in measuring the life lead in togetherness. For a woman life constructed with love is separate and is a reconstruction of two selves as symmetry of two genders. Feminity is not merely an emotion but is also architecturing of ones emotion and ones perception. To a woman her life and family is not merely the history of domesticity but an assertion of the best in her. It is a unified representation of the harmonious utility of two genders striving for core
identity. The memory of love and family or sexuality is a metaphysical sensibility. Gauri Deshpande therefore depicts how a woman relates to another woman when she introspects her domestic privileges. The process of depersonalising her-self as making an object entity is the manifestation of 'waste' for creative togetherness. Her urge of expansion and collective recognition makes an eager learner and a quick repentant. For this a woman commonly relates her heart to another woman may be a mother or a daughter or a friend or, a woman passer-by. A man commonly keeps away from such bettering sessions and therefore shows no interest and involvement even if a woman catches hold of a man for such urging. Therefore a woman eagerly identifies with her daughter or mother or a woman at large. Adrienne Rich describes this process as "re-visioning". Commonly men keep away from this process, as they attach no representative value to it. The poem is written in conversational tone and is specifically a woman's discourse with a woman. The ungratefulness of children is commonly the key topic and a woman finds in a male a poor hearer to such tales of agony and despair.

Virtue Too details the harassment a woman undergoes in the name of sexual ideology. It is because of ambivalent ideological perspective that Gauri Deshpande describes virtues as "Stinging rewards". The woman in Gauri Deshpande is suppressed under the pressure of virtue and is forced to wear a garb of comliness, which she unwantingly surrenders too. She has no hesitation to admit that virtues are no baton to deviating souls. The
hypocrisy of the so called righteous would stuns a soul and she wonders when the real face would emerge and what would bring equal rules for man and woman. No matter what is the social set up, the patriarchal hierarchy has spoiled the sanctity of the righteous world:

But to tell the truth I haven’t got the strength to let anyone else see how sleepugly faces can be with the aid of virtue.

(12-5)

One can discern a strain of anger in Gauri Deshpande’s poetry at the social and moral attitudes of the society towards woman in general. Gauri Deshpande echoes what Simone D Beauvoir once stated:

One is not born a woman; one becomes one. ... The situation of woman is that she – a free and autonomous being like all creatures – nevertheless finds herself living in a world where a man compels her to assume the status of the other. The marginalised, trivialised woman subjected to the politics of patriarchy is a woman full of intensities of a throbbing heart and a palpitating soul. (The Second Sex, 197)

A Sentimental Journey illustrates the essence of an emotional soul. The emotional contours are wonderfully described in terms of epithets and similes. On entering her maiden house she remembers young youthful life and the childhood home fitted around her like a garment in which she immediately slides down to fathom a world of
unlamented remembered moments. The father image to same measure reciprocated with intensity of love. He also gives a glance of “fleetingly, smiling remembrance” (10)

The poet still wondering at the identity of her vibrating heart wonders that togetherness would amount to. The female subjectivity is here projected not only buoyant but also adventurous. The poet still remains afraid and hurries to enjoy the pleasure of the bond which qualitatively she is not sure of. ‘A Sentimental Journey’ is a memory whereby quintessence of masculinity is explored on parallel terms to that of a woman.

On the same levels The Habit is structured and in a way it complements what A Sentimental Journey beholds. Women are upheld as the arch mother figure traditionally ‘a Seeta’ or ‘a Savitri’ but men at large enjoy the liberty of being a human animal but surprisingly they are not subjected to exploitation for their contrives. ‘The Habit’ dramatises the theme through a situational study. The poet lost her puppy dog and cried her heart out at the brutality of the fate. The poet was consoled for the same and was assured that the phase would soon be over. Surprisingly the poet could swim from one rude shock of fate to another with equally tranquil a mind as was expected of her:

I lost an arm
A friend, a child, a shade
And they were right.
I got over it
I got used to it

(9-13)
A woman with her growing age becomes immune to her own subjective self, a state of psyche that Queenie Leavis's *Fiction and the Reading Public* describes as:

If a woman is taken up with a house all day, she doesn't want tales about married problems or misunderstood wives she knows enough about these already; can't be bothered with dialect after a day's work, and historical novels aren't alive enough. What she enjoys is something that is possible but outside her own experiences.... (195)

The sight of a male coming towards her fills her with a sense of incompatibility and she wonders how she would carve out a solitary space for herself because the society has shaped her in another directed -social- role.

The need for romance is a no-no territory and a woman is forced to shed her utopian desire to settle back in the culturally devaluated sphere of family and men lead society. The resignation of a woman is treated with no compassion and no salutations are paid to her high valued sacrifice. The self-lacerating woman is a bloody image to her own community but not to male counterpart. The self negation of a woman is here put in such simple words that the pain is no way shadowed on the surface and the under current of the pain can only be reached out to proper slot that is objective female:

Now when I see him crossing a street to me, coming swiftly
How am I going to get used to him
It's the first time
And I've no time.

(15-9)
The Guest is a poem of disharmony and of discord in married life. The poem is a picture of deep-rooted gloom and helplessness, which is the fate of a woman since ages. The poem is a crisp note on how a lady surrenders herself in order to make a home for a man but in return a man leaves her “empty, barren and bereft”. The poem is not only charged with emotions but also consists of a transparent display of a private relationship between a man and a woman. The theme of gender exploitation is once again what Adrienne rich says, “Language is a map of our failures as well as our misery and discontentment”. The cruelty perpetuated by male centered man is defined as “Harsh eyes ate into the decay of my dreams” (6). It also talks about how a man remains aloof to the other that he subjugates. His attitude is that of lovelessness and his disharmony is murderous to a woman whose selfless surrender amounts to nothing but pain, a long wait and self-pity.

In the succeeding poem The Air Feels the poet breathes an air of loveliness and romanticises the presence of her beloved in her memory and looks around for his presence. The poet said that the nearness of her lover is a mesmerising experience and an intense desire for his proximity gnaws her soul when he is not there. The waiting of the woman in love is a wonderful expression of feminity.

I Wanted to Weep reflects the pain and suffering. It is a woman’s desperate efforts to hold to a relationship that has gone awry. The void in relationship makes a
woman cry but then a woman has little role in re-making a life or reconstituting a relationship. Her fate remains in the hands of her predator. The poem expresses the abysses in sex harmony, which is discontentment in the congenial climax of love. A woman is subjected to only passive reception of sexual love but is deprived of the authority to express her sexual urge. A woman is trained in suppressing her sexual desire and the word 'sex' is a taboo to her, therefore should not be spoken with loudness. Such a state of a woman is described by Gilman Parking in her book *The Home* as:

> The man needs the wife and has her; needs the world and has it. The woman needs the husband, and has him; needs the world, and there is the husband instead. She stands between her and the world with the best of intentions, doubtless but a poor substitute for full human life. (263)

*Poems in Winter* is a long poem spread to the length of three cantos. The poem is all about the disappointments in love and the rejection of the essence of a woman as a living being. The poem is subjective and the poet speaks the anguish of her rusted heart in the autumn of life. The poet calls her life. The poet calls her day “chapped and wintry” (6) and looks with complete disappointment at the piles of sawdust on image concretizing vast barrenness within her. The satiety is love makes the presence of the lover an unbearable confrontation and the absence there by of the lover is measured rewarding and “fruitful”. The poet then recoils to those yearning which are not only
unknown but also unseen. She also thinks about her love and her desire, which stands, unreached and unrealised. The image of her child after her father does not abridge the vacuum created between the two. The barrenness does not allow any seed of love to germinate and the poet remains depressed and disheartened at the absence of belongingness;

No. For there you are, close enough to kiss
With only this vast
Barrenness of your presence between.

(44-6)

The feminine ideology of ‘individualism’ along with that of gender is elaborately portrayed in order to exemplify the psyche and the fate of the marginalised. This self-representation penetrates the complicating perspectives related to woman as a section of the social whole. The discourse of male commanding voice is vibrant all over the length of the poem and the personal tale takes a colour of impersonal reference where by the narrative become a common woman in her predicament. The woman sexuality unlike that of a male has different parameters, to a man the pleasure is natural and display of masculinity where is to a woman it is extension of oneself both as a giver and receiver. To her sexuality is substantially complex and settle so much so that a man cannot fathoms its depth. Sigmund Freud states:

women's sexual potential as...the beginnings of the sexual life of a girl child are so “obscure” so “faded with time”, that one would have to
dig down very deep indeed to discover beneath the traces of this civilization of this history the vestiges of a more archaic civilization that might give some clue to a woman's sexuality. *(Feminisms, 364)*.

The regressive emotional behaviour of her partner is in a way punished. The poet has cocooned herself remotely from sexual arena of her husband. Here sexuality does not mean satisfaction of carnal pleasure but there is enough that can substitute as amorous resources. Luce Irigaray complements female sexuality as:

But woman has sex organs more or less everywhere. She finds pleasure almost anywhere. Even if we remain from invoking the hystericization of her entire body and geography of her pleasure is far more diversified, more multiple in its differences more complex more subtle than is commonly imagined ... *(Feminisms, 372)*

Lost love reveals Gauri Deshpande's discourse of desire, which in a few verses appears as carnal pleasure. The subtle elevated love that characterised *Between Births* as surrender and submission now takes a colour of body demand – the irrepresible urge to accommodate the demands of the other party. Here the feminine urge for realisation of self through body is made explicit and sexuality in terms of reciprocity is well defined. The poems are written with striking candour and here and there the echoes of Kamala Das may be traced. Kamala
Das believes that a woman has every right to explore herself with haunting sentiments and the articulation of it is no shame, for a woman is as sensitive to life or rather much more sensitive to life than her male counterpart. The non-traditional aspect of sex as a taboo is denounced which is a post modernist approach to social problems and issues. An echo of what Beheroze Sheraff the poet artist declares:

we need to stop seeing each other through man’s eyes and language...we have to have a different women’s voice. (Trends and Techniques In Indian English Poetry by Women of the Post-Independence Era, 76)

Kamala Das and Gauri Deshpande stand unlike each other in their attitude to sex. Gauri Deshpande holds sex to decorum and defines it as sublime realisation where as to Kamala Das it is a normal urge that demands regular satiety as in the case of man folk. To Kamala Das sex is a road to spirituality but for Gauri Deshpande love leads to spirituality but for spirituality sex is not mandatory. What makes the two women stand face to face is their candidness with which they explore the functioning of a feminine soul and a psyche in the sway of sexual urge.

Poem with which the second collection opens, speaks about the man-woman relationship in terms of togetherness. Here Deshpande believes that a woman is more assimilating, more reflecting and more arduous in building up relation as well as in maintaining it than her male partner. A woman is hardly given any space to
develop and maintain her sense of individuality and if she initiates this process then her company is shunned by her male counterpart. Her inner world and her inner mindset are of no concern and no curiosity to her partner. She is demanded and required to be complimentary to her partner's individuality, willingly providing enough space for him to grow and ripen in his individualisation. The question of co-ordination in mutual uplifting is yet a forlorn desire of a woman in the process of self-growth:

You sight me glimpsingly
and won't wait too long,
with a half-smile in your raised eyebrow
will leave me between shores
and walk off.

(11 - 15)

To Gauri Deshpande love is to communicate and to feel divine, it is not a quest for spiritual lover but for spirituality in love so as to transcend the inadequacy of the human life. Gauri Deshpande here does not advocate an authentic recognition by laboured efforts but a spontaneous response to a female throbbing heart and the tender world within. Towards the close of the poem, she expresses the pangs of separation and the strangeness with which her man separates himself and disappears amidst crowd. Gauri Deshpande thereby hints a sense of alienation, which drains the vitality of a feminine soul.

Marks I and marks II are poems of different veins from the earlier one. Here sexuality is once again defined as body changed first and then a state of sublimation. The
discovery of one's blooming with the attainment of youth is the beautiful image that echoes through Marks I — a poem of only ten lines. The poem has a traditional theme — a nubile girl is a measure of anxiety to her parents. The anxiety related to a perfect groom, the inane response of the society and the huge expenses of marriage ceremony adds to the agony of the parents where by the spring of the youth is not enjoyed by the parents and the girl feels lonely in new found world of ecstasy. The worry writ large on her face of her parents adds to her sympathy and she devotes her large time in the measuring of intensifying crow's feet around the eyes.

The bloom of womanliness is there by a secret pleasure, which is marked off and on by the heavy air of her home where future is discussed with many apprehensions. Female subjectivity is well constructed and the poet's narrative related to marriage and sex may be easily internalised because the world depicted embody the harsh reality of every middle class Indian family.

The unobservable consciousness of a female is expressed through words of feeling and emotions equally powerful in the sequel poem Mark II. Here the poet says that her nearly transformed self is now complimented by the society vociferously. Her blooming is noticed, the shine in her eyes and hair is discussed much frequently but quite amazingly these are not regarded as attributes of love.

In an Indian community pre-marital, love is deplorable. Rarely does a sudden transformation in a girl
is rated as miraculous working of love. A youthful heart of a girl does not enjoy the privilege of falling in love and sharing the pleasure of love with her friends and inmates with open admittance. She is made aware of social censure, much before a young heart spontaneously reaches out to some one for satisfaction. The wonder of love is noticed physically in the case of a poet but its essence is not legitimately approved. Once again gender disparity is discussed and the marginals are named as the deprived class.

The Night of the Others is a poem where female sexuality has been described on the basis of masculine parameters. Here once again a woman is pointed as a bundle of servile love whose sexual pleasure is resultant of what a man gives rather than contentment through mutual participation. A female desire is punctuated very rarely and its articulation is misunderstood as waywardness or immorality. She is an object in bed and is deprived of the role of associate subject. So much so that the value of the sexual organ is also undermined and her sexuality amounts to nothing but an imperative dictate by the officious male. Beside the sexual norms of the society deny her any pleasure as she is always labeled as a non-entity that privileges Phallo-Morphism. Luce Irigaray comments on a woman’s sexuality:

For woman is traditionally a use-value for men, an exchange value among men; in other words, a commodity. As such, she remains the guardian of material/substance, whose price will be established, in terms of the standard of their
work and of their need/desire by "subjects": workers, merchants, consumers. Women are marked phallicly by their fathers, husbands, producers. And this branding determines their value in sexual commerce. (New French Feminism.98)

The patriarchialised feminine gender is more accustomed to role-playing than to the self-caressing love and this has deprived the woman of spontaneity in love:

Reluctant, hesitant, returned
from the bulbul's chirp
the milkman's call, the lacy-leaf
to make meaning out of what
was before only understood:
the other.

(9 - 14)

The predicament of the woman is a result of her feminine functions. She has accepted her intellectual inferiority by not taking up any opportunity to compete with man and her work force is ascribed to 'her reproductive specialisation' but with the passage of time a woman has become something more fundamental with a high degree of ability and is now in competition for 'Vital resources and energy' as Jane M Usshar, in The Psychology of the Female Body states:

The doctors and psychologists . . . conceded that it was possible for a woman, if she were sufficiently determined; to dodge the destiny prepared for her by untold eons of evolutionary
struggle and throw in her lot with the brain. But the resulting 'mental woman', if we may so term this counterpart to the natural 'Uterine woman', could only hope to be freak, morally and medically. (Ethreneich and English: 1979: 116)

That a woman is victimised by ideological victimization is what makes her 'herself' an unrecognised space where she functions as a strong support to man and there by add to his masculine power:

A condescension - a profound self distrust . . . like industrial man, the modern woman values industry more than leisure she speaks in every way to externalise her life, to achieve success in men's profession, she feigns to be ashamed of her sexual success in men's claims to be as reasonable, as learned, as expert as any man and her best men friends make the same claim on her behalf. But just in proportion as she lacks a genuine feminine idealism, in as much as she wishes to be something other than herself, she lacks power. The truest obligation of a woman is not to identify her freedom with self-assertion: her blessed privilege to beget children and to serve her family with humility, gratitude and supplication. (The Dance of Siva, 86)

*Summer* is a poem, which defines the age-old territory of a woman amounting to her monotonous triviality. She is subjected to a dull arid living whereby a
woman looses the very charm of life. Thoroughly deflated with no status quo she strangles her pleasure of living in order to maintain domestic harmony. Her contribution in terms of personal and intimate ‘giving’ stands unrecognised and the distant and aloofness with which she breathes through time, shows her complete surrender as an individual being. The predominant cultural value is a bondage to her in her road to independent growth and evolution. Her rejection is her fate with certitude and her direct or indirect exploitation is her fate that only a miracle can alter. The miracle is here conotated as the love of her lover – a state of being in which she proposes to enter a new form of relatedness- “an insight that is not a projection of one’s own wishes and feelings but in awareness of the other person’s unique nature”. Such a kind of love is described as an ultimate value of an individual with wholesome mind. This state of love is not only enduring but also involves care, protection, understanding, sexual gratification and wisdom. Clemens E. Berde in his book The Image of Love describes such love as:

The image of love is not intellectual, nor is it the mutual release of physical tensions. In love two souls speak to each other; yet though they speak through their mouths in a language common to all and through their bodies in emotional expressions as old as the world, they nonetheless feel that what they are experiencing exists beyond space and time, that is something
new in the history of the world and it will not happen again. (25)

Here sexuality is discussed in connection with female psyche through images of vegetative world. The carnal pleasure is internalized by a woman and a message of positive sexual identity is ascertained. The discourse of personal identity in terms of the importance of body is synonymous to womanhood. The satisfaction that a woman derives elevates her ‘self’ from common insipidity of living and a colour of new glamour takes over her living. Here the desire of the flesh is treated as normalcy, which was otherwise categorized as bad and impure in the past ages. Such a woman is named as second archaic type by Betty Friedan as:

The new image opens a different fissure – the feminine woman, whose goodness includes the desires of the flesh, and the career woman whose evil includes every desire of the separate self. The new feminine morality story is the exorcising of the forbidden career dream, the heroine’s victory over the Mephistopheles: the devil first in the form of a career woman, who threatens to take away the heroine’s husband or child and finally, the devil, inside the heroine herself, the dream of independence the discontent of spirit, and even the feeling of a separate identity that must be exercised in order to win. (Sexuality And Love, 40)
'Summer' is an unhappy lyrical poem evoking nostalgia but with the sense of humanism. The poet waits for the touch of love and interestingly this wait is not of hour or of year but of "infinite patience". Such a wait is in harmony with the stereotype of "good woman".

Between Births is a short poem with only eleven lines where by a woman compasses her fate with that of the "mango blossoming" and her end with "the winter jasmine". Interestingly she conveys her subjective situation through vegetative symbols. A woman finds a fulfillment in her progeny-motherhood, which is fundamental of every woman yet her fate does not remain assured of happiness even though she is an embodiment of contentment for the family. The poet expresses the same uncertainty by a mention of "drouth". The ambivalence of physical and universal motherhood is here signified. A nearly similar idea is suggested by Swami Vivekanand who apparently saw the mother as "evil, terror, sorrow and annihilation more than sweetness and joy". The fate of a mother thereby is anybody's guess and the answer is negation. Motherhood and motherliness is characteristic of not only tenderness but also natural sexuality as a central expression of a woman's personality. Helena Deusche differentiates between the two as:

In the motherly woman the narcissistic wish to be loved, so typical of the feminine woman, is metamorphosed; it is transferred from the ego to the child or his substitute, but the narcissistic elements are preserved. The masochistic
components of motherliness manifest themselves in the mother's readiness for self-sacrifice, but in contrast to the attitude of the feminine woman—without demand for any obvious return on the part of the object i.e. the child. (The Psychology Of Woman, 17-8)

The physical surrounding representing reproduction in the forms of images like “mango blossoming” and “the winter jasmine” hints at the whole identity of individual woman.

To Shiva is an expression of the search of that blissful company of a man who is the great unattainable lover. Shiva is that arch image for who the poetess longs for in order to have a blissful culmination of her essence of feminity. To her Shiva is “Indestructible”, “Imperishable”, “Invincible” and “Ever-holy Death of Death”. For such a partner the poet wonders from one male to another in search of Shiva like the myth but the hunt is all in vain. Her expectations express futility and her reach for the impossible is her narcissistic love with her own subjective self. A smack of rebellion under long subjugation is also resonant here. The poem also echoes whimsprings of the cultural incantations; a woman is made to abide by since a very childhood unlike her superior counterpart.

Integration is a woman’s call for physical as well as emotional love. The desire is agonizing but an outlet is sinful as the presentation of the world. Emotional articulation of the love fills up with fear and resentment
and she secretly suffers through physical and emotional starvation of love. Here individual woman is “inevitably positioned in the either end of dichotomy: good/ bad, madonna/ whore, feminine/ career oriented” and such other slots where by she is webbed into contradictory discourses resulting in definition and prescription of behavior. John Berger recognizes this state of categorisation as:

The subject/object contradictions which face women, and which are inherently present in any analysis of the female body. Women can not escape from the dichotomy of being surveyed, of being labeled and categorised, yet of simultaneously surveying ourselves, of placing ourselves in the scheme of things one of the ways in which this contradiction operates is in the categorization of women within the Madonna/whore frame work, which describes the pure, virginal, good woman of her pedestal, unspoiled by sex or sin, her counterpart whore is consumed by desires of the flesh, is dangerous and inherently bad, tempting man from higher pursuits. (The Psychology of Female Body, 92)

The dictates of the flesh is communicated with epithets like “Prowling Unrest” (1) “Fists that clench and Unclench” (3) “Gnawing unrest” (16) etc. This satisfaction of the demand of the body destroys her
elemental self where by she looses her characteristic self and stands shameless for what she cannot labour. The wreck of her self is the wreck of what she upholds as womanliness. The slippage from feminine to female is irreparable destruction. She is expected to be highly economic in her libidinal demands. The threat of disintegration arrests her performitiviy where by the biological and anatomical demands are held behind and the phantasies elude her grip.

The Eclipse is a poem of pain and sorrow, the aftermath of sexualisation. The essence of love is not merely giving and receiving of love but is also essence of frustration, silent suffering, restlessness and suppressed desires. Here love is painted not merely as a romantic sensibility but also mental agony loaded with sentimental effusions, humiliations and hurls that affect a more or less tranquil relationship. Love is here shadowed as connubial adjustment. This suggests the psychic structure totalizing feminine subjectivity in love.

In Absentia is another poem in which the want and give agony is stressed with much force. Comprising of six stanzas the poem deals before a spread of landscape how a judiciously desired separation leads to despair and the heart desires the painful conjugality, which had coaxed the mind to separate its way in order to uphold identity. A sense of tranquility is estimated in love when the communion is delayed and once the sexual gratification is attained. The soul desires the separation as the archetypal dichotomy of the female / feminine is reinforced after the
dictates of the body recede. Here the psyche of the woman is delineated to put forward a contrast with a man in same state of mind. The principle of gratification therefore in its ambivalence is portrayed with much sensibility in the projection of the male and female roles. The difference in attitude is fore-grounded in the first stanza where sensual perception as force to sexuality and love is interrelated. The male sexuality is here made apparent as:

Man as part of nature is subjected to sexuality, which he experiences as drivenness foreign to the ego. The sexual instinct is not directed towards a specific person as object but towards gratification of itself. (The Image Of Love, 16)

H.L Amga observes in his book Indian English Poetry that Deshpande deals “the exuberant feeling of conjugal satiety as one hand and the other with etiolated nausea or boredom which comes after the surfeit of love” (186). Here once again like the preceding poem, love is defined as ‘a dry and insipid ritual’ that lacks mutuality and that sexual fulfillment is often charged with frustration. It seems to debate the questions “why is a woman unhappy and lonely inspite of abundance of sexual opportunities and why does she feel that sexuality has not satisfied ‘her’ but a desire in ‘them’ ”. The whole gamut of love making leaves as Amga observes in Deshpande’s poetry “… woman disenchanted as man do not penetrate into the “phinging depths” of there “souls / bodies”. (7)

The idiosyncrasy of feminine psychology in love is very well articulated here:
Teeth clenched
Breath held
I wait for you coming
For, from that moment
I must start to live
The coming of your departure.

(31-36)

The similar agony is strikingly evident in Monika Verma’s poetry where the joy of love and the separation as an agony which debates the meaning of gratification for female sensitivity:

My reluctant sight, victim of the falcon rose
Plummets earths words;
And the sun whispers:
will it be the falcon or the dove?
Verxed, I answer: Give me love.

In Absentia echoes the absence of true love in a man-woman relationship. The libidinous urges liberate a woman; the reconciliatory attitude of a woman is projected as:

And from our present misery
Do yearn to believe
That that too was a reality
To be lived again,
As much as this –
Of not – you – and – I

(25-30)

The compound not–you–and–I hints at the unwanted things, a woman is victimised with yet the sense of
dislocation and exile is her fixed territory determined by patriarchal norms.

Poem on Lost Love is a long spread of ideas covering a length of six stanzas; once again a woman deprived of sexual fulfillment due to the oscillating nature of man is detailed with striking epithets, metaphors and new compounds. The first poem, which constitutes the first stanza, exposes the emotional experience of a woman after a sexual opportunity. The poet says that physically doused in “you-smelling” warmth she plunges into a sense of uncertainty about her fate. The experience, which has transformed her into a precious being, a treasure now is let loose to course slowly and singly through a long “deserted routes”. She rejoices at “the fellowship of blood” that connects them magically with each other. The union is a trophy for the woman but is not the same for the man who draws apart without recognising the spontaneous participation of the poet to who surrender to her male part is the highest law. The togetherness shared in the intensity of sexuality is described as:

The alchemy of my blood
that stained and matted your belly-hair
has converted you magically
and made us the same;
each the other’s branded secret self
bejewelled and bright red
in a fellowship of blood.

(12-18)
In the last section the callousness to mutuality is indicated where by the poet remains a lonely sufferer, for she suspect's oscillation is her partner's behavior and is afraid of separation/rejection:

In love the other person is desired with the deep anxiety of a lonely creature who hopes to find the other part of him all that seems lovable and good.

(The Image of Love, 23)

Waiting is a call of the heart of her lover to appear so that the nervous heart may be put to rest. Here love is represented as an expression of concern and an agency through which a beloved singles out the other's individuality. The preciousness of the lover is guarded with sentiment and anxiety felt for him, is another shade of embodiment of love. The hungry heart thereby conjures the arrival of the beloved by imagining all those signs and traits related to his presence. The Wait intensifies the longing and the frustration related with hope where by the poet uses her sensual power to its maximum in order to satisfy her heart in desperation and despair:

As I wait,
Instead of lengthening
The hours compress
And too soon my hope
Refused to feed
The straining ears.

(22-27)
The Poem also describes the natural and instinctive habits of a woman as a beloved. Her moral quality is her service to man with love and tenderness which are her emotional attributes and for which she remains habitually unnoticed. Such a feminity can be noticed in the lines below:

The waiting and watching were almost over.
And it was time for you to get up and go.
And I remember you did not lift your hand
to touch lightly upon my head.

(36 - 39)

Such a sweet sour experience of a life is also noticed in Mona Dash’s introductory volume of poem *Down Drops*. Here she remembers her lover with a feminist resentment;

Do you today
On reading my e-mails . . .
Remember my hands
Which would hold you,
My lips, which you liked
As if a juicy strawberry,
In your world of metal and disps
Do you remember me as moving flesh
Or I can only on your speech?

(Black Hair on White Pillow, 59)

*Portrait* is another poem of sorrow about a Christmas day and mother and child images are painfully delineated towards the end of the poem. The poem has a noticeable strain of poignancy where by the experience of a woman is a only quest for love which comes to
wholesome culmination and gratification. Here the agitated soul is painted with the help of disquieting metaphors like “Redundant clothes”, “Dung-Marked wall”, “Rustling fingers”, “Dug wrinkled hanging” etc. Here woman is presented as a whore and the woman forced to take up such a disgusting path accepts qualms by shame faced “Rustling figure”. The poem recognises the inextricable relationship between the ideology of individualism and the individuals, the sense of self either determined by situation or by patriarchal authority. Mother and child image projects the filial identity commanding filial obligation in a patriarchal culture.

Kalpavrksa again debates the individuality of a woman who is so subjected to gender battle that she has no sense of individuality and has no courage to perform even a political or moral action single handedly. The death wish is her only refuge and self-negation is her easy weapon that she handles as a subversive soul. She has no weapon of vengeance and no mode to transfer her life of descent. She cannot erase sexual differences nor can masquerade her strength in a patriarchal circle. Her ultimate limitation is to accept her fate or imagine death. The poetess wished rain and it did; this wish fulfillment instead of her feeling of rejoicement and feels sorry for making the best of this fright and thinks:

I was frightened thinking
This fatality of fulfilment
Would lead me into strange
Lands, where I to say
Oh, I wish I were dead.

(6 - 10)

Oh, let me is a poem with a different vein. It is light in mood and the playful images reveals how a woman can derive pleasure from simple things in life such as the touch of raindrops, slush, sprout, shoots and roots, fills her with a sense of wonder and the feel of realisation that a human heart can encompass how deeply the animate and the inanimate around. The desire of the poet makes her request may be to the patriarchal norms or the cut on restrictions laid on her where by she can rejoice with the freedom of being a living soul. The poem is loaded with imagery and the cry is once again of recognition as someone who exists with a bundle of hopes, desires and dreams. Rain and Earth suggest patriarchal culture that is totally negligent of the existence of woman may be even as a marginal.

Souvenir is a poem that once again reflects on the merit awarded to a woman for her contribution to domesticity, nurturing of children and arduous house keeping along with radiating love, warmth and affection. The poem also questions the acknowledgement, if any, awarded for woman's wholehearted surrender to her family. The children and the husband are so accustomed to her role playing that the demands of the heart is not at all noticed of. Her gust of pain is her everyday suffering and at the close of long years after the children become self-reliant, she realizes that in the process of constructing a
home, rearing her children; she has become only a ‘face’. The meaninglessness of life is the only residue in this process of role enactment. The poem is imbued with pathos for it describes human predicament in relation with female gender. Here the traditional Indian womanhood is described as the preserver of home and the protector of culture (see figure No.1). The ghastly side of the reality is juxtaposed where by a woman’s sufferings, struggle and acceptance is also painted with noticeable sensibility. Meenakshi Mukherjee describes feminine virtues and humility as:

Social conformity has always been more obligatory for a woman than a man and generally a woman’s identity tends to be defined by herself as well as by others in terms of relationship with man as a daughter, as a wife and as mother. (Reality and Realism; The Novels and Society in India, 98)

This small poem also reflects upon self-satisfaction through motherhood, which is her biological destiny. Juliet Mitchell observes in her essay ‘Women and Equality’-

It is within the role as mother and a housekeeper that woman finds the operation that is her’s alone. (The Rights and Wrongs of Woman, 379)

Indian tradition has glorified motherhood so much so that not only culture but also spiritual gurus have idolized woman as a creator. Swami Vivekanand has also extended reverence to a woman as mother:
The ideal womanhood in India is motherhood— the marvelous, unselfish, all sufferings, ever forgiving mother. The wife walks behind the shadow. She must intimate the lines of mother; that is her duty. But the mother is the ideal of life, she rules the family. She possesses the family. (The Complete Works of Vivekanand, 58)

Love is another poem, which treats conjugality through a female psyche. The poem begins with a courtship when a male and female receive each other humbly with a fresh sincerity. They plan their future and assure each other of the devotion to make them marriage a wholesome joy. But soon alienation sets in and the familiar faces colour with new disappointment and the eager tone start flattering along with their smiles turning dull and grab. Their faces become tired and the sexual gratification is a straining haste process. The lackluster togetherness becomes an unhappy recollection;

Have we not seen all the places
Where our picnics left no traces
And stubble has grown over bonfires?
My feet are the feet of an old woman
Creased cracked and thin.

(23 - 27)

The poem is empathetically insisted on the importance of woman as an individual who is both emotionally and intellectually fertile in rearing assertiveness and individuation. In ‘Love’ she seeks to be
independent though bound in mutual reciprocity yet freed from manipulation. Her aim is to be a whole human being and not a mere adjunct to her male counterpart. Negating her identity as role filler she urges recognition of a individual traits as a sentient being. Here Deshpande calls to appreciation a new woman who wants to get rid of dependency need and who is all committed to wreck the pattern of sexuality in order to enjoy co-existence of equality in all realms of life. Here sex in important for woman but on her own terms. Therefore no emphasis is made on the psychological trauma to breakup relationship for a woman:

The glossy back of your head so like a memory
Of far off conferences with echoes of sorrow.
After the harrowing re-enactment of an idyll
We had but a brief farewell.

(31 -34)

There Was a Time romanticises premarital state of living. Here the world of dreams and desires once again painted to show the ecstasy of Indian woman in relation to her marital life. A happy married life-ensuring harmony in marital relation as acceptance and adjustment of precious attitudes and sentiments of both the partners is what a woman asks for along with acknowledged wifehood and motherhood. But future is not what a woman can construct as co-partner but is a role of subjugation and where she becomes conscious of meaningless existence. The role of the ‘fillip’ therefore is a slide from day to night and night to another day. A woman recalls her maiden life lying
dreamless during night in the stranger's arm to who she is married to passive submission, completeness to his living and to find solace on any profit in her own personal efforts and thereby continue serving mere as a body then as a mind or a soul. Her agony is reflected with much seriousness and with striking melancholy:

And days slide by meaningless
And nights remain enclosed
Dreamless in stranger's arms
And our solace
Will be: we knew
Of you and me

(15 - 20)

The inner recesses of the mind embodying mutually contradictory status shows the perspective of vision from hope to despair.

High is a sketch of the height and depth of commitment and enactment in love. The poet questions the lover about his earnestness in responding to her with amount of passion or love. Here woman as a passionate being with the desires of flesh is measured against a man who in sexual gratification leads the show. The poet celebrates the intense emotions which love begets in her and which decodes her sexual expressions. The poem is also a determined attempt to subvert prejudices of patriarchal society laid down for the marginal selves in the realm of love and romance:

Do I not look upon the dark canyon
Of your sad - sleeping fists half open
And throw myself down
In a bursting storm?

(28-31)

This poem structures what Gilbert & Gobar names as social construct- "Pattern of sexuality and behavior imposed by cultural and social norms". (Sexual Textual politics: Feminist literary Theory, 64)

The reflection made by the poet is a polite way to express resentment at labeling a woman’s initiation in sexuality as immoral she defends the biological femaleness of a woman and points out the contamination caused to her by patriarchal culture. Her belief echoes what Elaine Showalter once had declared:

No woman, we know is ever cut off from the real world; but in the world of ideas we can draw boundaries that pen up new vistas of thought, that allow us to see a problem in a new way. (Sexual Textual politics, 81)

Lost Love thereby explores all aspects of feminine sensibility and it is luxuriantly abundant in psychological experiences related to the mind, the body and the soul.

Deshpande’s Beyond The Slaughter House is third collection where her poetic journey into the realm of feminity continues but this time it aims to reach the aesthetics of that nobility which makes a woman idolatry in her own special way.

Still Life No. 1 & Still Life No. 2 echo the desolation and despair that stamp from the cities claustrophobic pollution and also spreads a morbid
sickness. The concreteness of a house emits a sense of hopelessness and the realisation of a partner is not beyond flesh. Hence the demand of the body is disguised as something attractive and inviting. The mind rejects this dissatisfying physical love and travels beyond the world of human beings where nature serves as a refuge:

But see! you say, and there,
Through the smog
The cars
The pollen
The damp dry cold or hot air,
Beyond your face
Is a lone white sail.

(Still Life No.1)

Poem on Going Away speaks about a woman's adaptation to a woman's world. The joy, tranquility and meaningfulness are not only self-satisfying but self elevating also. Through filial relationship the poet reaches out to her partner who makes her world complete. The poem also embodies psychological satisfaction, which a woman derives in the web of amicable relationship. She becomes feeble only when she analyses her life in comparison with her friends or peers. The image of a traditional woman is delineated here to epitomize Indian womanliness:

And through these green fields I come
home to my sister, waiting,
who says, so there are you.

(12 - 14)
I shall Arise and Go Now is a poem that speaks about a woman’s determination to carry on with her life. No matter what she faces and how discontentment with life she is entrapped with. The poem reveals that substance which is a essentially femininity with which she manages to battle with the unwanted savoriness of life and emphatically holds her interiority as a privileged possession; the masquerade and the performative status of femininity. In order to simulate a love relationship, she strives to prove her equality with masculinity and desires recognition in some measure:

... we are it
smooth and bitter and poor
and blessed with nothing but fortitude.

To Be Known is an expression of psychic restlessness to be recognisable subjectivity rather than marginalised objectivity. The mental and the emotional status describes and denotes the internal strife with which she wants to reverse her role and put herself as equal to patriarchal society and authority. Here the poet objects to her view, which she disgustedly labels as “An Imprisonment”. Rather she demands role-reversal slavery from her partner with “obeisance force” so that she may be known and felt as a compelling force. The present role is a killer to her and a bondage to her individual self. The poem asserts Gauri Deshpande’s distinctive presumption of femininity. Similar ideas are expressed by Monique Plaza.
who interprets woman's oppression as an execution of power, which is merely a question of philosophy:

The notion of woman is imbricated in the materiality of existence: women are enclosed in the family circle and work for free. The patriarchal order is not only ideological, it is not in the simple domain of value; it constitutes a specific, material oppression. To reveal its existence and lay bare its mechanisms, it is necessary to bring down the idea of woman, that is, to denounce the fact that the category of sex has invaded gigantic territories for oppressive ends. (Plaza 26)

Indira Kulshershtha in her book Women: In Search of Identity describes the pangs of pain to which a woman is subjected. In the state of nonentity, she describes her dissatisfaction, depression and atrocities as:

Many a woman suffers from mental hunger, which, like an empty stomach, is very discomforting and depressing. This has to be satisfied by offering to them various encouraging opportunities in life. A home can be full of good things, but still, life at times becomes difficult in it. The trouble is not caused by home. It is because what goes on in it. (87)

Two Self Portrait is a poem that juxtaposes the identity of a woman as held by the society on one hand
and on the other is her self-opinionated mind. The forces around where a woman is measured as less competent and highly emotional rationalize the public domain of a woman and here physical structure is labeled as weak and frail susceptible to danger or pollution. Gauri Deshpande has safeguarded herself from the internalization of such an attitude of shame or of unease concerning the natural working of their body. She has the grit to despise the superior gender because of its biological atrocities and playful attitude to life at large. She comments on her individual heroism with which she ignored cold eyes of indifference, hurls of protest not with smiles but with rigorous rebellion. She has now understood her "leprous" mate who is only governed by animal instincts like desire of treachery, crime, and untruth, complicity, cruel and obscenity.

She compares herself to an onion subjected to regular introspection whereby she measures her weaknesses with a bad taste of "whole of indigestion and bad taste with pain in womb". Her process of self-assessment makes a memory and dives deep into the regular "residues of virtue". (16)

**Rain poem** is another reflection on how emotional considerations excitedly wait to grasp what is close at hand. Woman wishes and phantasies sexuality, no sooner she becomes nubile- a normal human demand, characteristic of one's physical and mental growth. Rain is here used as a metaphor for such a romantic wish, which is expectantly awaited to transform the mental
imaginary joy by physical reality soon to happen in future. Shirish Chindhade in his essay 'A walk along 'Long and Windsome streets': The Poetry of Gauri Deshpande, describes the connotative meaning of the poem:

The rain is a bringer of kaleidoscopic sensations; it reminds one of the moments of love, it induces unbeatable ennui, it creates the excitement of welcome, and at the same time it prompts misgivings and augurs sufferings: (Trends and Techniques in contemporary Indian English Poetry, 146)

The second stanza of the poem enlists the havoc played by rain, which subtly hints at disaster caused by love to a completely surrendered human soul:

There's still time for chawls to collapse,
For buses to skid and kill, for trains
To snarl and for flus to catch.
Ritually we rejoice before we pay
Into flood - relief fund every year.

(14 - 18)

Rain poem is a brilliant piece of writing where conscious dynamics is used to express a woman doubts and ambivalence and emotional sways under the oppression of love. Here the rigorous emphasis is in the fact that love is an unpalatable emotion like fear, anxiety, rage and hostility. Sex may be desirable and rewarding. It is a normal human urge but the emotional involvement related to sex turns so easily into bondage that one sheds
one's independence and freedom spontaneously. This results in fear and anger. One's in need of emotional security uses possessiveness as a defraying tool for one.

**Summer Sequence** is yet another poem in which nature is used to speak the rising of physical along with the intensifying of the heat of the sun. The poetess is once again conscious of sexual deprivation, which is a woman's fate and, the dictates of social norms deprives her of the right and modesty to express biological urge. Annis Pratt reflects upon the some state of mind while discussing reflections in woman's fiction:

The tension . . . between forces demanding [women's] submission and [their] rebellious assertions of personhood, characterize far too much of [their] fiction to be incidental.

(Archetypal Patterns in Women's Fiction, 6)

The poetess talks about the unequal gender role where by she fails to reach out to her partner in the articulation and affirmation of womanhood. Mostly confined to inferior role in the patriarchal world and in submission to a male individuality a woman lives as per the norms decided by her male counterpart. The new environment around invites her but a woman has little courage to exercise her will:

In the slanting afternoon my face revealed all in its blurred and softened line all I'd wish to conceal from your eyes most of all;
and yours by the laughter on its brow
that you had known.

(13 - 18)

The inherent deficient living is defined by Simon De Beauvoir:

With reference to man not be with reference
to her, she is the incidental the inessential
as opposed to the essential. He is the subject, he is the Absolute – she is the other.

(The second Sex, XXI)

The raucous cuckoo wooing, the blossoming trees,
the fragrant mango, Jacarandas deep purple, gulmohar and
the splendour cassia all surround her, filling her with the
richness of splendour. Yet she has no courage to express
her love for fear that it might be denounced as lust.
Indirectly the poet condemns the double standards that
exist in a male dominated society and where a woman, as
a biological being, is put to harassment in voicing her
natural normal urges.

**The Slaughter House** poems depict the various
forms of harassments; a woman has to endure in order to
make her emotional relationship if any survives.

The imagery of Gauri Deshpande is the call made for
the upliftment of women. Most of her images are
suggestive of void in their lives, suggestive of vacuum,
loneliness, frustrations, depression and above all a sense
buses’, ‘Snarling trains’, ‘Slaps of waves’, ‘Lecherous
widow', 'Wrinkled flabs' are some of the images, that speak of disdained life and minds away. Juxtaposed to this, are soft images that suggest intrinsic quality of women. This is used as a slot for the making of 'new personality' for example:

A deep foreboding in my guts
Made my breast -tips quiver
(As though the long -weaned child
Thirsted again for a flow of milk)

(A Change of Season, 3-6)

If I could weave a cloth
Of the silk of your eyes and the shine of your hair
It will be bright reddish brown
The colour of rain on earth.

(A Child walking, 1-4)

To us is given the hollow task
of watching the sunset in a frame of tears
facing a face in our eyes we can bear
and hoping to grow a seed in sand and on rock.

(We Hadn’t the Guts, 5-8)

There is nothing give to do here
nothing but smooth out its pavements
with my beating feet, beer
tightlipped its greasy caress and harsh endearments.
only because we were here once, in love.

(Known Is This City, 7-11)
They have sawed out little piles of
Sawdust from my life
Cutting away at the branch of memory.

(Poems In Winter, 19-21)

From creeping dismal sidewalks
we crowd into homes that disguise
concrete with curtain
picture flower rug
and hopelessly clutch at each other
for we at least are flesh;

(Still Life No. 2, 1-6)

Through use of fertile imagery Deshpande not only adds emphatic clarity to her thoughts but also intellectual perception. The judiciously chosen words and phrases constitute an image to force the poet's sensibility on the readers. The psychological implications of the evocative force of an image is well explained by C. Day Lewis in his book The Poetic Image:

An epithet, a metaphor, a simile may create an image; or an image may be presented to us in a phrase or a passage on the force of it purely descriptive, but conveying to our imagination something more than the accurate reflection of an external reality. Every Poetic image therefore to some degree is metaphysical (18)

The imagery of Gauri Deshpande therefore is a verbal nuance projecting the poet's psychology. With the help of imagery the abstract element of the lines are concretized in order to give a dramatic colour and
tangible perception. This makes the ideas much transparent whereby the fathoming of the ideas become a less strenuous job minimizing ambiguity. Martin Gilke substantiates the utility of images as an echoing picture when he writes:

There are thoughts and feelings which appear to belong to the constitution of the mind itself; and there are thoughts and feelings which have been put down there out of conscious as one puts away in the attic unwanted luggage or an occasion anything not considered quite suitable for visitors to see. All or any of these may share in the traffic; may float up to the surface, either unhidden like “drowned faces in the pool”, or they may be deliberately evoked. (A key to Modern English Poetry, 96)

The imagery of Gauri Deshpande is inconsonance with the context of a poem that is why every image and every metaphor is full of significance. A look at the epithets, metaphors and similes would not only substantiate the vividness but also the compatibility of the applied thoughts with which she mirrors her idea.

**METAPHOR**

The dusty half–hearted fall of a goodbye had not told me you were gone.

(Death ,41-42)
No More is the busy thread of my life
linked through the eye of your needle.

(No More, 5-6)

With this beauty in his eyes
and sitting on his lashes.

(Thinking Disgustedly, 10-11)

The Sweet - drawn breath becalms
Your hand is resting in mine
Wrapped in Cloth –of –Dream

(A Child Waking, 7-9)

Slipping on this deathward Slope of life
Everything we clutch at proving useless

(Death, 9-10)

To us is given the hollow task
of watching the sunset in a frame of tears
facing a face in our eyes we can bear
and hoping to grow a seed in sand and on rock.

(We Hadn’t The Guts, 5-8)

Virtue too has her own strident
stinging rewards
of not having felt the texture of your lips

(Virtue Too, 1-3)

Under every past give stood waiting for the bus
Its garment of gaiety is weary some

(Known Is This City, 4-5)

And eaten shielded fastidiously from
Hungry eye in the front; in no time
Re –closed, in repose

(A Lunch on the Train, 28-30)
But most of all because a man, any man, does not possess that climbing laugh and Sweet flesh dark –hued bright and resilient  

(A Love Poem To Ella, 16-19)

Buffeted by a continual contact with unimportant events as I try to reach across the thick stream of traffic  

(Poem, 1-4)

A gleam of distant lightning in the steely sky We had seen while sheltering you and I  

(In Absentia, 23-24)

From your tired thigh which will be astonished tomorrow  

(Poems on Lost Love, 8-9)

EPITHETS

I can see the noose wait but fear to tremble as I may quake the house  

(The Hangman Awaits, 21-23)

I find myself nakedly apparent In the green sunshine of your glance  

(Camouflage, 5-6)

And I dreamt in the night of long travel when I woke up the sky was heavy  

(A Change of Season, 17-18)
The crazed cracked vessel
The shredded picture the mocking tawny eyes?

(Poems In Winter, 9-10)

Thin, drooped lip, inward hazel eyes, long slopes
of pale cheek and the serene shore
shining beach of forehead

(Family Portraits, 7-9)

Oh my country, butchered blattered
and bludgeoned into flat
apathy, consider this drouth

(Elegy for a Friend, 1-3)

From creping dismal sidewalks
we crowd into homes and disguise
concrete with curtain
picture flower rug
and hopelessly clutch at each other
for we at least are flesh;

(Still Life No. 2, 1-6)

Outlining your beloved head
and shifting your slender weight

(The Night of the Other, 7-8)

I’m affected by a prowling unrest
and known not what to do

(Integration, 1-2)

And the night
If only I were that harsh-throated crow

(Integration, 10-11)
A Gleam of distant lightning in the steely sky
we had seen while sheltering you and I

(In Absentia, 23-24)

To contain and communicate
Our joyous exhaustion;
the forgotten mouths

(Poems on Lost Love, 48-50)

An excuse to roll away and put on the light
Even the ragged breath may be due merely to overweight

(Ritual, 8-9)

The tired soothing and quit
Retreat and unquestioning emptiness

(When you Divided, 5-6)

Your harsh eyes ate into the decay of my dream
and the sound of your night pacing grew in my blood stream

(The Guest, 6-7)

SIMILES

Lying in moonlight like a snail trail
why are me on as the starlight falls?

(Death, 26-27)

But please do not ask me now to face
laughter grief or courage
for like a coward
that dared barrenly and murdered the wrong man.

(The Hangman Awaits, 10-14)
And the house fitted me like a garment
of unlamented unremembered moments
and with every step

(A Sentimental Journey, 4-6)

Iru had a nose like a light house
luminating the stormy planes of face

(Family Portrait, 1-2)

Sadly realise that your brown eyes
are turning slate (like the sea
reflecting the slate sky
reflecting in turn the slate earth).

(Still Life No. 2, 7-10)

By storms, pre-rains at mid seas
The country like a harsh
lecherous widow awaits

(It comes slow, 7-9)

Amorphous bulk of redundant clothes
Face like a dung-marked wall

(Portrait, 1-2)

And let me sleep with my check in mud
The smooth and darkly inviting
Then like a lizard I’ll lie

(Oh Let Me, 3-5)

Between sliding mud and water
like a stick dried out by long summer
I’ll lie between rain and mud

(Oh Let Me, 6-8)
Retrieved somewhere along the way of summer promenades
The glossy back of your head so like a memory

(Love, 30-31)

Trees are like people only much more indifferent

(Indian Treescape, 1)

Gauri Deshpande is innovative in the use of language. To enhance the meaning she coins open-compounds in order to add exuberance to the thoughts and feelings. This newness adds luster to her style and is a feast to readers who look for syntactic and lexical richness. Most of her compounds are towards both of concrete nature whereby the idea is magnified by the two-forked suggestion. Some compounds are enlisted below in order to show how compounds are coined to serve as one commanding image:

And runs in saffron rivers down
out summer -soaked trunks
He drinks and blossoms and yields the Indian sun.

(Indian Treescape, 32-3)

Know not this and your eyes will retain
their joy-cored, dark-souled brimming secrets.

(Find Not, 6-7)

The smoky-blue eyes and golden hair
I Wished upon my child
That is born with her father’s face.
The laughter in the face upturned.

(Poems In Winter, 34-37)

A couple of friendly words will prolong
your foetid, leprous, bag-of-bones life

(Elegy for a Friend, 10-11)
Beneath listlessly conferring crows, 
but paddy -swollen strewn 
with silver water, bite-flying, river grown
(Poem on Going Away, 4-6)

What had bound us was the thin tread of hate and fear 
Not the many-stranded heavy coiling rope of desire
(Summer, 10-11)

it seems futile that the drongo 
in its poised, black, fork-tailed
(The Eclipse, 6-7)

Benedetto Croce in his book *My Philosophy* reflects on the significance of artistic tools in projecting the force of meaning:

Mere words, mere images, mere colours, mere sounds are chimeras ... in singing expresses all its life, all its being every instinct and every need, its whole nature. So a man if he is to sing must be a man as well as an artist. (134)

Rhetorical questions are used in order to maintain a direct pulse of association with the readers. This is so widely used by Gauri Deshpande for it lends a dialogic quality to her poems and the addressee is imagined as a passive listener. Further Rhetorical questions also add truth like quality to the assertions in terms of generic reality.

**RHETORICAL QUESTION**

How long must I walk?

These long and windsome streets
before I meet
you?

(Death, 56-59)

Have I not, perhaps, just back from a dream
espied a leprous being in the mirror
eaten away with desires
of treachery, crime, untruth
Complicity -cruel, obscene?

(Two Self Portrait, 9-13)

Who hasn't heard the raucous
cuckoo, irritating, cawing his way
through all the summer days
and yet fell the newness of his wooing

(Summer Sequence, 9-12)

Where are we going? Streamers
of unpoetic days flying behind us?

(Lost Love, 14-15)

Do I think of you
as rain whips my face
and the feathery clouds up
and the paddy green ground her whip past

(Do I think of you, 1-5)

Should I not remember?

(Poems in winter, 15)

The web of Rhetorical Questions within the fabric of
poetry adds naturalness to the craft of writing. Monika
Verma in her essay on Gauri Deshpande compliments this
feature as:
Her simple style and poems ring tune—like a sound from a good bone—china cup or what to me, sounds like the genuine voice of Gauri Deshpande and not some are just trying to write poetry. (Facing Four, 17)

In the Syntactic arrangements of lines Gauri Deshpande reveals her knack of experimentation. The lines are inverted from the natural order in order to make the thoughts tickle a reader with some amount of pleasure and also to give a jolt of thrill to a reader. This proves that Gauri Deshpande had all required elements to prove herself a modern poet. Some lines are substantiated below to prove the merit of the poet:

**DEVIATION**

Promises that this shall be
an year of drouth

(Between Births, 10-11)

He poor man with his beauty
Thanked me groping by
Knew not the Silly Jacaranda

(Thinking Disgustedly, 16-18)

Heavy upon morning lids
proclaiming the victory of unreality.

(Virtue Too, 10-11)

Word music is another feature that is significantly noticeable in the poetry of Gauri Deshpande. Through word music abstract ideas are infused with melody so that the readability is enhanced and recitation be facilitated.
The common pattern used by Deshpande is Anaphora, End Rhymes, Syndetic co-ordination, and Asyndetic co-ordination. Syndetic co-ordination slows down the pace of a line; Asyndetic co-ordination adds hurriedness to it. With varied paces slow and fast arranged in run-on-lines pattern the meaning travels at times with a swerving notion. These features are substantiated categorically:

INTERNAL RHYME

Halting staring meandering; can I not stop to hear where a bird calls?

(Death, 24)

Looking up trying to think of all those meetings and partings

(Death, 60-61)

Waving -whispering bedighting -denuding Always beckoning

(Indian Treescape, 15-16)

Blew and blew and blew Breath over the white and blue and gold?

(Poems in Winter, 12-13)

I wont cry I wont cry

(Do I think of you, 11)

There, there they said

(The Habit, 3)

The midmorning, beating parching scorching sun burning

(Sun, 8-9)
The waiting and watching were almost over
(Waiting, 36)
In its poised black fork-tailed
flight should alight for one bright
(The Eclipse, 7-8)

ANAPHORA

My brother who held my hand at every bend
My lover about whose neck I must fall now
(Death, 33-34)
You’ll get over it
You’ll get used to it
(The Habit, 5-6)
I got over it
I got used to it
(The Habit, 10-12)
Its garment of gaiety is wearisome
its core of life flimsy
(Known is this city, 5-6)
And Speech annoyed
And I wondered if perhaps I had caught something...
(A Change of season, 10-11)
Some long dark hand
some mood of an afternoon. (yellow)
Some turn of phrase
(Poems in Winter, 40-42)
Will I think of you yet?
Will I think of you?
(Do I think of you, 23-24)
as deeply charmed and crated
as sea in full tide where her nose
(Family Portraits, 4-5)
Reflecting the Slate sky
Reflecting in turn the slate earth
(Still Life No 2, 9-10)
all in its blurred and softened line
all I’d die wish to conceal
(Summer Sequence, 14-15)
If only it’d rain
If only I’d die
If only there were some one to fall in love with
If only the day was all alone with
(Summer, 6-9)

ASYNDE蒂C CO-ORDINATION

by large red buses, sleek new cars,
thin people, small children,
scooters, cycles and once in a way
(Poem, 7-9)

O Lord
Indestructible, Imperishable, Invincible, Ever-holly
Death of Death:
(To Shiva, 1-3)

Unintelligible darkness
Of sorrow, delay, departure, suspicion
(The Eclipse, 4-5)
But can bring to mind only
The grass the leaves, the city’s lights, the misty star

(In Absentia, 41-42)

I just glimpsed the face in passing
only mildly familiar not really known

(Souvenir, 1-2)

There is something inherently
Attractive about fire – Smell, shape noise heat colour

(Theory of Materials, 1-3)

SYNDETIC CO-ORDINATION

And the spring when the mimosa
blew and blew and blew

(Poems In Winter, 11-12)

Breath over the white and blue and gold?
The eucalyptus spoke smarting pungently?

(Poems in Winter, 13-14)

Only yesterday we had wondered
as the rain sang and sparked and thundered

(In Absentia, 11-12)

END RHYMES

The Jasmines that start as younglings
crow into stately matrons pervading

(Indian Treescape, 20-21)

I’ll commit murder till I’ve had my fill
Forget it with a ferocity that’ll sap my will

(The Crime, 1-2)
Your harsh eyes ate into the decay of my dreams
and the sound of your nightpacing grew in my blood steams

(The Guest, 6-7)

To cold and fixed certainty
my life –you brought the intensity

(Prometheus and Orpheus, 1-2)

This time I know that you are not near
As before its six chill hits the air

(In Absentia, 17-18)

But today the clematis is white and grey
I know what winter is here to stay

(In Absentia, 17-18)

If only there were some one to fall in love with
If only the day was all alone with

(Integration, 8-9)

Only yesterday we had wondered
As the rain song and sparked and thundered

(In Absentia, 11-12)

My Lips are chapped. My hair dry
And musts hide the mornings from eyes that pry

(In Absentia, 9-10)

The poetry of Gauri Deshpande shares the same feminine trends as we notice in the fiction. Deshpande does not picturise women as reduced to the level of physical slavery starving for food, moaning against cruel destiny or groaning under the bondage of severity causing blues and gashes She is rightly admitted as a feminist exploring the higher society she fathom the quality life of the urban women; may be this is what she had been
observing being a product of a metropolis environment

The impressions rationalised about the women folk is that they are:

1. **Craving for psychological identity.**
2. **Desirous of recognition as a sexual being as a partner to men on equal terms.**
3. **Keen upon identifying and attainment of inner quest or self-recognition.**
4. **To fight out the memories of loss, pain loneliness and negation for all lives.**

In sketching the feminine perspective woman as objective self and the world of relationship is the territory that Gauri Deshpande explores. Her love poems are more focused on the poets struggle to overcome either the pangs of desertion or rejection or to embalm her soul after irrational separation or separation by death. The balance of love sways from frustration to fulfillment or from despair to new search. A woman's identity as a lonely being is a regular image throughout the length of the two collections *Between Birth* and *Lost Love*. Deshpande rationally suggests the cause of intense pain a woman undergoes in terms of estrangement and rejection. The cause identified is typical of the weaker sex- a slavish attachment in love –

> In the steady flickering of the candle
> My loneliness so mounts
> That I feel it must
> Conjure your presence

*(Lost Love, 29)*
I wanted to weep for you
And me
But I had already spent
All tears in useless mournings.
So now I watch arideyed
As my fingers open slowly
And let you go.

(I wanted to weep, 21)

The poems of Gauri Deshpande hardly build up a situation or a crisis but register the aftermath of the most agonizing hours. The poems are therefore psychological details either in the form of introspection or reminiscing. Distance between past and proximal present is as effectively drawn as the transition between self and environment. Women in all her territories like family, marriage and society can be seen. (See figure No. 2) A sense of compassion and sympathy for their victimization caused by their passivity, conformity, illusion and social norms is presented not for ‘reduplicating’ the state but for suggesting the remedial measure a need to shape oneself as a “transcend self”. This feature can even be traced in Eunice de Souze who through her poetry makes a loud call for a need for self-realisation and freedom despite the ridicule and humiliation around. As De Beauvoir explains:

The situation of women is that she – a free and autonomous being like all creatures – nevertheless finds herself living in a world
where men compel her to assume the status of the other. (The Second Sex, XXXV)

Rejecting patriarchal territory a woman must empower herself to confront her experience with a sense of equilibrium in order to develop an intense band between her inner and outer selves consolidating the inner and the outer resources. (See figure No.3 & 4) This is the call given by Deshpande to maintain psychological and emotional health as an equal to male gender. Musically to make the poetic pulse throb she adds the backdrop of nature. Nature serves as a barometer to put on record the intensity of sighs, the pain in heart, the flow of tears and life left "empty barren and bereft (The Guest, 12) after rejection in love. The changes in the mood of nature become metaphoric of the inner metamorphosis of the poets world:

And I wondered if perhaps I had caught something. .
Yet nothing happened
And I dreamt in the night of long travels.
When I woke up the sky was heavy
And then it rained.

(A Change of Season, 11-5)

In the second collection Lost Love the same pulse of thought is retained. Once again the mood of heaviness, uncertainty despair and nostalgia with sweeping minutes of happiness and momentary hope is visible. Once again the collection upholds nature as intensely transparent in picturising the bruised psyche and the wounded heart the cycle of seasons, a large variety of birds Drango,
Kingfisher, Cuckoo, Peacher, Sparrow, Crow, Parrot, Myna, Flowers to compliment the meaning of the lines Shirish Chinhade comments in his essay ‘A walk along ‘long and windsome streets’; The poetry of Gauri Deshpande’ as:

One rare dimension Gauri Deshpande has undoubtedly added to Indian English poetry is the approaches to nature which are neither stylised nor dated, for less merely decorative they are the ‘objective correlatives’ of the poets intimate experiences. They help her to connect and establish a meaningful support with the world around. (148)
WORKS CITED


... *Lost Love* Calcutta: Writers Workshop, 1970.

*Beyond The Slaughter House-Unpublished Collection*


Leavis, Queenie. Fiction and the Public Reading. Scrutiny; Chatto and Windus, 1965.

Irigaray, Luce. An interview. "Women's Exile" in ideology Consciousness, no. 1 1977, translated and introduced by Diana Adlam and Couze Venn


