Chapter III

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While the previous chapter examined the causes of alienation and attempted to identify the patterns into which the causes fall, this chapter intends to study the consequences and the manifestations of alienation. The alienated person may become disoriented or hostile, feel helpless, withdraw into her/himself or reject the established systems of values. The characters may struggle against the alienating conditions, and in the course of the struggle, may lose their accountability and credibility. They are consequently left alone and loveless. Since there is no one to love them, they are locked up within themselves. Their will to communicate leads only to their confrontation with their own self, to self-destruction or to the destruction of love in others. The alienated person does not find fulfillment in his/her work. The person denies himself/herself and consequently experiences a feeling of misery, not of well being. She/he does not develop freely a physical or mental energy, but is physically exhausted and mentally depressed.
Alienation takes different forms and may have various consequences. Besides the consequences mentioned earlier, sometimes alienation may have such positive consequences as innovation, artistic creation, invention, and discovery.

Mainly and particularly in Audrey Thomas’ characters, anxiety, withdrawal, uncertainty and indecision are the consequences of alienation.

Anxiety as the characters feel it, is fear that springs from a sense of uncertainty. The source or the precise reason for anxiety is unknown. Generally, in such a condition, a character loses his/her sense of proportion and balance of mind, and shows an unwillingness or incapacity to confront the real situations or problems. It reveals itself in the form of impatient anxiety in the character. The characters might show unwillingness to understand people. Anxiety which arises out of the present problematic situation might make the character introspective. Anxiety might also make the alienated character jealous. It might also result in the character’s physical movement (journey) to different places. Thus anxiety might manifest itself through the character’s jealousy, hatred or dislike.
Anxiety a major component of alienation may unsettle the whole psyche of a character, as found in Mrs. Blood, and it springs from a sense of guilt. Mrs. Blood’s relationship with her husband, children and friends and her attending to the needs of the family are darkened by her guilty consciousness. One reason for Mrs. Blood’s dislike for parties or any social occasion, her guests or hostess is that they might trigger a conversation on her husband’s virtues which Mrs. Blood could not stand or take. Her thought of people complementing her husband on his taking care of her, alienated her from them as well as from her husband. When she is in hospital, she is not keen on her husband’s visits. Her impatience and envy are supplemented by silence. She tries to overcome this feeling of anxiety by means of compromise. After Richard’s love and its failure, her freedom to choose a husband was actually the freedom to chose only the second best and she chose Jason not for love but as an alternative to Richard. It was an act of compromise – compromising with life. Her life with Jason has failed even as Richard’s with her had failed. Yet, she hopes: “I’ll love him again when the cracks are sealed, and ache is removed, the consuming self-obsession disappears.” (102).
Anxiety makes her feel uncertain about her own unhappy condition. It makes her frequently get back to her past. She relives her life with Richard. This regressiveness is symptomatic of her dissociation from the present reality of her life with Jason. She is like a baby who requires care. She is in hospital with a bleeding complaint and is anxious that the impending abortion is a punishment for her past guilt. The birth of her baby alive may relieve her of her sense of anxiety. But the uncertainty of the whole situation only intensifies her anxiety.

As a mother, she should have the child. The baby of Richard that she had aborted in the past should not become her nemesis now. If in the present her legitimate baby never sees the light of day, then the past will engulf her present and make her an alien to herself by rending her unable to face or accept the present, real condition of her life. She is not pragmatic in turning to her past with Richard. Retrospection results in obsessive regression. Her present is turned on her past and she goes on a parody spree. Her own baby is imagined as bread and the unhealthy blood from her womb is Christ’s blood.

Both Jason and the readers could view Mrs. Blood’s parody as a manifestation of an extreme form of blasphemy or of an acute existential despair. Richard is someone whom she had loved intensely
and still loves. Though absent from the novel as an interacting character, Richard holds the centre of Mrs. Blood’s thought and therefore of the narrative. Richard, the man she truly loves even after her marrying Jason, has the final word in the novel. His response to Mrs. Blood’s announcement, that she is expecting his baby is “Get rid of it”. Her frustration with Richard, Jason and her present bleeding pregnancy may be countered with and nullified by the birth of the legitimate baby. Her sense of uneasiness and her impatience with her children sharpen her sense of anxiety. Her relationship with her husband and her response to the doctors are shaped by her alienated condition.

Mrs. Blood’s other half, Mrs. Thing has the voice of order. Mrs. Thing’s concrete hand stands for putting things in order and for countering the neurosis of Mrs. Blood. The alternating voices, one of anxiety that causes alienation and the other of order suggest that the protagonist is stretched between extremes. This unresolved and apparently irresoluble tension is the consequence of an acute sense of alienation. Monomanically centered neurosis is the manifestation of alienation. The protagonist in *Songs My Mother Taught Me*, who is a little girl, behaves in a tensed manner throughout the novel. Mrs. Blood also behaves in a strained manner: “I longed for a friend, just one, but was
too bitter and proud to make any friendly overturns myself" (66). But in *Songs My Mother Taught Me* the tension built up in the mind of the protagonist reveals itself in her feeling that she is not a member of the family. She has always a feeling of something that could happen any time. Each happening, to her anxious mind, is a degradation: “The move to our grandmothers’ house was just one more humiliation” (45).

A large part of Isobel’s childhood is spent in anticipation. It stems from the violent quarrels between her parents which she associates with her mother and her bad temper. Her mother is a veritable personification of screaming, pretensions, pushing and lying. Her father is associated with incompetence and irresponsibility, especially, towards the children. These are all negative traits. This image of the mother and father continues in *Mrs. Blood*. It also recurs in *Blown Figures*. The protagonist, standing always on the tiptoe of nervousness, does not behave like a normal girl. This makes her develop a strong hatred towards both her parents. Dislike for and hatred towards her parents makes her life a long stretch of anxiety. “In her new notebook Isobel wrote over and over. “I love my love with a J. “she wrote her name, and then Jason’s and crossed out the mutual letters. LOVE, MARRIAGE, FRIENDSHIP HATE” (III). Her negative thoughts and negative attitudes to
her own sense of inadequacy become a canker in her mind. Her mind prevents her from moving out into the world. Locked within her sense of guilt and anxiety, she continues to suffer pain and torture.

Audrey Thomas writes on the one hand about the urge towards independence and, on the other hand, about the desire for attachment. In *Latakia* Rachel’s need to write a letter to Michael signifies that writing is her way of recreating his presence and alleviating at least temporarily her own pervasive sense of loss and alienation.

As a successful novelist and divorcee with three daughters, Rachel writes as much about self-division and the multiple demands of her life as she does about love. After a year fraught with tensions when Michael lived with Rachel and her family, her daughters go to join their father while she and Michael embark on a voyage out to Europe, thinking that this will mean a new life of writing and loving. But she soon finds that the old patterns reassert themselves – Michael’s desire to get back to his wife and Rachel’s need for both her independence and her maternal role. When everything goes wrong between them, Michael leaves Rachel and goes back to his wife who is teaching in Dar es Salaam. Rachel is left alone and to herself. Having finished the first draft of her sixth novel and waiting for her daughters to come to spend
their summer holidays with her in Crete, she hoped to enjoy the quite of
loneliness: "I intend to live quietly: . . . The girls will be here" (171).

In Munchmeyer Wills' inability to maintain the separation of life
and art, his failure to circumscribe and fix life is contrasted in Prospero
On the Island with Miranda's distinctions between her diary and her
novel, between her ordinary self and her "new-washed writer's
eye" (105). Miranda reveals herself to be not only a writer, but, a
compulsive chatterer burdening others with her stories.

Miranda really is much more concerned than Will is with the other.
In writing about a man, she is trying to extend the boundaries of her
imagination to move into a very different mind, even though she shares
Will's anxieties about the elusive, unreliable verbal sign:

If I were Munchmeyer, sitting in this room on this small
Island. I'd have two tape-recorders going and be
dictating into both of them alternately. (For
I'd be working on two novels, at least, if not
more). I would have borrowed this place from my
friends. Tom and Maria ("Christ, man I've just got
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> If I were Munchmeyer, sitting in this room on this small Island. I'd have two tape-recorders going and be dictating into both of them alternately. (For I'd be working on two novels, at least, if not more). I would have borrowed this place from my friends. Tom an Maria ("Christ, man I've just got to get away ") and I'd be drinking scotch and
scratching absent mindedly at my balls and wishing somebody would knock upon my door. Then may be after a few more hours and a lot more scotch. I'd call up Vancouver. "Hello Maria, is that you? Yeah. No, nothings wrong. I was just wandering if there was anymail'" instead. I crumple up another sheet of yellow Paper and try to feel superior to my hero. (Pi,114)

In Coming Down From Wa William is a victim of anxiety. He experiences a strong perturbing dislike for his present. He behaves in a very detached manner maintaining a grudging distance between him and his parents. The source of anxiety is unidentified and the impact of anxiety is unrelentingly intense. He keeps himself aloof. To get free himself if the constantly eroding sense of uneasiness, William undertakes a long travel. His monomanical search for the point of orgin of his alienation is a necessary event in his life. The question behind his quest journey is: "What happened to my parents out in Africa?" (10). He is not aware of what is going on around him. Distancing himself even from himself and trying to make people believe that he is doing a research project on wax coating, he tries to distract himself. He tries to solve the
mystery that shrouds the life of his parents, but he does not succeed though he reaches the destination. He comes to suspect that there is a sphinx like puzzle somewhere in his father's life, though he could collect no clue as yet to confirm his suspicion:

His father was a lab technician; his mother was a speech therapist. Money wasn't problem, but what was? It occurred to him from time to time that his parents were afraid. They were like people who were on the run from something, who had changed their identity may be and were afraid of being recognized. (CDW, 3)

In Intertidal Life, anxiety makes the protagonist Alice feel uncertain about herself and about her relationship to Peter and others. Alice's jealousy towards her women friends makes her uneasy and anxious. She feels that she has been caught in the course of a tide: " Will or nil he, he (Peter) draw these women to him as surely as though he controlled the tide..." (218)

She is not able to take her life as it comes. This inability makes her feel uneasy all her life. Though Peter does not love her anymore and
though she is convinced of the irreparable loss, she repeatedly yearns for Peter and thinks of getting him back. Her thoughts and acts are between desire and hope and her whole existence dangles between the two. She feels frustrated. Hope does not fructify and frustration pervades her life. Yet she shows no apparent sign of split or strange behaviour. In her effort to convince herself and to reason with herself she is a contrast to Mrs. Blood. She tries to resolve the crisis herself. At the same time she is not able to accept the reality of her life, though she recognizes and knows it. She tries to overcome her anxiety, but is not able to do that through her writing. But writing, viewed by her as a diagnostic and therapeutic exercise, foils her and the novel apparently does not get completed. This only emphasises the as yet resolved and, perhaps, the irresoluble anxiety. As Hutcheon remarks:

"As a writer, Alice has her own status - - she is a "subject" who uses her writing as a form of action to counteract Peter's control and to stop being a "thing" to which Mr. Hoyle has given his name, to stop . . . "(Hutcheon 29).
In *Songs MY Mother Taught Me* and *Graven Images* the attitude of Isobel towards her mother is slightly changed. The mother had been extremely bad tempered. Isobel's aim in *Songs My Mother Taught Me* is to escape from the mother but in *Graven Images* there is a place for sympathy/pity towards the mother. Charlotte tries to have a new perspective on her mother. Her anxiety is to find and establish the origin of her mother's family which could help her understand the peculiarities of her mother. She plans to know whether the peculiarity is a family trait:

The whole family history thing started as a make-work project for her... she was reluctant at first but then because obsessed, with, sometimes, two letters arriving in a single day. Her memory is excellent and she can also recall things that her mother or even her grandparents told her... *(GM, 21).*

Charlotte meets her old friend Lydia and both of them are travelling to England. Each of them is a victim of some kind of anxiety. After their bored artificial American life, they are in search of meaning in
Charlotte tries to trace the origin of her mother's peculiarity in the family tree whose root she is searching for in England. The material she collects in England in this regard points not exactly to her own ancestral line. There is another whose name is pronounced alike. And, this factual condition is supplemented by a vision she has in the church. She could see her forefathers and many other figures in the church. But despite the facts and the vision, her desire remains unfulfilled. Even though she has collected a huge quantity of records, her effort has not moved towards its goal.

Charlotte is jealous of her friends' joyful life and she thinks that her friends are having regular changes in their life. But Charlotte does not have. Her friend Lydia has been adopted and brought up by Bakers in America though she belongs to British parents. Her parents were killed in the war. Lydia also experiences an uneasiness, not very much dissimilar to Charlotte's, but she overcomes it by striking new friendships and relationships. But Charlotte's uneasiness remains unresolved.

Another major consequence of alienation is the withdrawal of the characters from their routine surroundings. Sometimes the alienated people set out on the lonely path of self-discovery by taking up the task of writing. The sense of being rejected by the outside world and the
rejection of the outside world by them result in the retirement of the characters into the interior world. Such a predicament is found in Mrs.Blood, Blown Figures, Graven Images, Intertidal Life, Munchmeyer and Prospero on the Island, Songs My Mother Taught Me and in Latakia.

The characters’ withdrawal is indicative of a need for love, the kind of free, unquestioning love which would envelop them. Their one happy memory does not relate to their personal life but to their experience.

The conflict between the need to withdraw in order to preserve one’s wholeness and sanity and the need to be involved in the painful process of life continues throughout. This oscillation between attachment and detachment reflects the need for a meaning in life. But, the pendulum does not stop at midpoint to constitute any still meaning. When the character finds that the reintegrative activity is hard to succeed, they withdraw into themselves. Withdrawal does not take the character anywhere. In a situation where one is cutoff involvement is equally meaningless. Both are destructive forces; there is no centre of equilibrium, no centre of harmony.

In Mrs.Blood, the protagonist withdraws into herself. She cuts herself away from the world around. The alienation of the protagonist is
not simply physical. Her mind is in a state of total disintegration. She is cut off from her family's past and present, and her friends and the society. It is symbolically represented by her being isolated in the hospital. Her withdrawn condition does not promise anything in her life. She is split into Mrs. Thing and Mrs. Blood. This split suggests the fragmented withdrawn nature of the woman. She withdraws herself from other women, traditions, religion and law in order to be someone else. According to Elizabeth Potvin:

The division of the narrative voice, along with the inner corporation of advertisements, newspaper, clippings, scripture, songs and instruction of reality and serves to draw out the identity of the protagonist as a single, unified personality. Mrs. Blood / Mrs. Thing is in conflict with her many roles: Patient., mother, wife, lover, neighbour, creator and destroyer. (39).

Her recollection makes her draw back from her present condition and re-live with a feverish intensity her past love affair with Richard in England and the abortion he forced her to undergo. This makes her move
back from the present and the normal in her many roles as patient, mother, wife, lover, neighbour, creator and destroyer.

Mrs. Blood, a north American woman living in Ghana with Jason, her husband and two children, has a miscarriage. She is anguished over the loss of a wanted child and her sense of anguish is sharpened by guilt and anger as she recalls her past lover and the abortion. Her relationship with Richard ends in pain and suspicion. Thus recollection becomes an intensifier of her anguished alienation:

I come to this place sitting up on a kitchen chair
( you know the kind ) in the back of what professes to be an ambulance. I say “professes”, or better still, “purports”, because things aren’t always what they seem to be and one must behave accordingly or try to . . . (BD, 11)

Mrs. Thing is much more involved in the present condition than in the past. In contrast, the past clings to Mrs. Blood like barnacles. Memories, particularly of her lovers, weigh her down and separate her from everyday reality. Her intense affair with Richard and its harsh conclusion dominate her thoughts most frequently. She still carries the feel
of him like a birthmark or a scar. Yet one of her articles of faith is that there are no victims. To endure, one should remain on the square where one has landed, be silent and wait until some one else throws the dice, for there is nothing ahead but a sheer cliff dropping down to darkness. Mrs. Blood remembers Richard making love to her and tries to imagine herself in his skin, experiencing her body. He is the shadow of her personality, drawing her down into the world of heat, sexuality, violence, unreason and death. Consequently, she is not what she is. Mrs. Blood longs for some one to care for and comfort her.

Instead of mooring herself to the present as wife of Jason, as a mother of two children, as a house-keeper and as a patient who is struggling in the hospital to have the baby alive, she is drowned in her student years and in the only man to whom she has ever committed herself passionately and wholly. She juggles the memory of the "real" Richard, the gentle caring man, with the "unreal" Richard who is brutal and impatient and who stands behind his apartment door unmoved by her appeals. Her own identity is constantly fought for but never attained. The self-centeredness tells only of a self not found because it is still in others' hands.
In *Songs My Mother Taught Me*, Isobel’s isolated unhomely condition leads her to a withdrawn condition. The whole family looks awkward and stigmatized. Isobel herself feels awkward because she is aware of the fact that there is no love and peace between her parents. They are just angry voices. Hypocrisy and callousness rule the roost. The whole family is unhappy in upstate NewYork. To escape from this condition she takes up a job in the Asylum:

I cursed the fates that they made Harry grow old
and cautious, made my father a bad provider,
made me seventeen and helpless... I was terrified. Shifted. How could I live with these people, in
this house? "(131)... In many ways it was easier
for me to cope with the avowed madness of
ward 88 than the glossed over violence of
my home... (SMTM, 145).

Because of parental failure and absence of love, she wants to be adopted by somebody. When this is not possible, she wants to keep away from her home. She is quite happy to work in the mental hospital. It is not a soul-sprung devoted service, but a peculiar experience that is at
once expressive of her troubled mind and therapeutic of her inner turbulence. She always wants to be somebody else or anybody other than herself or even anything other than herself.

In Blown Figures, Isobel has two children and a husband. From the beginning, she does not feel integrated with her family. Isobel returns to West Africa to seek the baby she has lost there by miscarriage some years before. The journey to Africa can also be seen as her attempt to expiate what she feels to be her guilt, a feeling with which she is neurotically burdened. Isobel, the fretful traveller, dislikes her fellow voyagers, and goes by plane, ship, train, bus, taxi, ferry, truck and on foot in search of a talisman. It could be her former lover Richard who betrayed her or her husband Jason who ignored her sex. She tries to place herself physically and mentally somewhere. But the withdrawn and isolated existence she has at home with Jason’s mother does not allow her to take root. She leaves home questing after something that will expiate her guilt and end her alienation. She does not develop any further relationship on her travel.

Her travelmate Delilah is a contrast to Isobel. She feels free and happy and enjoys her travel. Unlike Isobel, Delilah has a series of companions. But Isobel remains single. Despite her leaving home, her
mind seems to be bound with her family. So she keeps increasing the spatial distance between her ties and herself. As an alienated, and withdrawn woman, she does not fulfil herself in her journey; but, on the contrary, she denies herself. She has a sense of misery and does not develop freely a physical and mental energy. She feels physically exhausted and mentally depressed. "I have journey here," she said. "to get my destiny changed". (524)

In Latakia no character seems to be withdrawn on the surface; but on a deeper level, there is some withdrawn condition. Rachel and Michael’s separation is only on the surface level. Their love is, in a double sense, the centre of Rachel’s life and her writing. Her writing itself generates and communicates her own double sense of needing and not needing Michael. "Although I love you in someway, real way, I do not miss you you-or our relationship-got in my way... I can’t afford that kind of involvement." (21)

She used to watch the mailman come upon the street in Athens. She used to pray for a letter from Michael even as they became fewer and also less ‘friendly’ and more rational. He wrote that he could not stop loving her. He missed her terribly even though he went and lived with his
wife Hester. He worried about Rachel because she did not respond to his letters.

Michael cannot come back to Rachel fully and emotionally. He continues his life with his wife Hester. While living with Rachel, he felt frustrated as he thought that she did not give herself whole life to him and to his need. There is always a clash between these two writers. He violates the agreement between them and disturbs her whenever she is engaged in writing. Each feels withdrawn and isolated. Her creative ability could exist only when she keeps herself away from him. So gradually she withdraws from him. He feels that his charm is over. He deliberately draws back from her. His egotistically domineering behaviour towards her, her children and her writing, leads her to withdraw herself from Michael and into herself. He could not pull himself back from his wife and from his lover. Having no roots, he remains himself in a withdrawn condition. Rachel remains separated from the other women of the community. As Dennis says: "Rachel's alienation from this group is evident in the fact she rarely sees the weavers and never takes part in their craft". (82).

In *Intertidal Life* Alice and the children settle into a new life together, a new female life. Although at first Alice complains, "Here I am
on this Island with three kids and a drafty house with no inside doors, no privacy for any of us in our shock and grief" (39-40), she later sees the lack of doors as positive, lending intimacy to the cabin and drawing the four of them closer together: "each one could feel the other's presence in the night. Sorority. In the best sense" (147). In the same passage, she describes their daily routine of getting up early and going to bed early, each going about her own business quietly and simply, as being "a pleasant routine for all of them. Alice had never felt closer to her children... It wasn't Peter's absence, really although of course that had something to do with it"(147). In the withdrawn condition of this female world, Alice is comfortable and relaxed.

When Alice's friends Stella and Trudle go to California together, leaving Alice behind, she feels acutely the loss of this female friendship. In the case of Stella and Trudle, it was Peter who draws them, Peter with whom they decide to Paint a mandala, an enterprise that takes so much of their time and emotional energy that Alice is not only left out, but left behind by her friends so much so that, eventually, both Stella and Trudle even drive by Alice's house without stopping.

As the secrecy of the mandala club intensifies, the silence among the women grows. Alice expresses her hurt and disappointment with her
father. He is free to enjoy the homely atmosphere, and makes up fantasies about his new family and his cinematic adventures. Munchmeyer is probably still in the basement of his house. He may have written a short novel made of his fantasies about writing and women. He may not have gone anywhere. He may have day dreamed about writing and women to avoid both: "He wants to be loved. He wants to be recognized. He hates being just another grain of sand" (131):

Here was a place where he could write – he felt it in his bones. The experience of the last few months had left him drained of everything except a desire for the "clean, well-lighted place" he had thought about so long ago... A view of the tips of mountains, like hippies jutting hard against... The suit was the work of some one inspired:... Here, looking out of his window and onto this determined street, he would write as he had never been able to write before above that life, but not completely removed from it. It was as though for a moment he was little. Mrs. Lodestone as another Martha, and the as yet unknown Mr. Lodestone as himself, or himself-
that-was. Only happier, content. He would observe them and write about them. (M, 54-55)

In *Songs My Mother Taught Me* Isobel herself is continually spurned by her classmates for reasons that puzzle her. She is embarrassed by her mother’s intervention in her social life. Eating is a clan relish, and a celebration of self-indulgence. But in the family it is a misplaced sensuality and a reminder of the simple lack of communion in the family. Quarrels are exploded with offerings of food. Both mother and father cook. Food, the foundation of domestic and social interaction for the individuals in the family, becomes unrelishable in the rigid and hostile atmosphere.

Another consequence of alienation is the characters’ inability to be certain of anything or the ability to be firm on a decision. The character is suspended in uncertainty. Generally, it shows itself in the characters as a conflict between desire and a resolution against the desire. Their incapacity to stand on their resolution shows the uncertainty in their thought, reason and action. The uncertainty and indecision of the characters are particularly highlighted in *Songs My Mother Taught Me*, *Mrs. Blood*, *Munchmeyer and Prosper on the Island*, *Graven Images*, *Blown Figures*, *Intertidal Life* and *Latakia*. 
family and herself and her family being within her all the time. She is the Penelope though she wants to keep herself away from her family all the time.

In *Songs My Mother Taught Me*, Isobel sees herself, through her mother's constant criticism, as a misfit and failure. She is depressed, longs to die, and seriously considers suicide the night of her senior prom. Embarrassed by the sham parade of angora sweaters, ballet slippers, and salon perms purchased on her father's shaky credit, and shamed by her mother's fawning manipulations to wrest invitations and friendships for her, Isobel gradually comes to the painful - and potentially liberating - realization that she will never become the "golden girl" of her mother's aspirations: "'god' I whispered from inside my perfect bedroom, 'please let me die'".(55).

In *Mrs. Blood*, Mrs. Blood, her children and her husband Jason have come to Africa from Canada in search of "adventure", "romance", and as the narrator admits, to feel affirmed in their "superior" whiteness. With regard to her domestic identity, the woman defensively asserts her fulfillment of the requisite qualities: "I can cook. I am educated... My husband is admired".(160-161). But this defence does not hide her inability to cope with crisis or her sense of inferiority in comparison with the
cheerful and supremely confident English matrons who crowd her memory and populate her present with gossipy hospital visits.

In *Munchmeyer and Prospero On the Island*, Miranda’s capabilities with her family contrast to Munchmeyer’s failures. She sustains a marriage despite temporary separation and she writes a novel even though she also has a two-year old daughter with her on the Island. Munchmeyer foists all domestic responsibilities onto his wife, sets up “a hole for (himself) in the corner of the basement, beyond the kids” (4), but daydreams there instead of writing his novel or slips out to walk upon the beach. Blaming his wife for his writer’s block, he drives her and the children away and then dramatizes his loss without at all profiting from it: “He once told Maria he was a “compulsive beginner’ and has five novels, unfinished, in his drawer” (131).

In *Graven Images* when Charlotte first encounters the ship’s entertainments officer, a Pole, whose country distinguishes clearly between journalists and real “wry-ters” (those who creates literature), she timidly introduces herself as a “real writer”. Later she confides to the reader her fear of failure: “Perhaps I am afraid I’ll fail. Everynight I must repeat to myself, I’m a wry-ter, I’m a wry-ter. I’m a real, real wry-ter, the
way we used to say I must, I must do what the real wry-ters do—put aside
the outside world and write. The novel will be about my mother” (22)

In *Intertidal Life* there is a very strong inner desire in Alice to get
back Peter and also the strong resolution to let him go free of her. There is
a clash between emotional bond and reason. "If the children hadn’t
been there she probably would have fallen on her knees and begged
him not to leave her" (128).

Alice lives alone with her daughters on a nearly deserted little
Island. Her husband Peter has fallen in love with her best friend Ann and
has moved over to the mainland. Unfortunately, Alice is still in love with
her husband and she spends much of her time trying to understand her
conflicting feelings of love and anger, jealousy and devotion. Alice
doesn’t effectively resolve her personal conflict. She needs her husband
emotionally; but, she considers it better to let him go because he has
repeatedly declared the death of his love for her. Whenever he visits her,
she tries her best to show her love and affection towards him and tries to
draw him back to her. At the same time, she understands that her desire
is meaningless as Peter is determined on separation. She accepts her
failure to have her husband permanently. The conflict is not resolved.
She merely concludes: "... I forgive," she said, "but I don’t forget. And that’s hard. ... Can’t get over it. Gotta go through it." (279)

At the end of the novel, Alice even thinks of marrying again if she could find a right person. She is no longer desperately searching for a mate. She has become secure in herself, a moon-virgin in the old sense of female independence and wholeness. When Alice is uncertain about her future, when she cannot get back her husband and will not be able to have a new mate, she wishes she would be "a shore, washed by the sea, warmed by the sun, unmoving." (263)

In Latakia both Michael and Rachel are not unable to choose a course – either their artistic companionship or their family. Michael is caught between his artist wife and writer friend. He shuttles between his wife (Hester) and lady love (Rachel) with whom he seems to be really emotionally bound. He actually prefers the second woman, but he is not ready to obey the conditions stipulated by Rachel. So his resolution fritters and he moves towards his wife. This is only a false move. He continues to write to his love expressing his inability to forget her. This act shows his inability to be resolute in his purpose. Like Michael, Rachel is also full of contradictions. Her moods change from love to hate and from anger to dismay, to sympathy, colouring the ‘truth’ of the relationship and emotion.
In a moment she sees herself as "the villain (ness) of the piece" (131). The next moment, she is angry as she finds Michael a self-centered, arrogant man whom she also finds to be a highly attractive, sensitive, intelligent and talented person, when in a loving mood.

Even within a single frame, her uncertain feelings exhibit a mixed colouring”. . . you are not just sweet Michael in tears in the Hongkong kitchen telling me, I'm lovely and all that shit, you are also Michel the egotist, liar, the hypocrite, the coward” (35).

She takes the decision to have a son or daughter by Michael. But she is also uncertain about the whole relationship. She used to watch the mailman come up in the street in Athens. She used to pray for a letter from Michael, even as the letters became less and less in number and more and more "rational" and "friendly" in stated intention. When they separated, Michael wrote that he could not stop loving her. He missed her terribly. He worried about her silence. Michael resented his position to Rachel and said that if he was trying to write a novel about himself he would begin with the sentence. “This is a tragedy about a man who loved two women” (65). He was unable to understand Rachel's frustration, motherhood and love for him. At the same time, he did not
want to hurt his wife Hester, who had done nothing but good to him and yet he did not want to lose his writer lover Rachel.

Another significant consequence of alienation is creative crisis. Alienation seems to motivate the individual toward increased social contact, while, in other cases, the individual becomes less motivated toward any kind of activity. In either case, the person may become more sensitive to social relationships and may constantly assess her or his potential for facing and overcoming alienation. In Audrey Thomas’ novels like *Munchmeyer and Prospero on the Island*, *Latakia* and *Intertidal Life*, the writers try to channelise their potential through their creative activity.

In *Munchmeyer and Prospero on the Island*, Munchmeyer wants to write a novel but is, in fact, writing his diary "as though it were a novel" (5). He also feels uncomfortable about keeping a diary, which he considers a female tendency; just as Miranda feels she is usurping the male role by being alone writing for a year on her island.

Munchmeyer desires to be a writer but knows that he lacks the inner force. "I confessed to myself, in shame that I would never be a poet. Fame had been my mistress not truth" (8). Afraid of the ridicule which honest writing might expose him to, and more concerned with
presenting a fashionable image of himself, he knows that he is responsible for his own failure as an artist.

Miranda’s positive attitude to her family contrasts with Munchmeyer’s unsuccessfulness. The creator as artist and the created as failure and fraud, the woman (Miranda) tries to write about the man (Munchmeyer) who cannot write. Munchmeyer’s relationship with Tom is also developed through doubling, for Will Munchmeyer is writing a novel about Tom the painter and goes to his studio for technical advice. He is intrigued by Tom’s paintings, depictions of the white goddess in which he finds a mixture of sensuality and cruelty and he attempts to come to an understanding of Tom’s character through words, as in *Prospero on the Island*.

Munchmeyer’s anxiety increases when he wants his characters to be perfectly under his control whereas the characters develop their own way through the writing. He has to use his linguistic resources to control his characters. But, he fails in bringing his own characters under his control. There comes the crisis and his crisis continues at the end of the novel. Miranda is better as a writer. Every character in her writing is under her control. She continues her relationship with every character with the certainty that none will slip out of her design. Both writers, Will and
Miranda, are trying to master their own writing. While Will lacks resolution and focus, Miranda plans everything. She is a successful writer. She keeps her writing and her life separate and every character seems to be real. But Munchmeyer’s characters look imaginary, lacking the flesh and blood of the real:

"I gave him section two of the novel to read and he has handed it back saying, "I corrected the spelling, or rather I put a little circle around the misspelled words" (142)

"The goddamned book is finished, finished, finished" and till the earth back in. May be another tree will grow there and whisper, "Miranda has ass’s ears".

Today I feel let down, anticlimatical. Can one feel slack-brained, the way one feels slack-bellied the day after the birth of a child? (Pl, 148)

In Intertidal Life Alice is a writer of fiction who writes mainly about herself. Alice always writes on the kitchen table, for she never gets a room of her own. Intertidal Life is the memory of Alice’s loneliness, and anger when her husband left her. Alice’s attempt is to write the journey of her
life through the dark night of the soul towards spiritual healing and the release of creative energy:

Sometimes she bought a deck chair into the garden and just sat, perhaps with a sprig of mint or lavender in her land. Sometimes she fell asleep there, smiling surrounded by vegetables and flowers and butterflies and bees. (IL, 258).

Her novel is about disintegration of marriage, of human relationship and about how women cope with their alienated condition. Writing is converted in Alice's mind with a struggle in darkness "Like sitting all day in the dark or with a single candle. Trying to see, trying to see" (62). To her, "Night thoughts in poetry begin after the sun goes down" (69). The relation of artistic vision to darkness and moonlight is implicit in Alice's choice of alternative names for herself, Midnight, Hecate and Amanita. Vengeful fury at Peter produces that last name, a beautiful but deadly poisonous mushroom. It also suggests a contrast with the innocent Flora. Here, Alice associates herself with darkness and death, brooding on the death of her marriage as well as her own possible death in the surgical theatre. More importantly, the identification with Hecate points to the
link between moonlight and writing, through the goddess' double attribute of fertility and magic.

The dual aspect of the woman artist, light and darkness, is reflected also in another of Alice's titles “Scorpio House wife” (226), a phrase Audrey used of herself in a 1975 Capilano Review interview. It suggests inner tensions between a woman's roles earlier explored in Mrs.Blood / Mrs. Thing. There is some discussion in this novel of the practical difficulties of a woman writer, and of the possible threat to her happy marriage. But the scorpio image focuses attention more on the creative process and the extraordinary way of imagination. “Her hands stacked the dishes in the drying rack, opened the fridge to check that there was milk for tommorrow's breakfast, . . . her mind was making connections, leaping, dancing, Nureyev new steps, unheard of, but graceful positions”. (226).

Alice copes with her alienation through her art of writing. This is a portrait of the artist as mother and woman. The novel in the novel with the narrator seeing herself in her creation is a process of realization of hidden truths and of self realization. Audrey Thomas's own words in her interview with Eleanor are significant:
This is something I do tell young women writers
"If you do want to have a husband, family and
writing career, don’t be in a hurry". I knew which
came first, when my children were very,
small there was hardly any time to write. It didn’t
matter. I’d write when I could, and I felt any
particular conflict. Also, I never wrote when they
(children) around... (34)

The consequences of alienation faced by the characters of
Audrey Thomas have been analyzed in this chapter. The consequences
are anxiety, withdrawal and uncertainty. This chapter has also examined
the various ways in which alienation manifests itself. Through the
consequences, characters become physically exhausted and mentally
depressed.

Even where the characters seem to be possessed of a means to
overcome alienation, as in the cases of a character – writer, the means
becomes a source of further alienation as success in writing is elusive.
Writing as therapy only intensifies the disease.