CHAPTER II

The Social and Psychological Disorder in the Plays of Gautam Raja and Anil Abraham

2.1. Introduction

This chapter includes a discussion of social and psychological disorders in the select plays of Gautam Raja and Anil Abraham. Gautam Raja’s three plays; Pub Crawl, Shards, and Damini the Damager have been focused while Anil Abraham’s only play Gentlemen has been focused through the social and psychological point of view. All these plays erect such a world which is infected with various modern cruel ideologies. This infected picture has been studied in the following.

2.2. Shards

The play Shards portrays the life of urban women and focuses on their social and psychological madness. It deals with four stories under different titles. Each part of the play displays a different aspect of the distructed life. The first part ‘Apartment’ comments on the aspect of women living in urban apartments, looking at the life of people committing suicide. The second part ‘Deep Freeze’ includes a picture of an intrusion of a fridge in the life of a couple and how it brings the changes in their ordinary life. The third part ‘God’ deals with an erroneous nature of a woman and a jealous nature of her husband. But the fourth part ‘Two Sips’ is little different from the previous three. It tries to visualize the prime aim of human life and comments on the greedy and vulgar nature of human beings.

Though the play shares the ideas of female life, it is inappropriate to call it a feminist drama. It doesn’t focus on female issues directly; it tries to
touch the issues regarding the life of both man and woman. It includes three
caracters. Out of them, one character, a guest appears once.

The first Part ‘Apartment’ takes place at the balcony of an apartment
of the city of Bangalore. It opens with a guest and owner who are enjoying
tea. The owner shows Animals affection for the guest. She pretends as if it is
a part of a ritual tea ceremony.

When they meditate on the surrounding, the guest compares her
balcony with host’s and thinks that her balcony has a less lovely view than
the host’s. The comparison leads the guest to think herself inferior to the
host. It reminds A Room with a View by E. M. Forster in which Charlotte
Bartlett urges a view of the river. The host keeps the universal view that, the
view is always better on the other side. The guest is aware that her side of
the balcony is quite dingy. She exhumes her inferior complex by a laugh.
Though she is conscious about the situation that can’t be changed, she wants
to fulfil her desire of watching a lovely view. The idea of Freud’s
Substitution works here. She substitutes the fulfillment of her wish by
impelling her host to spend a lot of time out herein her balcony.

The society, particularly the upper and middle class of 21st century
crossed the boundary of ethics and morality. So they don’t think that they
have Hamlet-like problems. According to Earnest Jones, Hamlet looks
himself into his uncle and tries to fulfil his sexual desires from his mother.
The modern man doesn’t have any difficulty to fulfil such unexpected
desires. The problem is that they are unable to fulfil their materialistic
desires. Their fight is for the completion of these small desires. When they
fail, they become a victim of social and psychological disorder. These
women are the victims of same desires to which they are unable to fulfil.
While sipping tea, there is a pin-drop silence at least in the balcony, and both, engage in a deep thought. By breaking this silence, the guest praises tea and compares it with heaven. The comparison of tea with heaven seems odd here, and it is one of the silent features of people living in the metropolitan cities who fail in comparison due to their inability to look at the life positively. They turn to the serious subject in an awful way:

Owner: Another went by yesterday, you know.

Guest: What! That makes two this week!

Owner: Almost exactly this time. I was sitting right here, sipping my tea… when whizzes splat!

Guest: [giggles] How sad. (14)

Though they turn to the serious subject, it does not make them serious. It just shows that one’s death is a means of others entertainment. The guest drinks the news of suicide besides tea. Twice giggle of the guest implies that her two expressions, ‘how sad’, and ‘oh dear’ are just empty and hollow which do not create any sense or feeling of a guest. It resembles the expressions of hollowness portrayed in the poem The Hollow Men by T.S. Eliot. This hollowness creates due to social disorder.

The owner confirms that the dying person was a man as she saw his fluttering tie. Here it is startling thing that a person is being identified by what he or she wears and not by what he or she is. A man of wearing a tie or a woman of wearing no clothes at all is the identity to know the gender in this modern era: An ugly, all green and striped… Sort of like a caterpillar. Quite hideous. I am not surprised he got off. In fact, he was probably pushed (11).

This is what a typical woman living in a metropolitan city thinks about a dying man who is identified by his tie. Here tie is dominant rather
than a man. It seems that the life of human beings has become mean and piece of a tortured cloth. The dying man is judged by the qualities of the objects as a tie and a caterpillar. A man is less valuable than tie. The tie has a value but man doesn’t. Man is worthy due to only his tie and tie is not worthy due to man! Tie has its identity, but man hasn’t. He can’t be praise-worthy without the tie! The importance of the tie in the mind of the guest and host exposes how postmodern human life is degraded due to giving importance to the less valuable things.

The death of a man doesn’t shock them. She points out that it would not be a suicide, it would be a murder; he would have probably been pushed. She asks her how many persons she saw committing suicide then. The owner has seen four persons committing suicide. But the guest doesn’t believe in her because she thinks that there would be nobody who, at least, has seen two persons committing suicide. According to the owner, this number might increase if the number is counted on other floors. Even she thinks that it is not hard to count, just one need to give much time, sit in the balcony and count the people committing suicide. It reminds the poem Poet, Lover and Birdwatcher by Nissim Ezekiel in which he comments on the passion of waiting for birds and good words. But the modern people want to count the number of people committing suicide. It exposes how ethics of modern people are degraded. The guest knows that the people from other floors don’t count the numbers of committing suicides, the owner shrugs and says: “They are still there. They have eyes. They have tea times they have balconies… I think” (15).

The guest has seen more than four people committing suicide. It is not a matter how many people one has seen committing suicide, as she asserts; the matter is how one sees at the dying person, either purposefully or for just
the purpose of passing time. The owner doesn’t bear guest’s objection. She had seen them all clearly. She distinguishes them from one another by their colour. The pause taken before this distinction exposes her confused mental condition of how to imply the dead persons from each other. She is not sure about the first person if he was red, pink or pinkish brown. But she is sure that he was a man, and he was naked. To be naked is to be a man, the host supposes so!

The second dying person was a woman. The guest asks if she was ready for a funeral. The host thinks that she would have buried herself as she would have at the speed she was going. She was screaming and she continued praying while falling down. The guest surprises to know that she was screaming and praying at a time. Here it is essential to understand, if she was praying or screaming, or her screaming was her prayer, or her prayer was her screaming! It can be imagined her community by her last word ‘Amen’.

This terrible picture of death and the way other people look at this death show how social ethics has vanished and how this generation became a victim of social and psychological disorder. The guest is impatient and eager to know who was the third person whom she saw committing suicide. It is very shocking thing that the host felt sorry about the ruin of a sari; the dying woman had worn. She was fat and when she was falling down her sari turned into parachute. When the victim had fallen, the host had thrown a biscuit up after her:

Oh no, long before all that. Fat was like a like a cement-mixer. A cement mixer in a kanjeevaram … all green and gold. You should be allowed to be that fat. If she didn’t look so funny, I
would have been very angry, would have completely ruined my tea (16).

This is an outrageous bomb-blast on the heart of humanity. The host comments on her fat body and praises her sari. The sari was nice, as she asserts, which had the ability to hide one’s fitness. She thinks that she would have ruined her tea if the sari were not nice or if the scene were poor!

As they were having tea with a biscuit, their communication turns to the quality of a biscuit. They are too good to be the regular ones. But the guest is not interested to know from where the host bought. She is interested to know what would have happened to all of them, who committed suicide. Their pause, silence and mid-between laughs expose the futile nature of human life. As the things of committing, suicide are unbelievable, and they do not make any social, political upheavals, the guest suspects if the tie man and the sari woman are still down there. But the owner is the eye witness of their suicide. She suspects of their existence and she thinks of their being alive. Finally she ascertains herself of their death. She tries to look over the railing nervously but fails and then puts up the highest philosophical ideology and living style of modern, cosmopolitan life.

What if they are still there? One on top of the other? I’ve seen four. Imagine how many I may have missed. Who knows how many I have missed, I’m only here in the evening… What if they are all there just piling up… coming closer… (17).

This is not rare but a real picture of cosmopolitan life. There are a lot of things, happening at a time everywhere. But only few things are concentrated. The owner comments on the life of urban people. According to her, all the mornings, lunch times and even the, nights are equal because at
every time, the same things have been occurring since the odd constructions of the cosmopolitan cities are erected.

The guest disappointed by the idea of host, as nobody has seen down there, nobody knows who lives on the upper floor and who lives on the down floor. While exposing her ideas about the loneliness of human life, she is taking many pauses so that the confirmation of man’s sadness and madness would expose. When a guest comes to know that the host has become more philosophical and eccentric, she compels her to calm down and have another biscuit. She continues that everybody feels that all the good stuff seems to be happening on; our side of the building but such stuff happens everywhere and every time.

Coming out from the philosophical trance, the owner inquires what happened to the neighbour of guest whose voice was funny. Guest informed her that she too committed suicide escaping from the lift, and nobody knows why she did so. The owner laughs on the miserable condition of cow-like women. She informs about a woman who had long hair. She too disappeared in a lift accident unknowingly. As soon as she disappeared, the owner went to her house and brought tea-set. The guest looks at it curiously and blames her fate that she got only hairbrushes and empty frames. Once she had got a rug that is right now in her bedroom. Even she had shocked knowing how fast all things disappeared.

Three things, the guest and the owner brought from the disappeared woman’s house are strictly connected with social and psychological disorder of these two women.

The owner turns to her neighbour on the other side who is an old lady and insists that she has seen the top of the building. This old woman claims that the building has unbelievable height, and one can see it easily if there is
a clear sunlight. In such atmosphere, one can see thousands and thousands of windows.

They stop their gossips showing pity for the man who died the day before. The death of him doesn’t matter; his nice suit, gray and beautifully cut and gleaming polished black shoes are more valuable than his death. They expect from the persons of committing suicide to die leaving their valuable possessions back so that the women as the guest and the owner can easily bring his possessions and decorate their houses. The story of the greed of these pious women ends with serving more tea to the guest and pitying about the man who committed suicide wearing a green-gray-caterpillar like tie.

The second part of the play named ‘Deep Freeze’ is divided into two scenes. This part takes place in the living room of a couple. In first scene the wife who played the role of the host in previous part, talks addressing the audience and exposes the story of her husband Vijay, son Rahul and a newly received gift from America sent by her sister, a refrigerator. The half of the second scene of this part is an aside lead by the husband who; about his wife’s madness about the fridge. The remaining part exposes husband-wife relationship which is tainted with the disbelief against one another. It turns from simplicity to complexity due to the intrusion of the fridge in their house.

The woman is a representative of all women who live in apartments and work in public and private sectors. She is alone at home in the afternoon and is happy with the solitariness. She loves sitting around reading; she doesn’t get such a leisure time to sit and read. She thinks herself quite lucky on that day because she got an unexpected holiday, and even her husband is not home. Her only son is in the school, and she is reading ‘‘Readers
Digest”. She feels that reading such a magazine means just getting an idea of useless facts. When it came by the mail, she thought that it would be a court’s summons or the expiry of her insurance. She, then, frankly shares her victory that she always wins “Reader’s Digest” little scratch schemes. She has ever won tiny calendars, pocket diaries and rancid self-help books. She thinks that “Reader’s Digest” is nothing but a nice little drama in real life. It plays the role of old family friend, and she loves its company. This shows how women in urban apartments try to stress on their privacy and how the pursue of this privacy carry them to social and psychological disorder.

She continues her aside and exposes that she wasn’t home on Saturday afternoons. It is her shopping day. But instead of going out for shopping, she preferred to be home in the company of a brand new toy, the fridge. She believes that she can keep stuff in it forever. As tomatoes were chief last week, she bought twenty kilos and bunged them in. Whenever she needs them, she takes and when it is impossible to slice them; she gets hammer and smash them to bits. Her sister, whom she didn’t listen since last ten years, has sent this deep Freeze from U.S. While seeing such packed box, her husband thought that her sister-in-law died and was sent her back to India. He agitated feeling her dead body might be in it. As the address was written by her handwriting, the woman convinces her husband that she did not die. He supports his idea giving the example of movies in which the Americans particularly murder people and put the bodies in the fridge. When his wife asks him why they would send the body all the way to India, he answered that Americans do everything with a flourish.

The fear in his mind makes them dumb and senseless. Her nervousness and refusal to open the fridge made him switch it on for a while so that it would be easy for them to take her out. They sat around it for a
while and then she said if she were in there, it would stink as it would have been on a ship for many weeks. But her husband thought that she might have been wrapped in a plastic garbage bag by the murderers so that no one could smell of her decayed body. He is strongly firm on his opinion and continued that the murderer might be an Egyptian scholar and would have embalmed her as a part of his thesis.

As it was empty except a few plastic trays and boxes, she becomes a little disappointed not because she had anything against her sister, but it was a bit of an anti-climax. Though he was afraid, he came and peeped into it.

When he found nothing, he gloomily said that there is not even a fish finger. The thought of a woman, why her husband had expected to have at least finger of her sister in the fridge, exposes that she is suffering from traumatic disorder.

Her son, Rahul is fascinated with it. He once tried to get inside by emptying it. But she knows that he is not stupid, he is a genius fellow. She compares her son with her husband and concludes that her husband is slow. She ascertains herself that Rahul’s genius nature didn’t come from his father. Even she raises a question that from whom such a genius came. She knows that Rahul has been writing poems since he was five years old. In the beginning, she thinks, his poems were cute, but by the time he was seven, she couldn’t understand a word. As he is fifteen years old now, his poems have taken such a turn that she is unable even to look at them. The overall nature of Rahul exposes his abstract suffering from hyperactivity disorder.

Her son had to do a geography project on the tundra. She did most of the projects, but he didn’t find perfection in what she did, so she thought that he would have done it better that what she did. But the fridge increased his curiosity, and he began to do various experiments. One day, he puts a bottle
with full of insects in, just to perceive which ones would survive. And once, he keeps an eye on the neighbour’s little dog but his mother suggested him not to put anything in it except the things of eating.

She engages herself in the thought of what she would send to her sister in return. She doesn’t want to send her sister just a ‘thank you’ letter. She recalls that she had sent her a bottle of pickle with her uncle three years and three years before that too. But she is not sure if her uncle really carried it to America or dumped the bottle at Mumbai airport, because she knows that there is a room at the airport with thousand and thousand bottles of homemade pickle.

She feels that she can send her sister a nice the or a shawl. But she is not sure how much amount needs to spend on to get it there. She is mentally suffering about the thought of sending something to her sister. Even she thinks that it might be a madness to send her something only because she has sent her something. At last, she thinks to write a dignified ‘thank you’ letter. She intends to take the advice of Vijay, her husband in this regard, but she is aware for what her husband would force to send her. The thing would be an urn to keep her ashes as he always thinks that his sister-in-law has already passed away. Sometimes she feels sorry about herself regarding a marriage to such a negative fellow. When she hears pressure cooker from the kitchen, she gets up and exits in a hurry.

Scene two of part second opens with a man named Vijay, the husband of the speaker of the last scene. He is reading the “Reader’s Digest”. He puts it down in disgust and begins to share his present life with the audience. It is neither soliloquy nor aside, it is a kind of prologue. Here it seems that his
whole life is nothing but a drama of uncertain end and public just come to see the prologue as there is no drama in the theatre after prologue.

He gets angry on his wife for buying “Reader’s Digest”. He just imagines looking at the kitchen what his wife would be doing. He supposes that she would be loading the fridge with provisions for the rest of the year. He feels sorry about her deeds as she had made a very strange salad with full of tomatoes. It is amusing and amazing for him that she smashed the frozen tomatoes with a hammer. It is shocking for him that he has to eat the frozen potatoes as he knows that they are disgusting like eating bits of somebody’s caked bath sponge. They had only legs and thighs for dinner as she bought twelve chickens at a time that made him crazy. When he praised her ironically as he is aware that they have to eat only necks and gizzards next week, she angrily asked him if he could look at bright side of anything.

After exposing the vulgar utility of the fridge and exhuming what he has in his mind about his wife and son, he takes a pause. This is his first pause and then a long silence which creates sympathy about him. But his mind, though he dumped so much in front of the audience, is tightly packed with devastated feelings like a fridge, which is filled with nonsense provisions. He observed that his wife is for a long time in the kitchen and guessed that she might have been probably trying to fit a cow through the kitchen door.

When she asked him if they could send any gift to her sister, he found no necessity to send any gift to her because he thinks; she is probably lying inert in her fridge. As she couldn’t bear his ignorant tone, she slapped on his mouth with “Readers’ Digest”. He thought to send her nothing except a letter of ‘thank you’ telling her how much chaos the damn thing is causing. He has been thinking on the matter of how much electricity it consumes.
Even it was essential to convert to run on 240 volts. The man suspected that his sister-in-law might be thinking about them as these people are like morons. Even he feels that she thinks about them that they don’t know anything about the world around them. But his wife didn’t feel awkward; she just orders him to call for an electrician. The protagonist of the play is haunted by the idea that his sister-in-law is dead since the fridge is arrived in their house.

As he came to know that his son keeps sticking his head into it, he is thankful to God that his sister-in-law didn’t send them an oven. He claims that his wife was losing her sense of humour in her old age when he was slapped with “Readers’ Digest” by his wife due to his exhausted comment on her sister. He wished to take his drink, but he hates to take the ice that is made in the fridge. He likes to engage his mind in “Readers’ Digest” instead of the outputs of the fridge. Now he has to read today’s newspaper. He has been searching it, but he didn’t get. He knows that the place of newspaper is not definite. His wife puts it every time at new place, so he is difficult to find out.

He shared his experience of one day, when he was searching it everywhere and at last he found it under the papads, covered with oil. But he is not sure, about today’s newspaper. After looking for in a whole house, he suspects that she might have kept it in the fridge. He thinks ironically that if today’s paper is in the fridge, all of them will be in that fridge soon. He thinks that it will be on the paper pile again, so he leaves to find it there and as soon as he exits, his wife comes on the dais.

She has completed her work of keeping things systematically. As mince was so cheap, she bought extra. She doesn’t know which things keep in the fridge and which not, so she keeps potatoes in it. Both Rahul and
Vijay complain about its taste. There is a principle of Vijay that they should not waste the food. So he compromises with such disgusting potatoes and even eats Rahul’s remaining plate too. When she stops to share the report of her deed, she calls for her husband who is, she feels, rummaging about somewhere in the house. He is inside the curtain and looking for today’s newspaper. She assures him that he would not find it anywhere because she bought a whole lot of mince today, and wrapped each packet in newspaper.

There is a long pause in their communication and then he tries to ascertain if today’s newspaper is in the fridge. The silence of her assures it that she really used it to wrap the mince as she, after all, tells her husband that the classified section would be around somewhere. The man doesn’t control his wrath and threatens her; the thing would go back to her sister with his wife in it the day after. Due to his uncontrollable rage, he stood glaring at her then went up to her, and picked up the “Readers’ Digest”. As he made almost as if to slap her with it, she raised a warning finger at him. He sat and started with. She watched him for a bit and was turned distracted by a sound from the kitchen. Instead of trying to calm her husband, she asked her son to finish whatever is in the fridge within a week.

The fridge is responsible for their imbalanced diet because they have to eat only one item at one time. In short, this part focuses on human ideology to collect the rubbish for their day to day use. This rubbish deals with the infected thoughts and destroyed ideas of life. These thoughts and ideas lead to social and psychological disorder. The woman causes for her family members’ destructed behaviour. Even they are also responsible for their own destruction due to their deficiencies in knowing what is good and what is bad. In this way, the second part of the play focuses on the acceptance of slavery of commodities. Like Vladimir and Estragon in
Waiting for Godot by Samuel Bucket, the communication which is less communication and more argument or just a plain naked confession, is absurd. Two other characters are mentioned in this part that do not come on the dais but deeply affect on the basic ideology of the characters. Rahul, their son and a sister of the woman from US, play the dominant role in this play without their physical appearance. The fridge sent by her from US changes the life of the couple and instead of any positive change; it contributed the madness of the woman regarding her kitchen-dumb ideas. These ideas are in real sense horrible and dangerous for the hygiene. Even the part is also the exposition of artificial relationships, developed due to the brainstorming inventions of technology.

The third part of the play ‘God’ is more complex and challenging. Like previous two parts, it includes only two characters but unlike them, it touches a plenty of philosophical ideas. Though it is not appropriate to call it a piece of the feminist ideology, it occupies many segregated issues of the feminist world. The part raises a question of God’s existence. A dream, the woman sees about God’s sharing her bed, makes a tempest in the mind of her husband. She exposes her dream to her husband. God came in her dream and slept beside her on their bed. Then he woke her up and ordered to make tea. She rejected to make tea saying him it is his turn to make tea. When he found her in declining mood to obey his order, he reminded her that he is God and he is perfect and he can surely remind all the things. He assures her that it is her turn to make tea as he already has prepared tea last time. When she believes that it is God who can’t lie and so she became ready to make tea. In the same dream, she made tea and provided him. As she asks a taste of tea, he claims that he might have made it more perfect than her. Even he claims that he is God, and his every craft is perfect:
Yes, he said it was terrible. I told him he should have made it himself. He said that if he had made it himself, it would have been perfect and perfect gets pretty boring after a while (29).

While she was exposing her dream, his jealousy increased and ironically he asked if God uses Assam or China tea, or he may grow it especially in his backyard. But her husband doesn’t mind God’s domination on his wife; he has confused with the idea of sharing her bed by God. She knows the semantic meaning of sharing bed means to have sex, but she is firm on her opinion that she didn’t do any immoral thing to which we call blasphemy. But her husband’s jealous nature forces her to say:

Okey, Okey, I am sorry. Tonight I will tell him to get lost because I have a jealous husband. And He’ll say, ‘Yes, I know, I made him jealous.’ And I’ll say, ‘Yes, so I’ am afraid you will have to hide under the bed or in a cupboard or something.’ And he will say, No, no you don’t understand I made him jealous. I made him tall; I made him hate brinjal, I made him have curly hair, I made him jealous (30).

Aristotle in his Poetics called this world the imperfect and the poets try to make it perfect. Then the question rises if it was God who claimed about his being perfect or any poet in the disguise of God who claimed to make perfect tea. As the woman is a modern creature influenced by the inventions of recent technology, it will be madness of her to see the dream of God. The current world is a world of machine or robots; it is a psychology of every modern man that his every kind of work should be done by the machine. So there is one more possibility of God who came in her dream, who would be a robot in the shape of God. Though her husband makes her aware of Nietzsche, a modern philosopher who said ‘God is dead,’ she
doesn’t believe in Nietzsche because she experienced God in her dream sharing her bed.

Yet her husband thinks that she might have committed a crime of getting asleep with God or just sharing his bed physically, she would be sent to purgatory, where the souls suffer for their crimes and they regret there for their misdeeds. Here it is true that a man though reminds her Nietzsche’s philosophy of God’s death, he mentions purgatory; it means he is not ready to decline the survival of God. He thinks that God has a little notebook to note full of her shortcomings that he will read out to her in purgatory.

The Italian poet Dante mentioned purgatory in the second part of his great literary piece, Divine Comedy. The concept of purgatory is dominant in the major religions of the world. So it is the influence of this idea on their mind though they are born and brought up in the post-modern era where money is God; technology is dominant.

In this part, man, woman, dream, God, Nietzsche and Dante’s purgatory play reciprocal role and help to expose social and psychological disorder of both man and woman. Sigmund Freud defined the dream as the representation of repressed ideas; an attempt of fulfilling an irrespective desire. Her dream regarding God revolves what is repressed in her mind.

The part is very short, so it is little difficult to reach the dark room of their mind and to know what is going on in that dark room. It is one of the features of post-modern drama to write in fragmentary; this play strictly follows this feature of postmodern drama. How difficult to analyse the fragmentary piece of Kubla Khan as it is the incomplete piece of fifty-five lines, it is difficult to analyse the post-modern drama because it is one step ahead of absurd drama. As we are unknown to the past of the couple, we can
only guess that the woman is trying to get rid of the pursuing desires and the man is defending or preventing her from exhuming past desires.

Her dream of God, who shares her bed and orders her to make tea shows that she is not happy with her husband. She wishes her husband to be ideal and perfect like God. She is conscious that the jealous nature of him is making her more nervous and sterile. She expects to have an ideal husband who will share her household duties equally and whatever he will do, there will be perfectness in it. Even in her dream, she is aggressive to the social stamp on the woman that she is an imperfect creature, so it is not a matter of surprise if the tea made by her is terrible. She assumes that whatever she will make, will be either imperfect or perfect, she doesn’t mind after all. But she doesn’t compromise on her husband’s perfectness. On the other hand, the man is the little bit conscious about the upheavals being held in her mind. But he is just trying to erase the picture of an ideal husband and to force her to accept him what he is. Even he tries to nullify the picture of God from her mind saying her, he is only a man who has a legal right to share her bed. He asserts that either she commits the crime of sharing God’s bed or God shares her bed; it would be a crime of blasphemy. Though God is one of the criminals, he will blame her in purgatory. In short, both of them are psychologically disordered as they have lost the belief in each other due to the development of materialist attitude to look at the life.

As the title of the play rightly suggests about the nature of the play, it is written into pieces, and every piece is as thorny as a piece of broken glass. The fourth part, where again we have the same couple. It opens with the same man and woman who are having tea, and the woman wished to have two more sips since the title is ‘Two Sips’. The part takes place in the living room of a couple where Woman is sitting on the carpet drinking coffee, and
Man is on a chair. He is reading silently, and she is taking coffee by the same way. While taking a last sip and looking into her mug, she expresses necessity of having two sips more. She was suggested either to have another cup or at least bigger cup than this one next time, but she knows that it is not the fault of her cup; it is the fault of her nature. She knows that though the cup is bigger than ever; she will have two sips more. It focuses on the greedy and dissatisfying nature of human life. Both man and woman don’t know where to stop or how to control their immanent wills. In a short story How Much Land a Man Needs by Leo Tolstoy, he exposes that man needs only little space which can easily cover human body; but he runs from morning to evening so that he can occupy much more part of the land and at last he dies due to tiredness and was buried in that little piece of land which could take him in. Here it is the same condition of a woman. She got failure to decide the highest points of wants.

Her husband knows that she prefers a lot of coffee. Even she is aware of this fact. She puts up the absurd ideology of life that one needs either smoke or coffee to get him or her to the end of the day. Though the life is shortened due to human beings’ owning dreadful habits, in spite of having much more inventions in the medical fields whatever, or however man lives, he just suffers hard while killing time. So it can be said that a man performs less and expects more from the life. So he or she is not satisfied; they need two more sips of a drink. She wants to share the naked reality of life. So she says:

It’s empty. The adrenaline rush makes it feel like you are doing something until you get to the end of it and look at what’s in front of you drawing on the far side of the proverbial ship, on a dark night (32).
Everybody praises her painting, but she doesn’t give more than five minutes as she has stopped doing anything for the sake of her happiness. Even she has stopped painting, and she doesn’t bother about it. Her habit of taking twenty cups of tea per day neither shocks him nor makes him persuade her to reduce in the habit. Like her, he is nostalgic in the sense that he wanted to be loved by her. He knows that she doesn’t see anybody after completing her painting. Robert Frost’s ‘I have promises to keep’ and thrice repetition of ‘miles to go before I sleep,’ and Gautam Raja’s the female character’s, “you can’t stop near the end. You must have to go on. Some of my most inspired strokes happen near the end,” (34) resemble the ideas of Dante’s ‘Paradiso’ and ‘Inferno’. Robert Frost tries to put up man’s pursuit of aim and not to stop till the end, and suggests the optimistic ideology while Gautam Raja, being concerned with the life of modern stupidity, exposes man’s degradation and false pursuit of the futile aim. Macbeth was ambitious and so Lady Macbeth. She forces her husband to kill the king Duncan to be a queen; she doesn’t think about her husband either to be king or knight.

In this play, a woman has a burning ambition but she is unable to define it. So her journey to achieve her mysterious ambition carries her from nothingness to nothingness. She is conscious about the nature of her aim to which she thinks that it is not an easy, or as difficult as it sounds. She is vaguely finding the meaning of life in solitariness. She blames her husband for turning her into a machine of performing household duties and shares her husband’s bed whenever he wishes. When he declines his responsibility for turning her into such abnormal creature, she thinks that the marriage made her a deaf and dumb machine. He urges her not to talk vulgarly like a taxi driver. She compels that it is a marriage bond which has plenty of meanings.
To be an idiot and to work like a machine is one of the meanings. To be worshiped as an idol and be treated like a slave in household matters is another meaning of the legal bond of marriage. She thinks that the marriage bond changes everything; even the aspect to look at the life. Every couple is blind to their blinkers. She further puts up a breaking and fragmented philosophy of life as:

That blind to the most monument at mess-ups in history. (pause) You know the only way to know whether what you have painted is worthwhile or a whole lot of shit is to step back. And it is not just a matter of walking one step back; you have to pretend it isn’t yours. You have to disown it. Pretend, it never happened to you. And when I do that I, usually, find that it is a whole lot of shit (35).

Though the man is worried about her decision to step back and see their reality, she is firm on her decision and doesn’t get afraid of losing a hold of life. When she expects to step back and watch Rome burning, he hysterically confirmed her that he loves her.

The last part ends with the pondering of the woman of having two sips that find her always short. The concluding dialogue of the woman stresses the man that he can’t control his passion or decide a boundary of his expectation. Though the stomach is full, he expects two more pieces of bread. Thus, the smallest part of the play exposes the biggest philosophy of life.

The play Shards can’t be called a closet drama because it has been frequently performed on the stage not only in India but abroad too. It is divided not in the acts but the parts. Act is bound to the plot as almost all the late dramatists thought that the plot is the soul of tragedy, so it gives an
overall picture of the idea what the playwright wishes to highlight. But if the play is divided into parts instead of acts, it conveys no importance to the plot. The plays written in this era are fragmented and divided into parts instead of acts. These plays have neither beginning nor ending. The question of poetic justice doesn’t matter. In this era, Nietzsche declined the existence of God, and if there is no God, there is no justice. Even the characters do not resemble with the characters of great plays of master playwrights. These plays have neither hero nor villain, and the number of performing characters on the dais is small; two or three characters are enough. These characters resemble with the minor characters from the masterpieces of the world like fools, fools, caricatures and clowns.

2.3. Pub Crawl

The play Pub Crawl is written by Gautam Raja, which was though staged in 1997, published in 2006 with many changes. It is an example of post-modern writing style. Like his previous play Shards, it also bears a plenty of features of post-modern ideology.

The play deals with two characters, who try to touch the essential issues of life, but their thoughts about life resemble the 20th century’s The waste Land by T.S. Eliot. It is not bad to revolt against the established system which imprisons life in bitter rules and regulations, but it seems madness to abandon such ideology which binds human beings with an accepted order under the name of revolt and freedom. It devalues human life and turns it into minor living beings. It is playwright’s style not to give his characters a proper name but just call them by pronouns. In absurd plays, the playwrights like Harold Pinter, Samuel Bucket, and Edward Albee gave their characters proper names but in postmodern era human beings devalued themselves in such a way that it is difficult to identify anybody by his or her
name because the playwright asserts that the human beings turned themselves into pronouns by losing their identity of proper nouns. Generally animals are identified by their common noun but human beings are so degraded that it is intricate to identify them by at least common nouns.

The two characters named ‘He’ and ‘She’ plays a role in this play. Their role or what they put before the audience is not so valuable but their speech, action and movements, resemble to W.B. Yeats’ animals in the poem Long Legged Fly, who are able to walk on the surface of the water but their footprints can’t make either any stamp on the water or little movement of the water.

The play is divided into three parts. The first part is called ‘They’ which resembles with the prologue of traditional drama or poetry; the second part is called ‘He and She’ which deals with the core part of the drama and third part, again named ‘They’ which resembles to the epilogue of traditional drama or poetry.

The first part is set in a pub, and he, and she are seated at a table. It was the purpose of prologue in traditional play to introduce the subject of the play in advance, but the postmodern plays do not equally share the same ideas. The prologues of such plays neither talk about the subject nor expose the identity of characters. They just allow the readers to think and find out what they feel necessary to know. In fact, such prologues are naked. They share everything in the form of nothing without any hesitation. But the audience searches the clothes and imagines the things that are underneath the clothes.

Sitting at the table, he and she freely talk about sex. She doesn’t want to share her flesh with a stranger. Their dialogues expose that she is a harlot, and he is a pimp. He manages the customers, and she sells her body. It is not
a traditional prostitution. It is a modern idea to provide a home delivery. She is playing a role of ‘a call girl’. She hates to cope with any strangers physically. He cheats the customers saying them to enjoy the virgin lady, but it is her hoary virginity. In a real sense, she is not virgin. She has already lost her virginity. He makes a capital of her virginity and earns money. Once, he would have been murdered due to a lie regarding her hoary virginity. The meanwhile pauses contribute the serious tone of their communication. After a pause, she says:

I have just wondered what it would be like afterwards with a stranger. Because in a way, just afterwards is even more intimate than the... you know... the actual thing. But it wasn’t nearly as difficult as I thought. I’m glad we are still talking. I am sure an anonymous fuck is a horrible thing. (40)

It shows her fear about the physical union with a stranger. She is yet happy as she found a spot of menstruation. But she threatens him not to bring any stranger or any almost stranger person as a customer.

Their communication slightly diverts to the game of a ‘Laurel and Hardy’. It is a kind of game that resembles the activity of intercourse. When he thinks that it is a game of just wasting time, she advises him to practice and then, play with her; they are great fun if he fills them with water because when it is filled with water, it looks like the huge tit lying on the ground. She thinks that it should amuse him, but when he clears that he is not like other guys, she condemns him for his little knowledge about at least to take a proper kiss.

When the question rises of the feelings of guilt, she declares that she didn’t feel any guilt. In short, the prologue or we may say first part of the play makes a ground for the development of the play. No one can imagine
what the core idea of the play is. As it is written in the post-modern era, it exposes every aspect of this era. So the audience or reader doesn’t find any plot, they find neither any protocol of writing a play or traditional ideas of developing plots.

The second part takes place at the same place but the table in changed and now they are seated with unseen groups of friends. In the prologue, the time was not mentioned. Here time is mentioned, it is a morning time, but it doesn’t get an idea of the period of the year.

The communication opens with him exposing his disturbed mental situation. He is bored and every time he thinks that he would never do such a disgusting thing of homosexuality, but performs the same activity. He has heard arguments about four taps against one pitcher. He follows his friends blindly thinking that they would not take the drink that would make them out of the sense, but they don’t prevent themselves from taking the excessive drink. She has taken a heavy drink and unable to stand. She tries but almost falls over backwards. She manages herself to sit at the table grabbing it. As she is unable to adjust herself with the twelve guys, she warns them to get lost. After a pause, she tries to universalize the nature of drunk. She says:

I can’t help it – I get frank when I am drunk. A lot of people do (pause). That’s why alcoholics don’t have any friends (pause). They drink alone. They spit in their friends’ faces and drink alone. They slap their friends without provocation – that’s what alcohol does. It’s a terrible thing, alcohol (42).

Both of them have bad drunks and gone into their illusive worlds. Nobody is trying to peep into each other’s worlds. He doesn’t like his friends’ floating stories to which he thinks bottomless and meaningless. To finish a number of pitchers along with a number of vodka bottles is an old
anecdote, and he hates such boring anecdotes whose only point is ‘Man. I was so smashed’ (42). He likes to hear something new, something bloody stories as once upon a time he was so drunk that when he was driving back home, he accidentally moved down twelve labourers returning from a night show. He hates of having much more drink and doing nothing. He expects a bloody output from the intoxication of wine. As he tries to differentiate himself from other drunkards, she comments on his ironical nature showing him his true nature, when he takes excessive drink and what he performs. According to her, alcohol is a sneaky, backbiting, underhand and lowly thing. It makes him do something like stumble and almost fall over on his face and then turn around and announce to the entire party that his best friend masturbates with her teddy bear. She is aware of him that he would spend the whole next week calling himself ‘a social drinker’ (42).

She comments on him, but it doesn’t touch to his senses; he just continues what he is previously saying. He says that the matter of smokers is not different from the matter of drinkers. They blow the chillums excessively. He doesn’t like their nonsense story of saying, ‘By then, we had put thirty chillums macho, I was so smashed, so smashed that I couldn’t open my eyes man!’... (43). Instead of this, he prefers to listen to somebody saying, he got an axe and murdered his family. Even he is aware of them, how they set up a mini-cottage industry of chillum macho.

One boy cleaning, one uploading, another scraping, another, looking for a piece of brick, one looking for a piece of cloth…. considering they smoke the stuff to ‘chill out’ its damn strange that they get involved in all that frenetic activity… Then there are all those descriptions of how long their longest joints were. Full of phallic innuendo. (43)
It shows the rage of him against those who fly the stereotype stories after blowing chillum. He mocks their repetitive stories about chillum. At her part, she narrated her one story of last week. She saw a cute guy at the table. She claims that she didn’t ever see such male beauty in the whole city of Bangalore. It was her purpose to tempt him, but, though he had his eye on her, he hadn’t guts to go through her. So she decided to go to him, and when she takes one more peg of wine, she dares to go to him, even unable to go to the correct direction of him. Meanwhile, he leaves having snottily a sober wine, throwing a reproachful look from somewhere at her. Though she tells him to fuck off very loudly, it was too late that she was heard by the entire pub saying, and they go quiet trying to figure out who should be fucking off.

He doesn’t feel her story, a matter of surprise because he knows that the boys have a huge stock of stories. They are wandering minstrel as everybody has one thousand stories under each arm. He expects something new output from the intoxication of either wine or chillum. He hates the stories told by them and wishes to slap all the buggers. When they are in a sober condition, he is in trouble if they decide to slap him back. Still, it is not dramatic enough for him to see somebody saying that he was so drunk that he couldn’t stand and then his best friend came, slapped him on the face but he would be happier listening somebody saying:

Unless, he falls over and knocks down every single bike in the parking lot and everybody from the pub comes out and beats us half to death. Now there’s a story that’s worth sitting through a two feet pub bill for. (45)

At her side, she once again cites a new story which doesn’t attract him. A story of a colleague of her at the office once requested her for a date. She never wants to go with him yet she goes as he is her nice friend, but not
that much nice to whom she can indulge sexually. They see one scene where some guys strip down to their underwear. Though they have decent torsos, their legs look like chickens. When she shares the same experience with him, he says, ‘Nobody can be perfect’ (45). So she pinches his balls hard and walks out. It is a terrible play for her.

He has just realized that every time, he has mentioned what it would take to make the story dramatic. He thinks that it has been violence and death, mowing down twelve labourers, murdering the family with an axe and being beaten half to death in the pub parking lot. He is not a violent guy; he means he never gets into fights or anything. Here the word ‘repressed’ is suitable for the description of his nature. He has his repressed desires and he wants to be free from all these ‘repressed’ desires exposing them with slapping all his friends. He hates them getting excessive drink. He is supposed to be keeping track of how much they are drinking and then check the bill.

At her sight, she continues the same old story of a colleague who opines about human beings as, ‘No one can be perfect’ (46). Now, it is difficult for her working with him at the office. Every time he sees her and crosses his legs. She aptly uses the simile to bring out exact picture before the eyes as, ‘negative conditioning – like those rats that get a shock when they press what they thought was a food button’ (46).

He asks her if she thinks that he is a latent murderer or child dismemberer because he feels that only violence makes a good story. He has a question about himself if he is leading a most boring life known to man. Further, he thinks that he should be sexually obsessed then, like any other normal person. He thinks that he should have ended the story with; he was
so drunk that while he was going home, he let himself be gang raped by twelve labourers returning from a night show.

He feels that being raped by twelve men is more violence than sex. In spite of being a serious problem, nobody will let himself be raped. He suspects on himself if he has a repressed homosexual desire. When he was in the college, he was told not to engage in homosexuality. He shared one more serious experience when he was studying psychology in the college. He found abnormal psychology in his own, so he was told to analyse himself. He hastily adds that the homosexuality doesn’t come under abnormal psychology. He further cites his mental picture as:

You can’t help it off course. We studied depression at the time I was sleeping terribly – and I found out one of the symptoms of depression was abnormal sleep patterns. I decided then that I was clinically depressed. I was not of course, but the point is, that the thought depressed me. I was depressed for a week.

Where do you draw a line then? (47)

In her turn, she claims that she has come to the conclusion, that all the men she knows are incapable of having friendships with the opposite sex if there is no physical reward to look forward to. She always thinks about pure friendship between man and woman. But her experience is different; men come in contact of women only to calm their physical desires. When she came in Anil’s contact, she found him a various and libidinous. They spent their much time in gossiping and laughing, and even their gossips continued till four in the night. She thinks that it was their pure friendly relationship, but one day, Anil crossed boundary and tried to smooch her. She didn’t like his wild behaviour, and she cleared him that she didn’t expect such a nasty behaviour from him. Then he vanished and didn’t appear till she called him
one day. When he was asked why he stopped to call her, he frankly told her that he is platonically challenged, and he is unable to continue the same relationship with her without fulfillment of physical desire.

That is why, she hates a creature named man who is unable to befriend a woman without purpose. Anil is a representative of all those men who just go near women to fulfil their platonic love. She thinks that women do not befriend with men keeping any disgusting purpose in their mind. They don’t know a good friendship. They just know to snatch physical benefits if any woman comes in their contact.

She further comments on their conversations that exchange the bare information. Her wrath on them is not for their informative nature. She gets angry upon them for their lack of knowledge. Here she indirectly connects relationship of information and knowledge with man and woman and even with brain and heart. She intends that the men worship information and preserve in their complicated brain, while women worship knowledge and preserve it in their unadorned and lovely heart.

Both things, Anil’s departure from her due to her oppose to him for the sex and men’s informative world, are keenly associated with one-another. Whatever man shares, he just shares information and whatever woman shares she shares knowledge. Men embrace platonic love which can only survive in the brain and not in the heart while spiritual love whom women embrace, can survive in the heart, as well as brain. Women’s love, according to her, is more valuable and serious while men’s love is just artificial and smeared with lust. Man might have information of culture; society and religion but woman is the worshiper of the knowledge regarding culture, society and religion.
Though Gautam Raja declines to be called him feminist, the claim of Mahesh Dattani about him to be a feminist is not totally wrong. Even his plays expose female world accurately; he sometimes neglects the weaknesses of the female world and just puts up the positive things of this world. On the other hand, man doesn’t shy to put up the naked reality of the male world. He keenly cites every weakness of men. According to the playwright, man can be called brilliant due to his informative nature but can’t be called intelligent due to lack of knowledgeable nature.

At his turn, the protagonist talks about homosexual persons who seem are good at their behaviour. They are good listeners. He differentiates normal guys and homosexuals. He doesn’t like normal guys who are mentally disordered because they love to undress a girl in imagination. They don’t mind about what their activity is either illusive or imaginative. But the protagonist wants to prove him different from both homosexuals and normal guys. Even he spends so much time trying to see if he is a good listener that he never hears a word of what anybody is saying. At last, he confesses that he is sick in his head. It means, he is neither suffering from headache nor any previous sorrow troubling him; he just wants to share that he became a victim of mental disorder. The end of her turn with, “My colour pencils are better than yours okay!’ (49), points out what she wants to tell us. She hates to make generalizations. She knows the people in her line of work are the most defensive, pretentious, insecure, intolerant, snobbish, compartmentalized, petty, and jealous. It makes her wonder whether advertising is the safety net that grabs all the frustrated, lazy artists and writers before they fall out of society into obscurity. As she hates all such people, she is sitting in a pub drinking like an idiot. She knows exactly where she is heading. She thinks to get out from this filthy place, but she has
a question of where to go after getting out. She knows that she is just giving
the witch trials. She finds everybody guilty. Again she hates the beginning
of intellectual Olympics that starts after a small talk. She mocks the
informative things shared by the people around her with striking a pose with
defensive and argumentative nature.

The alcohol begins to spread all over his body and loosen his control
of his brain and heart due to his sitting at table for a long time. That is why,
he feels that an alcohol is a depressant, not a stimulant. He always wonders
whether to go to a shrink, but he doesn’t know where to begin. As he thinks,
there is so much to tell. But the thing is, it isn’t anything exciting, he doesn’t
hear voices or see funny ladies, nor does he have uncontrollable urges to
pick up a kitchen knife and cut his neighbour to pieces. He doesn’t believe
it. He thinks that he is a closet murderer. He needs to wash the blood out of
his mouth. It is his first action that he grabs a mug from a friend downs it in
one long gulp. He suggests him to take another peg. As it is a sweaty, prissy
drink, he thinks how anyone can drink that muck. He has an excuse for all
this nonsense; his mouth is spouting. It is leaping about in an extremely
annoying fashion. He likes to collect prickly little facts. Things, he suggests,
one can throw at people when they annoy out of everybody.

When he throws the ball of a turn to her, she frankly says that she is at
the pub only for cribbing to all of them. Even she warns them not to get her
wrong. As she thinks, they are all talented, well-read, intelligent people,
one a day they have to feel scared that they aren’t starving to death trying to
write a novel or sell their paintings. She has started testing that fear. The
more she churns out rubbish and pretends that she is doing something
wonderful, the more she tastes that fear. He thinks that an alcohol is a
depressant, and not a stimulant. She thinks that an alcohol is by far the best
thing to wash the fear and for the same purpose; they have gathered in the pub. The stamina of having drink, she confesses, is growing day by day and with sudden anger, she declares that those bitches need an entire brewery.

When there is his turn, he turns to the previous matter and continues the same story. He feels that he doesn’t need any professional help before he breaks out and goes and does one of the things he has been going on about. He thinks that it would be too late to call and make an appointment after he has stabbed his neighbours. He has an interesting story to share with, and that is, ‘doctor will ask him his problem’(50). He will just say that it is not a big problem, that morning he got up, picked up a kitchen knife and cut his neighbors into pieces.

He takes a long pause and mocks doctor who would ask him if his childhood was happy. But he thinks that people have such silly ideas who try to judge present behaviour by studying the past of the patient. He feels that the mental health needs just as much attention as physical health. It is time to fall prey to minor mental ills that just build and build. His friends suggest him a solution on his mental disease to stop homosexuality. All his friends think that he is a patient, and he needs to be very careful in these times of change and the search for identifying. His friends advise him:

It’s all too easy to lose your hold. We are constantly looking at ourselves, analysing ourselves in relation to bigger things, and so we find that there are many warps and buckles in the psycho continuum. You are all extremely patient. I am quite flattered. But I think I will stop there I feel as if my head is going to float away from anybody. (51)

The last two turns end with the same thing that he has lost his control over his head and he doesn’t understand what actually he is doing.
Jean Baker Miller argues that woman is the “other” only because she is the “mother” that patriarchy itself is a reaction against female dominion in infancy. (Miller: 83) On her next turn, she has shared her experience of the major beer obsession. She assures that it is not only a disease of Bangalore where the couple tries to achieve much happiness from the sexual intercourse performing innovative ideas during the process, but it is a disease spread in all cosmopolitan cities. Though it is a shocking incident, she doesn’t hesitate to share with. In one celebratory affair, he rolled newfound freedom and kept having to pour beer over her body and lick it off. She is shocked to know it was beer he poured over her, and she expected if it were wine or champagne, it would have given her more pleasure. Though it was both amusing and disgusting at a time, he began to do strange things with the beer bottle, so she whacked him across the head and walked out of his life.

She thinks that she is such a genetic magnet for all the mysterious guys in the world. Nancy Friday rightly thinks as,

We are the loving sex. People count on us for comfort, nurturing warmth. We hold the world together with the constant availability of our love when men would tear it apart with their needs for power. We feel incomplete alone, inadequate without a man, devalued outside marriage, defensive without children.

We are being loved for being part of a relationship, for our function — not for ourselves. (33)

She, at one side, condemns herself for not being like her classmates and on the other side praises herself for having such a freedom by which she can’t be the victim of ‘together forever’ ideology. Even she hates to get marry to such a person who is almost stranger and be happy or just pretend
of being happy. She hates the idea of arranged marriage and thinks to be free to get marry to anybody and live with him till she feels comfortable to spend her time with him. She wishes to advise all those girls who are the slaves of traditional rules and regulations, to find out the hard way. She shocks to know that they are really always happy. It scares her how happy they are with some idiot they met just four months ago. She shares her experience of spending four years with a boy before finding him to be the second biggest idiot in the world. She doesn’t have any clue of who is the first biggest idiot in the world; she gives him the benefit of the doubt.

According to him, everyone is insane and it is a good thing about alcohol that opens up the insanity. Insanity goes near to madness and madness has a remedy of alcohol. Both insanity and madness are strictly related with the repressed things. Sigmund Freud suggested various technical ways to open the mouth of repressed things, but the modern man doesn’t need any psychological processes to expose him. Alcohol is the only way to open an insanity. It gives one’s mind an excuse to be itself. The western political philosopher John Locke calls mind ‘Tabula Rasa’ which means a blank state, and here the protagonist claims that one’s mind is a totally different person when it is itself. He asks her if she makes any sense an if not, he warns not to ask him to repeat it, or he will get dizzy and throw up all over her. He keeps wandering if he should put his hands up and hold his head down. He further asks her if she thinks it would go away somewhere. He feels it quite pleasant almost as if the beer went directly into his skull, and his brain started bobbing about in it.

He believes that if anybody is under the influence of alcohol and if he shakes his head, his brain gets a little arrayed. It gets a little worked up and starts to complain. In an intoxication, if he tries to show his independence,
there is a possibility to keel over backwards and smash the skull on the floor. Though, he claims, he will look foolish, he doesn’t mind falling over in front of people. He suggests that if someone is impossible to move, it is better to lie where he is as many macho men do that. He informed about them as getting up is embarrassing, so they just lie there and pretend they have passed out. He confesses that he didn’t take such heavy drink which could make him impossible to stand on his leg. There is a problem; he cited, that the drunker gets into the craziest conversations.

He shares his experience at one party; he stood up and made a speech strongly advocating front open bras. He insisted that every girl who expected her bra to be taken off by another person must either wear front open ones or none at all. Since that party, he didn’t take such excessive drink because he would have experienced the bitter fruits of such crazy speech. He advises to the drinkers that they are never allowed to forget what they say when they have drunk.

In her turn, she comments on Hindsight, that has impeccable taste. She feels that, it is necessary to find new ways of meeting people. The comparison of human beings with a dog seems though, miserable, she thinks that the dogs have got the right path, and human being should go around sniffing each other’s butts. She hates those who find satisfaction in listening to music and even she would dismiss those who live to listen to Kenny G or Boy Zone. She feels guilty if she thinks to accompany such a guy. As she doesn’t know anything about such a guy; she hates him.

He turns after her to the educational system which makes passive idiots. His wrath against education is disclosed by his words as:

Life has this extremely bad habit of throwing up problems that lunge strait for the gaps in your education. Why can’t I ever get
problems I know the answers to? And why is it always the most awkward ones, at the most embarrassing moments? I mean how long can it possibly take to teach someone to take a bra off? (53)

Through reminiscences about extra-curricular in school every Friday, he expects to have at least one little class on removing somebody’s bra. He thinks that it is very difficult task. Nobody can ask for time so one can get in a little practice. He suggests two ways to remove the bra; first is to carry a Swiss army knife and other is to snap the elastic once hard, and she will have it off in a jiffy. The pause taken by him makes him think if it is a violent idea.

The most experienced idea of him, “stinging pain makes you angry… especially on the lower back” (53) exposes the new ways of temptation. He thinks that the pain on the lower back causes our adrenal glands to squirt a bit of adrenaline. He has one more idea about Big Ben to which he is not sure if it is a clock or a bell.

She cites her statement of the week that, “we don’t go out with people anymore – instead we date motley psychographic collections of bands, brands and movies” (53). She repeats the same statements for the friends around her who are almost strange for her. Further, she claims that she has seen humour the sizzled bitch look. Such a look, which she hates, makes her feel that she is wildly interesting before she beats up or pukes over the entire pub. She addresses almost strange friends around her that they are pitiful; they need to have read the right books, seen the right movies and bought the right paintings. She makes two classes of people. The first class is aware of literature and art. Another class needs to have bought the latest cell phones, owned the right cars and worn the right fashion labels. She warns those who
think themselves superior to everybody around, because they are intellectuals. But the fact is that they are all every bit as superficial as those idiots, who need to have their cell phones right ring at plays and movie-halls and restaurants. As she was talking about the cell phone users somebody’s mobile phone rings in the hall, she thinks that somebody should say not talk on the phone while she is trying to talk. She finds his savage behaviour. She shows her wrath addressing the person whose mobile phone was rung:

   Why don’t you just belch for us? Go on, belch for us right now, I want to belch a right now. (Pause) No belch? No belch. Belching is not okay. How about a fart now? Come on then, how about a fart?” (54)

   She suggests her friends to look at them. She has never seen so many emotions cross few faces in such a short time.

   There are plenty of reasons for what he should carry a Swiss Army knife, but none of the cause he recalls. He takes out a swiss Army Knife and asks her if the Swiss Army use it. If they don’t, here is an excellent prickly fact. He is unable to imagine the soldiers using one of the knives. Since sitting at the table, it is his second action to take the opener and open the blade of the knife. He looks down to the knife and thinks it as a useless matter. He has a question if Switzerland has the army at all. His informative mind provides the information that they don’t have an army, and that is why the Swiss army knife is someone’s little joke. He is very ignorant from this fact.

   She is essential to go for loo not because it is urgent but because one boy is looking at her, and he looks more nervous than her. So she just wants to leave her place for a stranger boy. She compares a condition of Bangalore of making friendship with a condition of Mumbai where the word, ‘Hi’
works so much and people in Mumbai make new friends with just a single, ‘Hi’. But in Bangalore, it is not such a condition. She thinks that they are still waiting for her say something. They want her to do her sum up. When she addresses them calling keepers of the status Quo, she knows her imbalanced condition of mind that she is very drunk and hardly knows what she is saying. She asks herself if it is a very bad thing to be a keeper of status Quo. She thinks to forget all her small town conditioning and just go over to him and say ‘Hi’. As he is cute and at the same time bored, she will probably fall right on the top of him. She doesn’t think even Mumbai would excuse something. Like that after standing slowly, she tells her friend that she will lie with the guy introducing herself as she is from New York. She doesn’t want anybody’s help as since last twenty five years she has been going to loo without anybody’s help. She confesses without hesitation that, she was doing it in her sleep for the first seven years. She is unable to walk, yet walks slowly backward away from the table, holding on to the edge.

In the third part of the play, both ‘He’ and ‘She’ came at the same pub and occupied separate tables. In this concluding part, he and she slacken all threads frankly. He exposes his secret that he was in love of an insane girl who is now sharing her body with a blinking idiot with this kindly obsession with beer. She is shocked listening to him as she knows that guy who had used her by the same way; pouring beer on her body and licking it. She knows Anirudh very well who plays such a nasty game with her. She asks him if he is sure that it is still beer. She expects that he must have gone on to something harder like kerosene. She is shocked to know this, so she says:

Are there no strangers in the world anymore!! Why? Why does this always happen? (toughing now) its proved now...
Everybody knows everybody else !!!’ (56)
He feels that it is like the beginning at the Bible that tells the story of Adam who knew Eve and produced Cain; Solomon knew so and so and produced whoever. Everybody knew everybody. It just occurred with her that if he has taken chances or done anything dangerous in the post. She will get punished for it. When he asked the confirmation of this very fact, she answered she has slept with everybody to whom he has slept with.

In this way, the drama ends with the confusion of readers. It resembles neither Shakespeare’s nor Ibsen’s problem plays. It focuses on the plenty of problems of the youths who are born in cosmopolitan cities like Bangalore and Mumbai, particularity in postmodern Era. The play portrays life-like picture of modern young world by devaluing the ideal structure of writing drama, established by the forefathers of Indian English drama. Gautam Raja is aware of the condition of the traditional form of writing. He thinks that the old techniques of presentation will not help to portray the disorder of modern life. In his writing drama, he sustained order, while portraying both social and psychological disorder. Pub Crawl is the fragmentary drama. One can’t claim of having a beginning, middle or end. It can be called a drama of broken dialogues. This drama can’t be called either tragedy or mystery; as it doesn’t follow any rule of writing tragedy or mystery play; yet it is full of tragic and mysterious incidents. In the core part of the play, both characters are under the influence of alcohol; which force them to exhume the broken pieces of incidents.

2.4. Damini, the Damager

Damini, the Damager was first performed by Artistes Repertory Theatre at Opus, Bangalore on May 26, 2005. It is another mind-blowing play by Gautam Raja. It is written in the same mode as Pub Crawl written. The play is divided into six monologues. All these are dramatic monologues
written in a prose form. They are strictly connected to the inner part of the mind, which is one of the ways to open the dark room of mind so that one can get free from the repressed desires. There are four females, who share their personal world with the audience. The protagonist of the play, Sita and her mother, Shoba have two monologues each and Priya, Sita’s old friend and Sapna, Sita’s cousin as well as very good friend, have single monologue each. These six monologues help the audience to voyage in the dark and mysterious area of their life.

The play opens with ‘Opening Tableau’ and ends with ‘Closing Tableau’ featuring all the actresses in which they share a line each. In ‘Opening Tableau’, Priya’s only sentence, ‘I was only a face…’ (62), and in ‘Closing Tableau’, ‘when I look in the mirror, I want to know it’s me. Me!’(91), shows the journey of her life. In the same sense, each character tries to pack their lives in two sentences in opening and closing Tableau, respectively.

The title of each monologue shows social presentation and psychological penetration of the protagonist. Six monologues are well connected to each other, yet it is laborious to know the beginning, middle and end. Here the playwright deliberately violated the traditional form of writing play and divided it into parts instead of acts or scenes. The setting for the each part is same; the stage is as bare as possible which resembles setting of the absurd plays.

The first part of the play entitled, ‘Skin Deep’ deals with Priya’s monologue. It contains her fight for privacy. The scene opens in a dressing room. She is in front of a mirror, and her back is to the audience. The audiences can see half reflection of her face only in the mirror. The half reflection of her face in the mirror shows how he disorder is divided in two
halves as first which is hidden, represents her psychological disorder while the second half belongs to the audience, exposes her social disorder.

Priya has got natural beauty, and this beauty caused make her Miss world, Miss India, the Shampoo girl, a girl dancing in the sweater ad, hot model babe and the snooty cat-walking board. As she is so famous all over the world, she became a public property. Being a public property, she is being misused by everyone. At a particular stage of life, she came to know that her popularity is useless for her well-being. So the ideology of John Keats ‘A thing of beauty is a joy forever’ became farce in her life, because it troubled her personal and social worlds. She feels pity about herself that everybody, old, young, ugly, male or female has had the chance of gazing deep into her eyes, of seeing her face close up, even closer than she can see it. She is shocked to know that there are people who know every contour, every blemish and even every pore. She is not even around those guys to tell them to get lost who put her photo up in their rooms, on their mirrors and even in their bathrooms; they leer at her every day. She doesn’t want the wrath of girls who envy her and curse her and cut her eyes out. She doesn’t want anybody to laugh at her as she has an experience of the prettier girls who laugh at her folly and go back to whatever it is; they are doing with their lives.

She was fighting in the past to make her private face public and right now she gets disgusted with the public identity. She wants her public identity to tear it into pieces. The terms like ‘cut’ and ‘paste’ are modern terms related to computer technology, but the heroine of this part is one step ahead. She wants to cut her face but doesn’t want to paste as it is; she wants to rearrange it and make it her once more. Her idea of rearranging forces her
to establish reorder that she has lost due to her over ambitious nature of being famous all over the world.

Gautam Raja used two symbols tactfully to make her monologue more influential; they are ‘mirror’ and ‘scissors. Mirror is an object that shows the reflection of anything that is in front of it. It is told that mirror doesn’t lie but only it is such a thing which lies most. It just shows the external picture of anything; it fails to reflect human beings internally. Priya is in front of the mirror and just wants to cut her surface reality. She was haunted previously by ‘Dorian’ thoughts, and she succeeds in her operation to be famous like Dorian Gray, who succeeded to preserve his youth, in The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wilde. Oscar Wilde rightly says:

Those who find ugly meanings in beautiful things are corrupt without being charming. This is a fault. Those who find beautiful meanings in beautiful things are the cultivated. For these, there is hope. They are the elect to whom beautiful things mean only Beauty. There is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book. Books are well written, or badly written. That is all (5).

The same thing happened with Priya. Her face is smeared with powder of Miss World, Miss India, a shampoo girl, etc. She just wants to cut these layers that she finds in the mirror. But the mirror is unable to show her mind’s picture. Once upon a time, she had a dream to be popular, and when this dream was fulfilled, she became ready to tear the surface layers of her identity. She tries to resemble with the mirror. But in a real sense, both of them are liars as both are unable to disclose each other’s real picture of mind. So her expectation to show her what she really is from the mirror and
its expectation from her to be seen as what actually she is, do not fulfill due to their personal weaknesses.

Another symbol of scissors recalls Belinda from The Rape of the Lock by Alexander Pope. In this poem, Belinda’s lock was cut by her lover baron, with the scissors also meaningful. By this weapon, Priya wants to cut her public face into private. But there is no scissors in the world that can turn her public face into private. Scissors are mostly used in the medical field, for dissection and various kinds of operations. The word scissor is very important in the life of Macbeth, who was living under the impression, that he would not be killed by any person who was born naturally as second apparition had prophesized as in the play Macbeth:

Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh to scorn
The power of man, for none of woman born
Shall harm Macbeth. (Act IV, Scene 1)

But Macduff was born by the process of scissoring. Priya wants to give unnatural birth to a private face by demolishing her public face. As the prophecy of apparitions in the life of Macbeth created disorder in overall ideology of Macbeth; in the sense, Priya’s overambitious nature caused to be the victim of social and psychological disorder. These disordered feelings give birth to such a world which is more horrible than the world in the mind of three witches who showed Macbeth a dream to be a king.

Priya is nostalgic heroine who at one level wants to be famous all over the world and at the other level to save herself from the misuse of her photos, pictures, etc. She is aware that turning her public face into private is as difficult as to stop a volcano keeping a palm on the hole of it. She is aware that her attempts of turning her public face into individual face is not a simple matter yet she takes the scissors and cuts her face. The lady, who is
unable to be alert from being popular, can’t succeed in her operation of turning her public face into private.

Like a lady of a post-modern era, in which everybody is running after the popularity, she seems to be mentally disordered woman. Though she shares her few experiences, how she is being used by the public, the readers or audience can imagine which things she would have done to reach the peak of popularity. Now she feels disgusting to sustain such popularity. That is why, she wants a private life in which she can enjoy the small things. It seems that her attempt to be a part of highest social order turned her into a patient of psychological disorder.

The second part named ‘Harricane Shoba’ includes the monologue of Sita, the daughter of Shoba. It is a fine example of social disorder. She is the heroine in all six monologues, so one can easily identify her as the title character.

The monologue exposes the complex relationship between mother and daughter. It is a fine example of Electra complex. But it doesn’t get an idea of Sita’s attraction towards her father. Her monologue just exposes a quarrelsome relationship between mother and daughter. She feels that her mother is not a proper mother. She doesn’t like her dominating behaviour. Even she doesn’t want anybody’s domination on her. According to Kristeva,

For a woman, the call of the mother is not only a call beyond time by the socio-political battle. This call troubles the word. It generates voices, madness, and hallucinations. After the superego, the ego that fragile envelops founders and sinks. It is helpless to stave off the eruption of this conflict, this love which has bound a little girl to her mother and then lain in wait
for her black lava, all along the path of her desperate attempt to identify with the symbolic paternal order. (Kristeva: 39)

In this monologue, the audience finds ironical and aggressive tone. Sita makes a picture of her mother as typical Indian mother who looks after her daughter more than the necessity. But Damini finds her mother as less careful and more fearful. At the beginning of the monologue, the love, anger and loss that Sita voices in relation to her mother, Shoba, reproduce the intensity of a particular relationship imagined and constructed between a modern girl and traditional mother in a specific cultural context. The focus of this monologue therefore, is to briefly discuss some of the different feminist disordered issues from which the relationship between mother and daughter has been studied in both traditional and post modern angles and the relevance and limitations recent feminist studies of female adolescence and mother daughter relationship. Additionally an analysis follows of how the mother-daughter relationship is slowly breaking and turning to social and psychological disorder.

Adrienne Rich’s famous statement, the “cathexis between mother and daughter… is the great unwritten story” (Rich: 225) drew critics’ attention to studying the significance of the mother-daughter relationship. Though it is not our prime duty to focus on the study of motherhood, it is essential to focus on the perception of the relationship between Sita and Shoba. The monologue has emphasized the importance of Shoba’s early relationship with her daughter in shaping this relationship and the continuing working out of this relationship in adulthood. Though Nancy Chodorow in her book The Reproduction of Mothering opines that, “Girls do not give up attachment to their mothers in forming a relationship with father but rather define themselves in a relational triangle with both mother and father,”
this relationship is tainted with social and psychological disorder since the liberalization, privatization and globalization spread their wings in India and even the technical changes affected overall human life. The relations, either they are between mother and daughter or father and son, are changing rapidly, and these changes represent a social and psychological disorder. Here what Shoba wishes to share with her daughter is already known to Sita. Sita is a lady in her late twenty and tries to prove herself different from others. Shoba thinks that she is her daughter’s first true friend who can look after her very well. It was her dream to be a dancer of Kathakali, so whenever she walks either on the floor or in her house, she makes a big noise by which the neighbours get troubled.

This monologue is an internal voice of Sita. Lesbian critics think that a daughter is half part of the mother and mother is supposed to be half part of a daughter. After a neoclassical era, the relationship between mother and daughter is changed and became aggressive having edge of sensitiveness. The modern mothers don’t think that they are their daughters’ humble advisers and good wishers. They just think that they are the trainers and their daughters are the animals in the circus. They think that their daughters should obey their mothers and should spend their lives under their supervision. This monologue expresses how Sita’s mother looks at her as a doll or like a slave. As a mother, shoba has some duties to inform her daughter but it doesn’t mean that she should be repressed under tyrannical and inhuman rules. Sita shares her experience of her mother regarding how she was a strict trainer rather than a good mother:

Then, when I turned 24… lesson four. ‘A Girl who Does not Marry by 25 Will Become a Hideous Humpbacked Creature.’ Her boobs will flap to her knees. Warts will grow out of her
armpits. People will point and laugh as she walks down the sheet. She will become. The creature Nobody Will Marry. (69)

In this way, this monologue exposes the peculiar relationship between Sita and Shoba. Shoba is the representative of a past generation and trying to load her dying generation on Sita’s rising generation. Sita fights with her mother because she wants, and believes she can, make her mother see and make her mother listen. When her father had gone abroad for a business trip, he heard the quarrel of Sita and Shoba and came back leaving his trip incomplete.

In The Muse as, Medusa Karen Elias Button explains that even in contemporary literature studying mother daughter relationships is an archaeological process. “The process of reclaiming the mother involves, in part, an historical reaching back to the lives woman have lived before us, to find there the sense that our experience is rooted in a strength that has managed to survive the centuries.” (Button: 201)

The monologue focuses on the relationship between Sita and Shoba, which is discussed in recent scholarship within the context of class and gender oppression in which Shoba tries to protect her daughter as long as she is able, while also imparting to her, the necessary skills to survive. It has been here attempted to analyse this relationship through the social learning theory rather than psychoanalytic frameworks. Shoba’s emotional relationship with Sita is thus considered in relation to the pressing demands of ensuring physical nurturance. Her tries to provide a physical and psychic base for Sita affects mothering styles and the emotional intensity of their relationship. Here the emphasis is placed on the role of Shoba in the enculturation of Sita and the effects of this role on their relationship.
The mother-daughter relationship is constructed as an important and integral part of an adolescent's growing central in determining how the relationship between Shoba and Sita is imagined in this monologue. It is a question of who is speaking, mother or daughter from where she speaks in terms of time, place and socio-economic context and how she speaks. The relationship between Shoba and Sita is thus analysed within the context of family and place with an emphasis on listening to voices of mother and daughter whether in a relationship, conflict or in separation. The relationship between the two in this monologue is noticeably constructed within a one parent family structure in which the absence of the father due to his negligence at his family places the onus of providing and caring for a family on Shoba. The difficulties of Shoba in meeting both moral and social needs of a daughter, as well as her needs, engenders a rupture in their relationship. The rupture is revealed through angry and frustrated voice of a young lady Sita again in other monologue *Damini, the Damager*, and traditional and dominant view of an old lady Shoba in ‘The Stone Sentinel.’

In ‘The Stone Sentinel’ Shoba voices her own needs for the life and identity, separate from that of being a mother to her daughter and discloses her continuing dependence on her mother for moral assistance and emotional support. In this monologue, Shoba’s voice, out-of-relationship with that of her daughters, defines Sita in opposition rather than in relation to self reproducing a split between her wish for separateness and the satisfaction of her own needs and the nurturance which she attempts to give her daughter. The pauses and silences in the monologue signify what is not said or admitted to self as she tells how she had spent the life after marriage in looking after her daughter. Shoba presents herself as a woman in the mother and a mother in the woman. When the woman in her motherhood wakes up,
she thinks about her love, passion, lust, childhood, fond of gift on the occasion of her birthdays etc. and when the mother from her womanhood wakes up, she thinks about her kitchen, house, children, husband, children’s education, dinners and sing-songs, keeping herself in the middle in these entire things yet feeling alone in a crowd. Though she loves gifts, she hates their gifts. After marriage whatever she got as a gift, they had two categories; kitchen and beauty. She aggressively puts her condition in the house as, “They put me in my place _ my place is as the provider of love and beauty and warmth and food” (76). Even she doesn’t reject how Sita loves her:

I knew that Sita had always understood because, every year she gave me a book. And every year, it was the right book. Always something that let me travel… or helped me forget. Or remember. Something that made me hope. Something that made me stop wondering where I’d have been if I’d stayed dancing. Kathak was once my whole life. Now it’s only curry and chapattis. (78)

Sometimes, she can’t control herself from expressing her anger, but to express anger as a mother is to separate herself from the expected role of a mother of caring and nurturing other family members. She has an agency in the sense that she speaks as a subject through taking up an unmediated “I” position in the monologue. She, thus, directly expresses her thoughts and feelings about her daughter, their relationship, and her anger from her perspective.

Shoba’s refusal to accept blame for her style of mothering consciously reproduces in this monologue both an awareness and a refusal of a culturally prescribed ideal of mothering and of a mother-daughter relationship that
doesn’t allow for differing circumstances and different kinds of relationships. She doesn’t represent the limiting and stereotypical image of the strong traditional Indian mother for her daughter. A tone of cynicism and defeat is heard in her voice. Her need for her daughter although perceived by Sita as real is also perceived by her as a trap. The conflict between providing substance to her mother in which Sita would have to give more to herself and giving up her own dreams in life, produces more to the tension between Sita’s voiced need to move away to find a different life for self and moral responsibilities she has towards the flesh and blood of family.

Throughout the monologue, however, her choices have reproduced a valorization of care and commitment to relationships to her daughter and to the welfare and safety of her family. She says:

    It’s horrible, the way the guilt leaps for your throat when you say something like that. It was guilt that tormented me more than anything else. But then how could I suddenly start playing ‘mother when my original character seemed all wrong! (80).

Listing to the voice of Shoba, it is essential to note the tensions and shifts in her language as she defines the meanings of independence and talks about issues of separation, connections, and relationships in association with her own needs and the needs of her daughter. In this monologue, it is easy to discuss a tension constructed between the voice of those mothers who struggle for physical and emotional survival in difficult circumstances and voices of their adolescent daughters. Sita voices her needs for love, support and autonomy, yet it is expected to take on responsibilities both on behalf and for her mother. The less powerful voice of the mother is constructed in opposition to the stronger voice of the daughter in these monologues.
The voice of Sita constructed in three of these six monologues is caught between her rejection and repetition of her mother’s history and her loyalty, attachment and identity with her mother. Her mother shows herself to be strong despite her mistakes and weaknesses. Sita’s mother expresses concern that her cousin Sapna, though haunted by the memory of her lover, who died in a car accident, is following the tradition strictly by marrying before twenty five to a new strange person and is happy with him. But Sita affirms her identity separate from that of her cousin Sapna, whom she resembles. There is, in these monologues, a consciousness of the shifting, blurred boundaries between wishing to both identity and strangeness themselves from their mother. While Sita disassociates herself from and blames her mother’s weaknesses, she acknowledges her strengths, too. Shoba fails to enable her daughter to move beyond her limitations. It reproduces the fear of being subordinated and trapped within the same circumstances in the voice of her daughter. In these monologues, Sita finally separates from her mother and goes to America to complete the course of filmmaking. Shoba’s strength is used only to prevent her daughter from what she, usually, fears and what lies outside the boundaries she knows. Sita can move only by separating from the confining strictures and values of her mother.

The last monologue of Sita, Damini, the Damager exposes how Sita is going to put up the first scene of the movie of her first direction. She is haunted by the rigorous thoughts of marriage. She just wants to destroy the system of arrange-marriage. Through her first directed movie, she wishes to show the freedom of a girl to select her life partner. She thinks that every girl should have the right to choose a life partner by her own. Damini, who will be the heroine of her movies, will damage whole outdated marriage
system, killing at least five members of the society by her gun who impose their wishes on her. The parents of a boy expect a girl to be all-rounder in only specific fields, and a boy expects the physical beauty.

As Sita knows that, it is very difficult for the new film makers to settle, she tries to fulfil her desire to be a director by dreaming and in this monologue and she cites her beautiful dream to make a film. The systematic use of symbols like cup, tray, sari, sofa and at last gun carries the audience to get into the mind of Sita, who is aggressively exposing her wrath against society. The night walk of Lady Macbeth holding a candle in hands exposes her mental disorder. In the same sense, the symbols of cup, tray, sari, sofa and gun help the audience to get awareness of Sita’s mind. She asserts that community and religious values constitute identity, so she wishes to break down the structure of community and bitter religious values. She knows that these things are the basis of the conflict between herself and her mother. So she moves outwards from the inside environment on her life and identity; that is separate and different from her mother. The anger of her mother is expressed at what she focalizes as her daughter’s rejections of the values she has instilled in her daughter and therefore a rejection of herself as a mother.

In all of these monologues, the speeches are constructed in which a daughter wishes to sing universal music outside the bounds of home and to separate her talented voice from the disapproving voice of her mother in order to create songs of her own.

Shoba substitutes for the lack and absence that is missing to the daughter from her mother and is additional to the mother’s emotional and physical nurturance of an adolescent daughter. She represents for the daughter alternative values and roles for the young woman struggling to extricate herself from what Sita perceived as the confining strictures of her
mother. She helps Sita to traverse the boundaries of the inside to the culture and power of the outside while maintaining those connections to family and values that contribute to empowering the adolescent female.

All human life on the planet is born of woman. The one unifying, incontrovertible experience shared by all women and men is that months-long period we spent unfolding inside a woman’s body. Most of us first knew love and disappointment, power and tenderness in the person of a woman. (Rich:11)

It is a female tragedy of losing either mother of her daughter or a daughter of her mother. Understanding the relationship is critical to young adult Sita because she bonds with her mother in a complex, interdependent association that often inhibits a daughter from establishing her identity. By describing Sita’s quest for autonomy from different viewpoints, these monologues can offer possible solutions to the problems faced by adolescents.

The relationship between Sita and Shoba undergoes added conflict and strain in the adolescent years because Shoba is the primary role model and teacher of cultural values. This relationship is often complex and manifests many of the ambiguities and confusions about the social meanings of womanhood and motherhood.

Vivien Nice comments on the nature of mothers in her book Mothers and Daughters ‘Mothers are seen to teach daughters… to meet men’ needs and suppress their own. Girls are taught to be attractive and caring, not to outline men intellectually… and to look for approval” (Nice: 46)

It is true about Shoba who wants her daughter Sita to get marry as early as possible. According to Gilbert and Webster, “Each mother has to
transmit the rules of femininity to her daughter to help them survive in the world as she knows it.” (Gilbert and Webster: 83)

Though Carl Jung proposed the Electra complex; daughter’s psychosexual competition with her mother for possession of her father, Damini doesn’t seem a competitor. A father figure in this play is neutral. Sita’s father doesn’t interfere in the mother-daughter relationship. Both Sita and Shoba use the technique of defense mechanism by two ways to resolve the conflicts between the drives of the Id and the drives of Ego. By repression Shoba blocks her memories, emotional impulses and ideas from the conscious mind. She cites one incident in her monologue of her birth in ‘The Stone Sentinel’. Sita was born seven days before her birthday. So Shoba, the lover of gifts, didn’t get any gift on her birthday, and people brought gifts for Sita on the occasion of Shoba’s birthday. That is why, first time she might have repressed her feelings of hatred of her daughter. On the other hand, Sita also repressed many things such as her freedom, feelings for love, sweet memories and emotional impulses. She had to live under the command of her mother. She thinks that her mother is her first teacher who is bitter and strict and just loads the outdated cultural values and decayed moral values on her. Identification is a second defend mechanism by which Sita incorporates, to her ego, the personality characteristics of the same sex parent; in so adopting, the girl facilitates identifying with mother, because she understands that in being females, neither of them possesses a penis, thus are not antagonists.

Sita represses neither her pre-oedipal and oedipal attachment to her mother nor her Electra attachment to her father. This means that she is going up with more ongoing preoccupation with internalized object relationships and with external relationships. Because she doesn’t have to repress her pre-
oedipal and oedipal attachment to father and mother, she reaches a more relational sensibility than boys. But Luice Irigary, an American feminist disagrees thus: “How can we accept that the entire female sexuality is being controlled by the lack and envy of the penis?” (Irigary: 58). She claimed that Freud is forgetting the mother-daughter relationships.

Shoba is naturally suited to domestic work and not spheres suited to men such as politics, science or business because she didn’t possess the same level of rational thinking that men did and had naturally superior abilities in skills related to family support.

While studying a relationship between Shoba and Sita and finding out the disorder in their relationship and their personal disorders, it has been attempted to touch prevalent feminist disciplines besides, sociology where it concentrates on sex-role differentiation, where it attempts to distinguish between the individual and the roles she has to assume and where those roles are studied in relation to their social determinants and psychology and literary criticism where the focus is so specific and where the points of intersection are so numerous that they demand detailed analysis. As Juliet Mitchell has demonstrated, psychoanalysis is particularly useful to feminist scholarship in that it shows us, “how we acquire our heritage of the ideas and laws of human society within the unconscious mind.” (Page xiv)

At the same time, Mary Caruthers opines a similar view like Lacan’s in her book Imagining Women: Notes towards a Feministic Poetic, as ‘Language is the medium in which we carry our past, determine our present and condition our future,’ (Caruthers: 281-307).

In fact, Freud emphasizes that the pre-oedipal attachment to the mother is never totally superseded by the desire for the father, neither is the oedipal rejection of the mother ever overcome. This ambivalent relationship
dominates a woman’s entire life, especially her relationship with her husband or lover.

The ego, boundaries between Shoba and Sita, is more fluid, and more undefined. Sita is less encouraged to be autonomous, but she is also less nurtured, since her mother projects, her own ambivalence about being female in patriarchal culture upon Sita. The idea of Nancy Chodorow suits to Shoba who becomes a mother in order to regain a sense of being mothered and in order to compensate for a heterosexual relationship with a man who values separation while she values connection and continuity. In her relationship with her daughter, she works out her unresolved relationship to her mother. This idea is quoted below:

; rendition and continuity of external relationships. From the retention of pre-oedipal attachments to their mother, growing girls come to define themselves as continuous with others; their experience of self contains more flexible and permeable ego boundaries. Boys come to define themselves as more separate and distinct with a greater sense of rigid ego boundaries and differentiations. The basic feminine sense of self is connected to the world; the basic masculine sense of self is separate. (Chodorow: 169)

Shoba teaches her daughter what she has learned in the crucible of sexism. She can’t give her a sense of self-esteem that she doesn’t possess. Sita must learn to interpret a new the experience her mother has passed on to her to see this life in terms of struggle, often unconscious to find and maintain some peace, beauty and respect for herself as a woman. Shoba’s ideology of life leaves us with a sense of her own sympathy for all those who struggle within a complex relationship and of her willingness to explore
the intense pain, longing, nostalgia and joy of that struggle. In this regard, Jung and Kerenyi say:

Every mother contains cutup in her daughter. This participation and intermingling give rise to that particular uncertainly as regards time a woman lives earlier as a mother later as a daughter. The conscious experience of these ties produces the feeling that her life is spread out over generations. (Jung and Kerenyi: 162)

In third monologue ‘Ten Ton Tongue’ Sapna points out her love story, particularly the story of passion and sex to which she calls love. She has seated alone somewhere and narrated her first love. She feels that she has no passion for him, so it must be love. She likes to go with him for dinner parties. Whenever he asks for dinner, she accepts his invitation. On the dinning table, he asks her various questions but except ‘yes’ she doesn’t know another answer. She says, “He looks at me a lot, when we talk and even when we don’t talk. Not normal looks – special one’s sort of moony, doggy looks” (71).

She exposes the nature of their love through this little speech. She thinks that their love is most passionate love smeared with the doggy feelings of sex. His passionate looks sometimes irritate her. She recalls those nights when she feels like vomiting. She thinks that he is a fool and says:

As I said, I have no passion for him. Do you think I love him? It’s a strange, almost staid sort of emotion. I’m content just to clunk along the way we’re doing. But he, he wants something big. I can tell. (73)

Above quotation suggests that he doesn’t want only bare love; he wants to blow off his sexual appetite. Her friends call her a fool. But she
doesn’t mind. While dropping her after dinner, he kisses her. He parks his vehicle a little away from the house and then kisses her leaning over her.

“It was a light peck on the cheek the first couple of times and then he did more and more… and more,” (73) shows how his love is turning to the lust. He tries to do strange things with his tongue. She doesn’t know its reason. She feels it so repulsive just after a meal.

In her meal, she avoids onion and garlic to prevent herself from a disgusting smell of the mouth which, she thinks, will help him to come closer than ever. The only way she could enjoy it again was to tell him to stop. It found easy enough to say when she was rehearsing in bed; it was impossible to do so for her when she was face to face with him.

She had to tell him something on the way home. But she just sat there looking out of the window, willing herself to bring it up while she answered all his questions in monosyllables. They kept getting closer and closer to the top of her lane, and the tension kept mounting. She felt like screaming at one point. Then they reached and finally she turned to him and began to speak. He just leaned over and pressed his mouth to her. He knew that she had started to say something, but he chose to ignore it. He decided that he could win her over with that kiss with his oscillatory skill. She got angry because he denied her carefully planned words, killed them on her lips. The speech that became the core part of her monologue is:

So I stuck my tongue between his teeth. I heard him gasp; he loved it. But I didn’t stop there. I kept pushing my tongue in further and further, until he started choking on his lips, but deep in his throat. Just as they were born, they died. I killed them at the fountain, in their womb (74).
Her tongue got heavier and heavier. She could feel it. It became like a stone, just sitting in his throat, choking him. It was like a boulder; she could feel it teetering. Then suddenly it plunged, tearing through his vocal cords and dropping down his throat. She could feel it crunching past bone and plunging deep into the car seat, ripping through all those springs and foam. She visualizes her experience thus:

It just sat there for a while, and then. I could feel it getting lighter and lighter… and then it just came back to me. Before I know it, it was there, in my mouth, just as if nothing happened. I could only sit there and look at the bloodied mass next to me.

(74)

It was her illusion that her tongue reached all over his body and even it wondered everywhere in his car. But the fact was, she had given him much more physical satisfaction by sticking her tongue in his mouth.

But in fifth monologue, ‘Wedlock’ the same character, Sapna when enters a new of post-marriage household duties, she feels so much disgusting. She doesn’t want such a nasty world, so she attempts to think herself to be unmarried yet the situation doesn’t change and at last, she decides to embrace the situation around her.

In ‘The Stone Senital’, there is a reference of Sapna, who got married after her lover’s death in a car accident. In this monologue, she is impossible to imagine being a married woman, so she attempts to prove herself to be unmarried and how her every attempt fails.

One morning, she woke up married. The condition of her resembles with Kamala Das, a well known Indian Poetess as she confessed it freely in her poem An Introduction. She went to sleep again, hoping things would look better the next morning, yet she was still married. So she got up, went
to the kitchen and hid in the cupboard all day. But that didn’t work either. Because she was sitting on the frying pan, and somebody’s always looking for the frying pan. In fact, whenever she sits down, somebody walks in looking for something and makes her get up to get out of their way. They shout at her for bringing this and doing that.

So she decided to go out the next day. She wandered around watching everyone else wander around. She couldn’t help thinking so many people, so many families. So much hate. She was accosted at a traffic light by a shabby looking man selling a dubious pair of Ray Bans, which she bought. He was the only person who seemed to want her to buy what he was selling. She thinks that shopkeepers are strange people.

As soon as he left, a little boy came up with a pile of yellow dusters and a wide smile. It was such a nice smile. But when she said no, the smile faded a little, and he pushed some more. She said no again, and the smile disappeared and his face became blank. She knew then that he would torment her until she gave in. So she gave in and bought a duster.

Just before she got home, she put on the Ray Buns and the duster. She wore them all day, every day for a week. But they didn’t seem to change her life or her marital status any, so she threw them away. She sat about at home from then on. She left her legs unshaved for two months and then shaved patterns on them, brushed her teeth only on Sundays at the dining table. She learned how to burp long and loud at will; washed her hair using the flush; even she picked her nose in the kitchen with the end of a spoon. She went to a psychiatrist for a week, a hairdresser for two. Her husband went to a prostitute three nights in a row. She went to the local policeman four times in a row. She would go to bed drained but smiling, and then she would wake
up married. It was for her, like a hangover from hell. Her whole life stretched ahead of her like a sewage pipe.

She would have to see that messed up side of the bed every morning. It was spotted all over like some disease cigarette burn holes, unnamed bodily secretions, little blood explosions around smashed mosquitoes. When she gets out of the bed, the strange, blue toothbrush is next to her waiting for her. She thinks that there is nothing uglier in the world than a frayed toothbrush, especially blue. She says:

And then there were the smells – animal smells hanging there above the mirror, ready to pounce… primal smells that made my nostrils flare and my hair stand on end. I used to throw up every time. I stuck my toothbrush in my mouth. (84)

She feels disgusting at the sight of the kitchen where she sees the pools of split milk and coffee, crumbs crunching underfoot, dirty plates, messed up table mats, dripping tabs, wet footprints and crumpled newspapers.

To get rid of this condition, she had hit upon a solution, she had to ask her husband for help. She knew the weaknesses of her husband, yet it is her only hope for a solution. She asked him after he had finished his ritual of scratching himself in front of the TV and pouring gum by the gallon down that gullet of his. He thought a bit and said he needed time to think. Two days later, he told her to follow him. He took her to the bedroom and told her to put on the sari she had worn for their wedding. She waited for him to leave, but he didn’t, so she undressed herself to wear her wedding sari. When she was wearing sari, he watched, never taking his eyes off her. She took her time putting the sari on, not once did his attention waver. Then he led her to the kitchen, where he started rummaging ground under the sink
and cursing while she just stood there in her finery. She seemed it like ages, and then she suddenly smelt it, a smell that made her nostrils and her hair stand on end.

Sapna came to know that life is but just a walking shadow. When she was in love, she could be compared with the great heroines of the world who died for their lovers like Juliet, Ranza and Laila. She was in such an illusion that life is a wine with full of intoxication; so she had impressed to this passionate life. After spending two years in waiting for her lover, as she was not ready to accept the fact of her lover’s death in car accident, she got up from the sleep one day and found herself married. She never wanted to be imprisoned in the wedlock but the surrounding social condition didn’t allow her to be unmarried.

As she was in the deep sorrow of her lover’s departure, she didn’t understand when she got married. It shows that she was in a mysterious, broken condition when she was entrapped in the wed-lock. These two monologues portray the whole miserable condition of a woman who had devoted physically and spiritually to a person and never wanted any other person in her life who would share her mind and bed.

It is said that marriage is a union of two bodies turning into one, having a single soul. But it didn’t happen with Sapna. She was impossible to forget the past and accept the future. Unlike Gertrude, Hamlet’s mother, she kept herself in the mourning conditions; still she is married in her faint mental condition.

The monologue comments on the power of love and marriage. If Gertrude were single just in love of King Hamlet, She wouldn’t have mentioned to Claudius. She might not have thought to get marry within a month. Even she would have preferred to die like Ophelia but not to get
married twice. It seems that love is like Eden garden and marriage is like a hell. The dumb revolt of Sapna suggests the same thing. People get marry though it is filled with wrath, disgust, domination and legal physical exploitation.

Sapna suggests that love is a peak of success, when two bodies spiritually come together. While marriage is an inferno where there is a valley of responsibility of both sides and struggle for bearing children and bringing them up. Her expectation from her life is that she just wants pure love where she allows physical union, but she doesn’t want life where there is nothing except putting bodies side by side without love.

Here Gautam Raja succeeded to disclose both social and psychological disorder through the character of Sapna. She is a representative of those girls who love someone from their heart, and when they fail to get that love, they become a victim of social and psychological disorder. There is a social order which prevents from keeping illegal relationship before marriage. It helps to devote to the person whom woman gets marry. Sapna breaks order falling in love, sharing body with her lover before her marriage. Even she breaks a psychological order, putting herself in an unconscious world for two years. It is her revolt against a social and psychological order. Society and individual mind are such elements who try to reestablish a previous order by paying a big devotion.

It is an attempt of society to establish reorder and for this purpose Sapna was forced to get marry. She was forcefully sent in contact with her husband hoping their physical union might cure her mental illness. Her husband tries to understand her at every level as he hoped that she would be cured by his cooperative behaviour. When he fails to reestablish the order, he takes the decision to kill her by burning. After pouring kerosene all over
her, instead of crying she just kept smiling at him, and then he came to know that it is not the way to reestablish order. There was a burning stick in his hand, and it was moment’s difference to throw it at her, her smiling turns his mind. He becomes a victim of his wife’s strange behavior, so he had decided to burn her alive. But as we know love is powerful and a remedy on thousands of diseases, smile has such a divine power which can reestablish a disordered world. Here he cancelled to burn her alive due to her single smile.

Sapna was conscious about her love and wished to get marry to that person; she had stuck her tongue in his mouth. This shows how Sapna’s life is a show of an where acrobat there is nothing except sorrow and pains of breaking down. Her voyage from love to passion and from passion to sex is as important as her reversal from sex to passion and then from passion to love. It shows a fine picture of orderly disorder and disorderly order. In her disordered condition, she tried to expose the difference between lover and husband. The concept of lover resembles disorder while the concept of husband shows order, but sometimes loving disorder is better than terrible order.

2.5. Gentlemen

The play Gentlemen is written by Anil Abraham and published in 2008. In the forward of the play, the playwright has confessed few things. The first thing is he didn’t see, The Vagina Monologues by Eve Ensler. The second thing is he is inspired by self-motivation to write on a lighter look at the male viewpoint. Further, he continued that the male of the species rarely talks about things that bother him. But he doesn’t dear to talk in public. It is supposed that men have no feelings or if they do, make a miserable job of expressing them. The purpose of writing such a play is the playwright wanted the men to have their, say freely. He wanted to discuss taboo topics
that are normally relegated to hushed whispers in the confines of a consultation room or the back benches of a classroom.

The play contains five monologues of four different Gentlemen and a lady. They try to expose those things that are not expected by the social system. They wish to break down the established social order and reestablish new order to which common men call disorder.

First monologue named ‘The importance of being Earnest’ focuses on the social and psychological condition of Chacko, a master in information technology. He wishes to live by breaking all rules and regulations of society and expose all those things which are not allowed to talk publicly. There is an identity card in his pocket, he wore jeans, shirt and sport shoes, all of them are branded. He looks up slightly nervous, and diffident but covering up with occasional bravado. He talks to an imaginary Companion sitting on a bar tool. The music of the song ‘Thoda sa tu lift kara de’ by Adnan Sami is being played as a background. The song catches the things being held in his mind. He is living under the pressure of social bounds and slightly thinking to break down the chains of rules and regulations in which he is packed up since his birth. The play opens with his confused mental condition due to his physical maturity. He was naturally gifted this maturity in his sleep. He confesses that, it never happened with him. His friends generalised this idea that it happens to everyone in a particular age. He used to spring to attention every time a ‘sakkath maal’ passed. He had to just take off his cloths at the end of a tiring day and his fellow would pop out, curious to know if there was any chance for action. While working at the computer entering some boring data, his sexual organ gets all stiff and perky and distracts him from his work. It proves that he is Mr. Ever ready man. So he penetrates on, ‘It’s a fate worse than death for a man!! And that too for a Mallu’ (18).
Chacko’s physical problem started at the bachelor party for Tarun. He had many beers when his cousin kept smiling sweetly from the hall; he decided to explore the possibilities of a score. But Chacko is not satisfied with his present condition. He needs a permanent assistance to fulfil his physical desire.

Tarun’s cousin led him to an adjoining room and they started with heavy duty petting. He thinks that somewhere at the back of his mind, the things were not happening because he could feel no strings in the lion. He is shocked to know that there is not even a little whimper out of his physical organ. His organ just lay there chumma doing nothing, limp and listless. He tried a little sly fondling, touching, but there was no effect at all, Chacko panicked and she quickly sensed his panic.

As Tarun’s cousin is most experienced girl, she comments on his condition and suggests him that it is not a new thing which happened with him. Chacko knows the philosophy of Shakespeare about the alcohol as it increases the desire but it takes away from the performance. Chacko left alcohol for a few months from that day. He shares his marriage stay in the following words:

Then my marriage got fixed. One of the photographs, I had vaguely said yes to when my mother talked to me over dinner. I nodded in approval of the fish curry and she thought that I said yes to the girl. Some nice Malayali Syrian Christian girl who was also a techie. (19)

He would have been thrilled any other time. He thinks that sex is impossible without the effort of making intelligent conversation or remembering birthdays or any such crap. He confesses that he was not sure at this particular juncture in life if he was up to it literally and figuratively. He tried to avoid marriage saying he is not ready as his company says he
might have to travel to the US for a project any time. It didn’t work as they found solutions to all his problems. Even they asked his uncle to say frankly if he is already engaged with any girl or he is a eunuch. Their enquiry about his physical fault challenged him and he became ready to prove himself that he is a full man.

Chacko thinks that the wedding is a vague blur of smoke filled ceremonies, smiling relatives, bawling babies and rich food. He freely shares his experience of the first night of the wedding day. He was so exhausted because he was more difficult to perform after the torture of an Indian wedding. He hates to do the stereotype things which are shown in movies like coy brides, jasmines and glasses of milk on the first night. He asks a question to the audience if it happens in real life. He expects to say good night to each other and take a farewell to sleep separately. He wants to set such a sensible trend especially in an arranged marriage, where both the bride and groom gets just one single uncomfortable conversation with a girl while relatives giggled and peeped from the next room. It is unable for a groom just to pounce on some girl he hardly knows. And if he takes such a horrible action, it is a question of spending whole life with the same girl. It is his expectation to ban the advices of his friends on how to establish control over the misuse in the first night. He hates the rules like, ‘if you don’t do her the first night itself, she will have no respect for you!’(20).

Chacko tries to follow the social rule of bringing bodies together but he fails on the account of his physical failure of his organ. But he is not nervous and doesn’t blame it. All he wanted to do is sleep. So he sleeps but before sleeping, he mutters something about getting some rest like he is this sensitive, caring husband who wants to get to know his wife better before
beginning on physical closeness. He describes the next day of his marriage in the following words:

The next day was a bit quieter. Relatives started to go home. Thank God! A few idiots did their round of checking bed sheets and making sidey remarks about us looking like we hadn’t got any sleep! Every fibre in my body screamed, ‘Shut up and go everyone’, while I maintained a stupid grin on my face. (20)

He admits that he was on edge because the day would come to an end; it would be night again. He expects his organ to be ready. The song sung by Adnan Sami, ‘Thodasa tu lift Karade’ signifies how he essentially needs his organ to perform its duty. As there was so much time to fall the night, he joins a group of his friends who are lost in loud conversation on the balcony and attempt to see if he could discuss the issue. When he asks his problem, everyone caught on at once. Their faces seem so as they had been waiting for him to be asked the same problem. ‘It happens, da maccha, don’t worry. It’s called performance anxiety,’ (21). His psychiatrist friend began attempting a serious take on his problem but his other friends interrupted saying Chacko has only a soft copy or he has just a flat tyre or if anybody is ready to provide him his stepney. He pretends his cell phone is buzzing and escapes into the shadows of the garden when his friends deteriorate into internet jokes on Viagra.

He feels the panic setting in when the evening come and things began to quieten down. As the evening is approaching, his body’s fibres begin to give him current and it is unbearable. He recalls all passed days about the troublesomeness of his organ.

His wife smiles at him, suggestively, when he enters the room. But he is unable to say that it is reality or just his illusion. He gets a bit paranoid. He
even thinks everybody outside is whispering about his problem and giving him meaningful looks. His pulse is racing, he can hear his heart beat loudly and his throat is definitely dry. He drinks water noisily from the bottle near the bed and turns to her.

She suggests him to talk and settle herself down near the foot of the bed. It is possible for him to talk to as there is no risk or action, because he has turned himself into action-less personality, but it doesn’t mean he is passive. It is his experience that the conversation was good. He confesses that he never enjoyed conversation as much as on that day. They talk about their childhood, their parents, their siblings, their job and their aspirations. Before he knows how, he lies in her lap and she plays with his hair. At last, they came together physically. His organ comes into life, and it makes a dramatic appearance on centre stage in what credit titles call a friendly special appearance. They were talking about the Nuclear Treaty and how something simple like a petrol price hike could bring normal life to a grinding half. At every moment, he had been traveling to the area of love, passion and sex.

Aristotle suggested that, as his friend Lalettan asserts, action is so important in the bed performance or in sexual intercourse. Within thirty seconds, he becomes calm and quiet and the sea of his passion becomes silent but he wishes to tell his unmarried friends not to perform any sexual activity on the marriage night. The concluding of the monologue ‘Let the bastard learn the hard way. Then I can be there to sympathize and tell him it happens… it happens to all of his’ (23) signifies the stereotype life style of the society. Chacko is innocent by his nature. He freely shares what he experienced. Actually there is an emotion in him of something lack and that the feelings of timidity causes for a social and psychological disorder in him.
He plays two roles at a time. He tries to fill up the gap between what he is and what he ought to be. It is a social and psychological gap to which normally can be called disorder. He is normal and behaves normally, yet it is the fear in his mind about his being a full man. The purpose of his marriage is not to suffice society or maintain social order; on the other hand, he wants to restore the disorder, which is created due to his excessive thinking and feelings of tiredness. His struggle to break down the social system at one hand and his surrender to this system on the other hand has been displayed through his monologue. In this way, his monologue is a dumb revolt against established social and psychological order.

The hero of the second monologue ‘Fiddle on the Roof’ is Shailesh. He puts up his perception of life with the music of ‘On the Roof in the Rain’ a song from a movie ‘Masti’. He is an adolescent, so he is curious to know the answers of those questions which can’t be asked publicly or sometimes parents either avoid answering or just giving childish answer. His body language is awkward and paces it up and down. It doesn’t stay in one place for a long. He has worn torn jeans, round necked T-shirt, earring, satchel or even better in disheveled school uniform. He has worn glasses and is typing in a blog or digital diary as computer.

When he was child, his mother told him that it is his tail hanging between his legs. He confesses that it is a first clear memory about his penis. He thinks that there should be someone monitoring parents to see that they don’t warp their kids’ minds. He asserts:

For many years, I kept wondering why my tail was in front while in most animals in my picture books had theirs hanging at the back. I went through a phase when I was curious. (27)
He was curious to know if the little girl baby in the neighbour’s house has a tail and when he discovered that she doesn’t have it, the questions, why God didn’t give a tail to the girls, rose in his mind.

As he was child, he was under the impression of his maid servant. She kept him threatening if he didn’t put on his shorts quickly after bath; some bogey man would cut off his tail. Even he heard the words like ‘shame’ on his half nakedness from the friendly neighbourhood Paati, Andalamma. She didn’t say anything to his baby brother who crawled around without his nappy. From that day the word, ‘Shame’ made an unbreakable mansion in his mind. Since then he learned that genitals were something to be ashamed of. His penis was not meant to be seen, one did not talk about it and for all practical purposes it did not exist.

He experienced that the human mind is always fascinated by the gross when he saw a penis of Kaleem uncle, his new driver in the car, which was a beast. He asks the audience if they have noticed some dog turd on the grass. He thinks that the seer’s eye keeps wandering back to the spot even though every sane fibre in his body is warning him to look away.

It was a secret of both Kaleem uncle and Shailesh to see a sexual organ of Kaleem uncle in the car and not to tell it anybody. When he had bath, he asked his mother when his penis would be as big as Kaleem uncle; since then Kaleem uncle didn’t come to work the next morning. His papa and mama argue a lot that day. Papa dropped him to school every day from then onwards. But this incident made a lasting effect on him. He came to know that he was inadequate. He was just not big enough. It seemed like everyone had a bigger one than him. Further, he puts the male nature regarding their sexual organ:
The male of the species is always comparing sizes. Why don’t you think they have those partial partitions for the urinals in public toilets? Without even thinking, you are trying to get a quick glance at the next man’s equipment while he is peeing. It’s a subconscious gut instinct. ‘Is his bigger?’ Or, ‘Shit man he has a weenie!’ It’s like when people get out of cars at a five star hotel, they survey the scene to assess the competition. (29)

The symbolical words Mercedes and fiat have been used for the woman; the chap who drives a new Mercedes is better than the chap who drives an old fiat. He knows that his sexual organ is not so much big, yet they must be having spy cams watching him in the bathroom. He has a question, how else he would explain the fact that his junk mail’s filled with offers to increase his size of a penis. He has confused to know that they know the size of his penis. He deletes the stuff daily, yet it keeps filling his mailbox every day.

He thinks about privacy, but, unfortunately, he gets failure again and again because he tried to see the advertisements like ‘Make your bigger’ and ‘Are you big enough?’ He feels it bad enough when they release credit card information to telemarketing guys, now they are telling everyone the length our penis.

For looking his crotch more impressive, he used to all up a thick gym sock and stuff it down, his underwear and then pull on his tight jeans. He doesn’t know if it worked, but he caught a bad attack of dhobi itch from all the chafing and rubbing.

He doesn’t feel that women look at men’s crotches not even surreptitiously, the way we steal a glance of women’s breast. When he talks about breasts, he is so much impressed by the breasts of Shakila from
Malayalam movies that defy every law of gravity. His first introduction to a pubertal rush of hormones was through Shakila.

He shared one incident when he was in the 9th standard. On the occasion of Matthew’s birthday, Shailesh and his family stayed over at Mathew’s place. He had the huge collection of Shakila movies. It was an education, much more fulfilling than the one they pretend to do at schools. Conical breasts that pointed ahead in a firm promise of things to come.

After the arrival of Shakila in the illusive sex life of Shailesh, he woke up one morning to find some sticky stuff on his pyjamas and wondered if it was some disease. But his sex guru, Matthew told him the real cause. He also woke up some mornings to find his bed-sheet very obviously tented, with no apparent stimulus or purpose. By this incident, Shailesh made many changes in his life style:

The fact that this uprising could be put to the same use and taken to a logical conclusion was the next lesson from the Gospel according to Matthew. Bless him! What would I have done without him? Now I suddenly realized the significance of my bedroom door, my saviour from infusion. I took longer to change and longer to bathe and longer to sleep. (31)

He finally solved the problem, escaping for hours to the roof to study. That was the best monsoon of his life. He is fascinated with the smell of fresh earth, the splashing raindrops on the terrace and his little discovery channel. The little staircase room on the terrace was his private space where he was lost in a world of adolescent fantasy. He says, ‘Teachers and neighbours, vegetable vendors and the girls in my class, all lent themselves to my vivid, pubescent imagination in this little refuge on the roof!’ (31-32).
He had even collection of magazines and books hidden under the pile of old newspapers on the roof. They were very cheap with horrible English without grammar. It was his neighbor Paati Andalamma who guessed the cause of his going on the roof either in sunny or in raining. He freely shares it as:

I had fun and scoring brownie points with the neighbours! Life could get any better! And then… disaster! One day, I found out that I needed glasses! ‘I told you not to overdo it, maccha!’ Matthew pontificated over a Coke in the canteen. ‘One drop of semen is equal to ten drops of blood…’ Or was it a hundred drops, I can’t remember. (32)

He thinks that he is committing a serious sin, and he would have to pay the price for it, with thick Soda glasses and a life time of chronic fatigue. He shuffled around the school corridors like he had just received a death threat, and he refused to look even at the pictures of Paris Hilton that Matthew had on his cell phone. He feels that it is divine punishment against the sin. He almost became a recluse and stayed indoors most of the time, reading. He read anything he could lay his hands on even back issues of his mother’s famine. And he surprised to know ‘Our hand is God’ syndrome. The Kothari chap wrote about it is, ‘It’s just like blowing your nose; it doesn’t lead to any fatigue or tiredness, and not to blindness or another significant illness. There is no need to feel ashamed about it’ (33).

He had spent much life under the repressed feeling of shame. But Kothari Chap gave him liberation. He was finally liberated from shame, guilt and self-mortification. He shares, ‘Masturbation was like blowing my nose… but a lot more fun, I had to admit! Now I was free to jerk off till the lines on my palm had been obliterated’ (33).
When the astrologer read his palm and declared this boy has no future, he showed his carelessness about future. He proved himself to be the follower of Robert Herrick’s life philosophy ‘seize the day’. If the present is so fulfilling, and sex is within arm’s reach and nobody will prohibit him from it, then why would he worry! The monologue ends with an inner call of Shakila whom he promised to rush at her.

This monologue portrays a typical psychology of an adolescent boy. He gets in the clutch of a beginning curiosity about his penis and then curiosity transforms into fulfilling the sexual desire. Here it can be stressed on both kinds of disorders. Social disorder in the sense that he began to keep himself away from society, on the other hand, he kept himself thinking excessively on the matter of sex is the psychological disorder.

The monologue transforms a nature of disorder from social to psychological in a typical structure of human society. It is natural to fight for gaining new knowledge but sometimes man becomes a victim of getting excessive knowledge about something like Doctor Faustus in the play Doctor Faustus by Marlowe. A childhood curiosity to know about our physical organs and then comparison of them with others carry children to such a turn of life from which it is difficult to get them back.

Shailesh knows only to fulfil his wishes either they are social or asocial, whatever the problems create in this age from childhood to puberty. They create due to children’s extra ordinary curiosity about knowing something new. Psychological disorder creates due to the transformation of childhood in deafness and puberty in blindness. The protagonist is pursuing to fulfil his sexual desires and for this purpose he tries to be alone, to study at the roof so that he would be possible to do whatever his mind wants and to read magazines.
It is a social order that children should spend their time in playing and trying to achieve new knowledge. When they fail to fulfil their libido desires, they become the victim of psychological desire. They are conscious about their unhealthy mental condition and mental disorder; so they struggle to reestablish an order, so that they would be possible to perform naturally or behave normally and after the reestablishment of psychological order, social order is automatically reestablished.

The third monologue ‘The Last of the Red Hot Lovers’ belongs to Shoaib’s ideology of life. He is a barber by occupation. The monologue begins with the music of a song “Banda ye Bindaas hai’ from the movie ‘Aks’. He is a tapori type character.

The monologue takes place at Shivajinagar cheap barber shop. Shoaib has worn a transparent shirt, so his net bunion looks through the shirt. His hair is coloured with golden brown mehendi. There is one earring, and he is cutting imaginary client’s hair in front of him. He is speaking frankly with the customer as though he is familiar.

This monologue is filled with gaps, pauses, silences and interrogative and exclamatory remarks. Shoaib shares his family life, his wife’s behaviour regarding baring children and sex and boring life of monotones works.

His wife doesn’t allow him to have sex with her. As he feels there are two purposes of sex one is to get pleasure and other is to have children. He thinks that children are God’s gift; we can’t avoid this gift. He tries to put up as well. He says that he is a man of the family, so he doesn’t prefer wine or spend money on gambling and racing; even he prohibits himself from smoking. He presents his daily routine as he works there from morning to night without stop. As he has only one source of enjoyment, and that is his
wife, he expects sex from her. But when she rejects, he became furious and nervous as his only happiness is snatched by his wife.

He hates modern thoughts of the modern girls who don’t allow having more than two children. But he thinks about the society that might blame him for lack of maleness. He doesn’t like her suggestion to put on the condom. He frankly admits that his mother hadn’t known what a condom was. She didn’t tell her husband to put on such a joyless thing while having sex. As his wife is the graduate, she tries to make her impression talking in English.

He can talk and walk English like Amitabh Bacchan. It is his firm decision not to wear condom. He will not obey even of Amitabh if he advertises condom on TV as he has advertised all items except condom. Even he thinks about the nature of how would be the advertisement of condom if Amitabh performs it.

He hates the idea of condom which is totally useless. He says sarcastically that they would say to put a plastic paper in between while kissing. He allows raincoat in the raining but in love, why one needs condom! He thinks that wearing condom while sexual intercourse equals to eat Cadbury chocolate with its wrapper.

He requests the audience to think over Mughal-e-Azam, after romantic scene between Dilip Kumar and Madhubala, what would happen. If Dilip Kumar were to pull out a condom and say, ‘Mere noor, ab main pehanoonga Kohinoor,’ (39) it would the magic in romance.

By citing the example of romantic song of Rajesh Khanna and SharmilaTagor from ‘Aradhana’, he displays how the advertisement of condom destroyed the romance. Shoaib has a question about AIDS if only rich people become victim of it. Everybody asks him to change the blade or
wash razor in Dettol. As he has heard about people if they put on condom, there is no chance for AID, so he has an interesting idea for his customers to save themselves from AIDS to go to saloon putting on the condom. By a force of his wife several times done, he once tried to put on a condom but, unfortunately, his passion became calm while putting on a condom. He thinks to have the classes on TV to teach how to put on the condom instead of Big Boss, Yogaasans of Ramdev Baba, and a recipe of making halwa from carrot. The people of government don’t teach how to put on a condom. He would put it on if he learns how to put it on.

Shoaib wants a daughter as he thinks that sons are just wastage of property. In every field, the girls are working in recent time. He cites some examples of great Indian woman like Sania Mirza, Sunita Williams, Sonia Gandhi. He expects to make his daughter a software engineer while he will run his saloon through his sons. But he doesn’t want to send his daughter to a call – centre as he gets afraid to be called his daughter, a call girl.

His ancestors are from Lahore. They came over during the partition. They told him that they used to lift the lungi to check if he is Muslim or not. He is shocked to know that ration card, passport, voter’s card and driving license are of no relevance. It is shocking that his identity is under his lungi. A silver of skin cut off while childhood cannot reappear again. He thinks that many people were mercilessly butchered because of that insignificant bit of skin. He innocently thinks that if they would have put on condoms to hide their identity.

He is eager to know what safe sex means. He thinks if it is referred to eunuchs. He further keeps his philosophy that the young girls and boys indulge in the kind of casual sex, can be quite risky.
He picks up loosen thread of his previous speech and continues that his grandfather came from Lahore and settled in Delhi. During an emergency, when Sanjay Gandhi was forcing sterilization on everyone, Shoaib’s father who had just married, fled to Hyderabad with the whole family. He is proud of himself that he is now full-fledged Bangalorean. Shivajinagar is his world. He thinks that Bangalore is a nice city as it is away from any religious riots or hassles. The people living in Bangalore are very gentle and friendly. They have a mentality to adjust themselves. He thinks that it should be the slogan of their nation ‘Just adjust a little’. He feels that the city is away from the calamities like Mandir-Masjid, India–Pakistan potholes and traffic-jams, Bangalore Bandh or the Cauvery water problem.

As he has completed his cutting, he asks if the customer wants oil massage. He knows that he needs of least ten minutes, so he suggests going out and having a snack or relieve at the loo. He needs such a break like on those TV programmers, ‘We’ll back after a short break.’

This monologue is most intelligent monologue out of five included this play. This Gentleman is sharing his ideology about society, sex, wife and family. Through his monologue, he tries to touch the world around him. He portrays the nature of already established social system at one hand and on the other hand he focuses on the structure of changing society. Though he is not orthodox, he believes in God and thinks that children are God’s gift. This example of his father is in front of him about this matter. He knows why his father left Delhi and preferred to live in Bangalore.

It is his social disorder when he wishes to embrace the religious ideology of life. Though he seems to be a man of outdated thoughts, when he wishes to have a daughter and give her an education of software, he
revolts indirectly male world suggesting for his sons to run his saloon. At social level he seems most thoughtful, sincere and free man. But if we peep into his mind, we find some darkling thrushes shouting in the deep corner of his mind. As he has to work from morning to night, there is his revengeful tone against life.

He is very particular about sex life. He neither loves to put on the condom nor kills his desire of sex. He taunts on his wife for her modern attitude. He deliberately denies the use of a condom. He is against all unnatural things. He thinks to put on a condom and then have sex is against the law of nature. Nature has a naked beauty, and he thinks to drink such beauty. He thinks that the modern inventions particularly the invention of a condom is carrying human beings to disorder. As he can’t fulfil his sexual desire freely due to condom, he gets anxiety increased in his nature. The disorder created in him would have turned into the reestablishment of order by murdering a man who invented condom.

He feels his wife to be a disordered lady as she doesn’t allow him to have natural connection with him while his wife would be thinking about her husband as a disordered person due to his traditional and orthodox nature. At the beginning of the play, he shows rigorous nature about women but it is not his universal opinion. In Hamlet, Prince Hamlet calls woman ‘frailty thy name is woman’ and doesn’t change his opinion though he experiences a true love of Ophelia or surrendering nature of his mother Gertrude. Shoaib doesn’t cite any universal ideology unlike Hamlet; he just talks at personal level. He gets angry on his wife; it doesn’t mean that his anxiety is against whole female world. If it were so, he would not expect to make his daughter, a software engineer nor would he mention the names of great Indian women.
His nature is an admixture of on one hand social and psychological order and on the other hand social and psychological disorder.

The title of the fourth monologue ‘To Pee or not to Pee’ is a parody of Hamlet’s soliloquy ‘To be or not to be’ in the play Hamlet by Shakespeare. Ramalingam is a protagonist of this monologue. He is in late sixties. He sat on a wheelchair. It has a catheter and urine bag which is suitably camouflaged till needed. His voice is crusty, slightly rasping. His neck along with head trembles. As he is sitting on the chair, nobody has time to talk with him. He is leisurely and idly killing time. Though his movements are stopped, his is not silent; he has devoted himself in various kinds of thoughts. His excessive thinking turns him to be rebellious but this revolution of thoughts doesn’t have any way to bring on the surface so that one can really understand him. His life has become just a dust bin, neither of any family members prefers to talk to him or spend a moment in his company. The anxiety and revolt against these people float through his valueless words:

Rushing, rushing, rushing, rushing all the time! ‘Bye Appa, I’m late for the office’, ‘See you thaatha, I’m going for my dance classes’, ‘Not now Appa, I have to watch Sharukh Khan’s Kaun Banega Crorepati.’ Who am I supposed to talk to? The walls? (45)

It is his philosophy that we always take the most important things in life for granted. It is his greatness that he didn’t admit or grant his wife though her filter coffee was best in the world even better than his mothers because he wanted to preserve the worth of his mother and save his wife from flattery.
Ramalingam is a modern King Lear. He is not being either entertained or indulged. He doesn’t take things for granted in these days. It is his miserable mental condition that he has to miss his wife totally. He misses her, her list of things to be bought while returning from office, her crisp cotton saris, the smell of sambrani in her hair, the warmth of her body just lying next to him and her filter coffee. Nowadays, he gets either instant coffee sometimes or they just pretend not to hear him asking. With a long sigh, he tries to put up his miserable situation that, ‘And they say I can’t hear! can’t hear, can’t eat, cant breathe. Hmmm!’(46). The heart problem made it difficult for him to breathe lying down. So he spends most of the night propped up on pillows. He thinks that we learn to value our normal breathing when you have a difficulty in breathing or in an asthmatic attack. Except such problems we are unable to listen to anybody even to Shri. Ravi Shankar.

Ramdlingam thinks why people are forced to learn art of living; it would be easy for him to learn art of dying, so that he would be easy to die. Nowadays, he needs to learn art of peeing. He asks if you thought about it when you rushed to the toilet during the interval and unzipped your plants. He compares his condition with men who go in interval to toilet, easily pee and come back. It is difficult process for him. Though he tries to pee the process is not easy for him; the stream doesn’t start. Sometimes it’s painful, drop by excruciating drip, ‘Or sometimes I’m dribbling in my dhoti like my grandson. It’s a full cycle really, this life… now they have bought me adult diapers… larger versions of what he wears’ (47).

In his days, they didn’t have disposable diapers. There were little bits of triangular cloth cut up from old saris and dhotis. They all peed near the coconut trees just outside the house. He doesn’t remember where the girls
went. He never saw them do it. They used to have little competitions to see who could pee higher on the tree trunk. He always won. The force of his flow was good. He was always a champion. Now it dribbles down the side of his thigh and wets his clothes. He knows Morarji’s advice to drink own urine to cure all illnesses. He tried it for two weeks. He thinks it was not that bad after the initial wave of revulsion. He felt its taste a little like badly made lime juice. The smell of it was neither nice nor did it help his joint pains like he promised. He still couldn’t button his shirt comfortably in the mornings, or ride a bicycle anymore. He used to be so good on the cycle back then. Many of the college girls used to come for a ride on his cycle, sitting in their dhavanis on the cross-bar. He used to ride fast and then brake suddenly so that they would scream. He was very popular and handsome.

He shares his sorrow of increasing the age. According to him, it is very piteous to be called ‘uncle’ by some pretty girls. He feels that the word uncle should be banned. He never gave a lift in his car to some girls who called him uncle and requested to give lift ride to Karamangala. He took revenge on them calling them aunty and drove off.

He feels that; you should think yourself old after getting the first gray hair. He doesn’t think about the gray hair on a head but around sex organs. It is his experience that whole thing starts to look salt and pepper. He remembers the day; he discovered he had grown hair there. He must have been about ten. He was so thrilled. He was a man. Though he hadn’t moustache or beard, he had public hair. He oiled it during his bath and nurtured it till it grew to a reasonable thickness. It was his private little garden. He shaved it once with his father’s razor because his friends said; if he shares hair it grows better. It was very uncomfortable when the poky little hair was growing back. The result of his mean activity was very bad; his
father got some infection on his face and he didn’t think his public hair grew any thicker. There were so many lies and myths behind this activity.

His family members think that as he can’t pee properly, every other function is also impaired. He claims that he is physically fit though he was retired ten years ago. He slyly watches the TV over his newspaper when his son lingers on FTV or MTV when he is channel surfing. Whenever his son looks at him, he is studiously reading about Mr. Chidambaram’s financial forecast in the ‘Economic Times’. But when he is distracted he doesn’t take his eyes off the screen. He is surprised to know about the things, showing on TV recently.

He is shocked to see the programmers on TV. When he first bought a black and white TV, the most exciting thing for them was ‘chitrahar’ and Ashok Kumar’s promise ‘to meet again’. He comments on the shows on TV as:

> Now they are walking ground in nothing on those fashion shows and there’s even this girl pulling up her Chaddi and showing it above her jeans? Kaantalaga, hailaya! (Smiles) it’s at times like this that I know that my other functions are still all right. (49)

He thinks that his memory is not good. The family members act like he is forgetful. But he can remember things from long, long ago. He remembers his previous phone number. They just press buttons on their mobile phones and call people. If their mobile is misplaced they don’t know how to call others. He has an objection on young people regarding good memories. But he forgets something, it’s because he is old. It is shocking about these modern people that they will remember Valentine Day and forget which class their daughter is studying in. It is miserable that his
family members remember the appointment at the parlour but forget his appointment with the doctor. So he comments: ‘Priorities! That the problem. Nobody priorities anymore! What are the important things in life?’ (50).

To pee with dignity is most important thing in his life now. He doesn’t want a bag and tube dangling around whenever he goes. He doesn’t expect so much from the life. He wants to pass urine like any normal person, without pain, without leaking, without straining and wherever he pleases. He stresses on the thing of his being a man. He would like to pee wherever he wants, even on walls with notices saying, ‘Do not commit Nuisance Here.’ He would like to pee in parks, in gutters, against the side of a Nirmala Bangalore toilet without paying. He visualizes his thought as:

No, but seriously… it would be great if all men were given bags like this one. ‘Caught peeing on the road… fined and catheterized for two months!’ That will be an effective punishment to stop this nuisance. If only you could thin up effective punishment of all offences, life would be so fulfilling! Catheterize them all! (50)

Simone De Beauvoir says in her book, Old Age about old age as ‘old age is life’s parody, whereas death transforms life into destiny’ (1970:599), which suits to the condition of Ramlingam. He complains about auto-drivers, politicians, salesmen, and children and he think that it is a symbol of an old age. He promises that he would not complain on one provision if somebody would empty the urine bag and vip the tube out of him, so he could walk to the toilet, lift the toilet seat and watch a glorious stream of amber coloured urine hit the commode ceramic and collect in a frothy pool before being flushed away to anonymous oblivion. The monologue ends
with the same music mixing with Ramalingam’s piteous voice, ‘why can’t you just let me pee?’ (51).

The last monologue of this play focuses on Vagina monologue. The title ‘Who’s Afraid of Vagina Wolf’ is a parody of Edward Albee’s play Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf. In this monologue, the protagonist is going to share such things with us that are unbelievable.

Vaijayanthi, a female protagonist who heard all previous monologues became ready to answer their monologues. She is not more than thirty years old. She has worn a black slinky gown. She is at one side attractive and on the other side tough, feminine, self assured. There is a confidence in her body language. She has all features of a typical post-modern woman.

When she comes on the dais, she begins with an oxymoron as ‘Ladies and Genital Men’ instead of ‘Ladies and Gentlemen’. She doesn’t mind who wrote this play either man or woman but surely blames that men think with their crotches. If the same tough question is asked to both man and woman, she thinks, she will scratch her head and him, his crotch. As she thinks about man though he is happy or sad, though he is worried or relax he performs the same action of scratching his crotch. One more shocking thing about man, as soon as he enters the house, loosens his belt and slips his hand into his crotch. She asks if there is some distress button down there and they would grab the remote. According to her, the remote of TV is a phallic symbol and man sits for hours with that strange dumb smile on his face and surf channel meaninglessly, while he fondles the remote with a regular rhythmic pressure.

She connects a relationship of men with pornography. Though they have pretty wife at home, they want to watch some tired old witch with disproportionate body parts. They expect their wives to join them. The worst part is the sound track full of animal means and grunts that let all the
neighbours what you are up to! Sometimes it might be worth-watching, soft and seductive. If she tells her husband she likes foreplay, he thinks, she is talking about golf. She is sure that they are from Uranus. Their action of shoving and pushing doesn’t go far long than two minutes. They roll over sweaty, sighing and satisfied like they have just launched a rocket ship or something.

She tries to belittle the penis saying on ugly bit of brown flesh hanging awkwardly between their legs. She thinks that it was the same bit of flesh that made their grandmother distributes sweets after they were born. She doesn’t understand why people give different names to their penis as popatlal, chunnibhai, John Thomas and the latest one Mohanlal. She asks Chacko if his fingers have pet names. She doesn’t like to differentiate body parts from one another. She feels that, it is a misunderstanding of every man that a woman loves him only for his penis. She bugs when any man shows his middle finger to a woman driver, because according to Freud it is a phallic symbol. She knows that when a man was the child, he would show his little finger and when he is the adult, he shows middle finger; she feels if it means a growth of little finger into bigger.

It is told in the male world that female are attracted to the size of males sexual organ, but she here clears that she attracts to the bank balance of him. That is only important in men’s pathetic little minds. On an average, the blessed things are not very impressive in size, and if a man stopped watching that silly cyber-porn with heroes like long dong silver, he wouldn’t have a complex. If women had to have an ad line for men’s organ, it would probably be ‘Dhoond the reh jaaoge’ or ‘Yeh dil manage more.’

But she seriously admits that women couldn’t care less whether its large or thick or black or white or even polka dotted and tasseled for that
matter. Woman doesn’t mind what man wears, either boxers or briefs. She cites her experience that when a woman marries a man, he wears shapeless chaddis with holes and stains in them anyway. So she feels that there is no point of those underwear ads with guys jumping off balconies in their Frenchies or being molested in public toilets with well-defined lipstick marks on their bodies. Women will be very pleased if men make sure their penis is not dangling to knee level and if they have a bath once in a way. But she doesn’t blame to all men. She knows that the guys in Desperate Housewives look good. She wishes she had a Gardner or a plumber who was half as exciting. But her elderly Maali, Shivappa, doesn’t quite meet those criteria. Though he is a good Maali, she wouldn’t bathe with him if he were the last man on the earth. The adjective ‘desperate’ regularly used for housewives is shocking. She comments thus:

…all housewives are desperate. Desperate for some loving, some listening, some caring, some sense of responsibility in our men. Anything to make us remember there was a semblance of something human in that sweaty, smelly, creature who burps and spits and can never aim right with his God-given penis while peeing on everything except the toilet bowl! My toilet smells so good till big Daddy comes home. (58-59)

She ascertains that a bit of sweat and urine never hurt anyone. But guys wallow in it. They smell their bodies to see if they still smell filthy after a workout. She requests not to offer her that now species called the metro sexual male. She suspects if the cavemen comeback. She will vomit if she hears the word metro sexual one more time or see one more man sitting next to her in the parlour waxing his chest hair.
Pain was our prerogative and parlours were our last bastion. They have come in there too! Waxing and bleaching, threading and grooming! Get out guys! We like you with chest hair and stubble and unkempt hands. (59)

She shares her formula of being happy for women. If men only return the favour and let women keep their body hair and upper lip hair and underarm fuzz, they could all live happily ever after. It is women’s general psychology that they have to look like Preity Zinta, think like Madam Curie, behave like mother Teresa and bed like Pamela Anderson.

Moreover, she cites a weakness of man. If that isn’t possible, then they will have no choice but to take out their frustrations by rubbing their sickening self against Vaijanthi’s back in a BTS bus or flashing their miserable vestige of manhood to the students outside Mount Carmel College. Or they will find some lovely, vulnerable woman to rape and will stress on her fault of dressing provocatively. While exposing the mental condition of man, she says:

The four-year-old children being molested are wearing two piece bikinis? The elderly women raped during communal riots were dressed in low-waist jeans? Or was Imrana wearing a provocative burqua when her father-in-law attacked her? Come off it! Rape is not about the victim… and it’s not only happening to women. So watch out for your son too! (60)

She requests men to come out of penis fixation so that things may work out. She admits that though women don’t admit, men are an important part of their lives. Even she thinks that men are as indispensable as their menstrual cycles. She asserts:

Menstruation, menopause… everything that irritates the hell out of a woman has men in it. Even out movies… If you show a
woman with some spunk... she’s lesbian. And in the middle of a guns and gore movie they’ll through in a woman for an item number. (60)

She compares herself with Miss World and claims that she has more enthusiasm in her middle to than the Miss world has in her entire body. She asks if somebody has an item number with John Abraham for a change. John Abraham can hold a gun or a knife, but the common man can’t do without emotional support. It is right that a phallic symbol of power rears its ugly head again. She suggests a woman that she should carry a sickle or a carving knife to cause her husband’s member some harm. Every time he brings her a non-stick pan for her anniversary, or forgets to tell her, he has called ten friends over for dinner. When he says her when their maid quits, they will manage, here ‘they’ means only she who should manage without maid-servant. Sometimes, she seriously thinks a couple of batteries and a dildo would be far more useful around the house than the sad species women marry. She admits that the man can talk about his genital in public but woman talk about dildo in public.

By universalizing her voice, she says that she and the women like her love men and their inherent genetic obsession with cleaning up. She asserts as, ‘Give us a home we clean up. Give us a man, and we try to clean him up. Put things in order, so that you can’t find anything anymore’ (61).

By the observation of the nature of male, she came to know that there has to be a method to his madness. She asks what they would do without women. Men don’t dare to say to live happily ever after. The monologue concludes with, ‘No story ever ended with the prince unmarried and lived happily ever after. Face it, guys was indispensable. Even if you write
dickhead dialogues, you have to add a woman at the end’ (61). The play ends with a song from ‘Parineeta’, ‘Nai nahi nahi yeh baatein hain purani.’

Structurally, *Gentlemen* is free from any easily recognizable flaw and is compact. Never for a moment does the playwright indulge in anything for the sake of sheer theatricality. The plot neither evolves nor unfolds itself. There are fragmented pieces of six various stories that sometimes surprise and sometimes shock in the play that make the spectator sit on the edge eagerly looking forward to the next turn of events. The monologue of Vaijayanti surprises not only other five male characters but the readers and spectators as well. The radical change that comes over Vaijayanti surprises us. The audience has the satisfaction of having witnessed a few rarified moments of pure aesthetic delight and intellectual insight divined by an extremely powerful artist.

*Gentleman* has been taken as a play that shows how a woman is tormented in a male-dominated society. Man is not a gentleman, he is just man and an empty vessel made up with the clay of passion and lust. The vulgar curiosity of all *Gentlemen* speaking in the play discloses how the mode of the journey of modern man is changed and going to the valley of alienation and absurdity. The play is a fine example of dramatic lampoons. The playwright has selected all these *Gentlemen* from lower and middle class to expose social and mental disorder of the country.