

Chapter - IV

PRAGMATIC HUMANLY SELF

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“The hands that help are far better than lips that pray”¹ connotes the pragmatic approach of human’s self and makes its assertion on working instead of praying in the moment of crisis. Nowadays, we are familiar with similar thoughts in our day to day activity which automatically draws attention towards ‘Pragmatism’. Pragmatic humanly self is not any literary term which is used here for some purpose but simply a phrase which suits with modern interpretations of human’s psyche. Pragmatic is generally defined as *“solving problems in a sensible way that suits the conditions that really exist now, rather than obeying fixed theories, ideas or rules.”*² Self denotes man’s and woman’s consciousness of being as a human.

According to Cambridge Dictionary the word ‘pragmatic’ is quite near to pragmatism which has the same connotation as the word pragmatic has. So, for the better comprehension of the term It is necessary to cast some glances over the philosophy of pragmatism by William James, who is one of the famous philosophers of nineteenth century after Pierce. James observes, *“Pragmatism represents a perfectly familiar attitude in philosophy, the empirist attitude, but it represents it, as it seems to me, both in a more radical and in a less objectionable form than it has ever yet assumed.”*³ He further explains:

A pragmatist turns his back resolutely and once for all inveterate habits dear to professional philosophers. He turns away from abstractions and insufficiency, from verbal solutions, from bad a priori reasons from fixed principles,

*closed systems and pretended absolutes and origins. He turns towards concreteness and adequacy towards facts, towards action and towards power.*⁴

To William James pragmatism is connected with the thought that knowledge is derived from experience instead of following theories and principles. A pragmatist purposefully drives away from whatever exists prior. James' pragmatist is one who turns down from generalization, incompetence, hypothetical or theoretical reasons, fixed principles, closed system and pretended absolutes and origins but one who is towards concreteness and adequacy, facts, action and power. So in this reference, modern man is pragmatic who does not follow any dogma and particular principle in life but he chooses some objects to have belief and on that belief he searches the truth and acquires knowledge and by this process, he makes decisions on the basis of the experiences of his life. In the beginning of the twentieth century, this concept as developed by James is vividly seen in the novels of Deshpande.

That Long Silence

That Long Silence is a novel which presents man and woman taking decisions pragmatically in Indian society. It is the stream of consciousness technique which runs through the psyche of Jaya which is popularized by William James. The novel is in first person narration storied by Jaya. Deshpande casts her vision of prevailing pragmatism in Indian society through several characters. Some of her characters are traditionally bound but some others acquire modern vision of life and break the tradition to

facilitate life and are pragmatic in their notions. Deshpande has used flash-back technique for enhancing the effect of the story.

Jaya's and Mohan's characters have been studied in the sense how they turn into pragmatic one. Jaya is a leading character whose narration builds the story. Some starting pages of the novel give the glimpse of Jaya's life. Mohan and Jaya shifted to their Dadar flat in Bombay and their children were outside with her friends: Ashok and Rupa. The story advances with the perfect mingling of present and past presenting Jaya with tattered self and haunted memories.

Shifting in Dadar flat familiarizes Jaya with enquiry on Mohan and she becomes indifferent towards her husband; she has no concern for him and always tangles in her thoughts. Each happening memorizes her past event even a bit. An ongoing process and chain of thoughts occur in her mind and her mental condition does not remain normal. She talks little to Mohan but thinks much about her past. She thinks almost each family member and the relationship about her and even the trivial incident which is not of much importance. This introspection and orientation derive her psyche into the pragmatic state. Each fact of life is reinterpreted by her and in this way she makes an exploration of her inner self. If we talk about Jaya's pragmatic humanly self we think about the beliefs which shape her life. As pierce expresses:

Our beliefs are really rules for actions. To develop a thought's meaning we need only determine what conduct it is felled to produce: that conduct is for us its sole significance.

*And the tangible fact at the root of all our thought-distinctions, however subtle, is that there is no one of them so fine as to consist in anything but a possible difference of practice.*⁵

Jaya's father named her 'Jaya' a Hindi word which means 'victory'. Her life runs on the belief which her father imbues in her psyche until he dies. He wants her daughter to walk with the pace of time for which he got her admitted in English convent school for better knowledge of English than those of her cousins. Jaya acquires modern vision of life and her vision, a basic platform on which she wants to build her life cracks and shatters when she got married with Mohan: an engineer with traditional bent of mind. Pragmatic vision of Jaya's father is the foundation in forming her psyche. Her father's pragmatic thoughts let his mother become scornful to him, when he got married with a Marathi girl instead of "*good Kannada girl*"⁶ but the fact is digested by his mother in some way but Jaya's admission in convent school irritates her. Appa's reply to Ajji, "*it's going to be more useful to them than being good Brahmins*"(That Long Silence-90) is a symbol of change in Indian society.

When she got marriage proposal from Mohan's side she is confused and unwilling to marry him but has no proper reason of rejection except Mohan's assertion on cultured wife which bothers her and her mother so much: "*Cultured! Damn, damn. Dada, I can't possibly marry a man who uses that word.*"(That Long Silence-92) After marriage with Mohan, she identifies him as a stranger in her life. Vanita mami's advice "*A husband is sheltering tree*"(That Long Silence-32) somewhere ensconced deep in her

mind. “*A pair of bullocks yoked together*”(That Long Silence-7) that is how she tries to be in her marriage.

Jaya is a modern educated English medium rational girl but marriage in traditional family and in cultural ambience she tries fitting herself. She knows what freedom is but slowly and slowly she is confined within the limitations of marriage in playing the role of a wife. After marriage, in Mohan’s family she finds role models of perfect wife and she tries to fit in that case through the years. As James states, “*all realities influence our practice.*”⁷

Deshpande visualizes us such circumstances where Jaya’s psyche starts to reshape. She unleashes the human conduct beneath the experiences as she goes through them. From the initial days of her married life she starts to suppress her vision but what she ensconced in mind comes on the surface while going through multiple experiences in married life. An analysis of the change of her vision is made. One of their early marriage conversations soon turn into a dispute and Jaya angered over Mohan. She became furious and accusative and leaves Mohan blank faced.

Anger is not a serious offence for Jaya but she startles when Mohan stops talking with her after that. At first, she could not sense his silence but after days past, she moves to reconcile first. The incident shatters Mohan who had never seen woman angered over man: “*My mother never raised her voice against my father, however badly he behaved to her*” (That Long Silence-83) He thinks to be angered on a woman’s part is unwomanly activity.

For Jaya, at this dimension, her life is changed even she starts to change herself: *“I had decided I would pattern myself after them...well, if not happens, at least the consciousness of doing right, freedom from guilt.”*(That Long Silence-84) Jaya suppresses her humanly self as a woman. She shapes her life accordingly to the need of Mohan. She makes no revelation of her choice before him. Let he should feel like Appa, *“what poor taste you have, Jaya!?”*(That Long Silence-3) She pays all the responsibilities of household core and her life rests only on Mohan and she follows those magazines like the Bible which state how to attract a man: *“Don’t let yourself go. How to keep your husband in love with you. Keep romance alive in a marriage. The quality of charm in a woman...where does it come from?”*(That Long Silence-96) What else she did, she cuts her hair short like *“Mehra’s wife (and Gupta’s wife, and Yadav’s wife, and Raman’s wife.)”* (That Long Silence-96)

She collapses her entire self and is deep attached with Mohan so much that each time she frightens of losing him. If there is any delay in his usual time of return, she feels him dead: *“The very idea of his dying had made me feel so bereft that tears had flowed effortlessly down my cheeks.”*(That Long Silence-97) Mohan is ignorant about her feeling. Through Jaya, Deshpande shows human’s need for family ties with different perspective. She projects the pragmatic vision of human who pays relationship only for self benefit and his need of survival. Jaya says, *“we’re all frightened of the dark, frightened of being alone, so we cling to one another, saying...I love you, I want you, I need you.”*(That Long Silence-97)

There are other instances where Jaya puts down her vision as we see when Mohan is charged in corruption and an inquiry is set on him and his fellow being Agrawal. He is terrified with the thought of quitting his job and for the short period of time they shifted to other place. Jaya never goes against Mohan's will even she does not put her vision before him. She follows him in each of his decisions and result is complete collapse of her self. As she says, "*Sita following her husband into exile, Savitri dogging Death to reclaim her husband, Draupadi stoically sharing her husband's travail.*"(That Long Silence-11)

Shifting in Dadar flat breaks the routine of their life. There is a change in their behavior. Both are lost in their world. Mohan, who is always indifferent from Jaya's inner world, never thinks to peep inside her mind. Jaya in her silence senses the gulf between the two. She thinks, "*We had stopped speaking, except for the essentials of daily living.*"(That Long Silence-55) She escapes from the daily routine of house wife coming here in Dadar flat and this routine captures her imagination and after getting rid of the monotonous actions, her inner self feels freedom: freedom from the demands and needs of the other households of her home: "*There was nothing to be cleaned, nothing to be arranged... I was free, after years.*"(That Long Silence-25) This sense of freedom gives her enough time to think, interpret and reinterpret her actions and search for the truth of her life as James Observes:

*That ideas (which themselves are but parts of her own experience) become true just in so far as they help us to get into satisfactory relation with other parts of our experiences.*⁸

Jaya's pragmatic self could no longer be suppressed and she comprehends and identifies the voice of her inner self being indifferent to Mohan. The life she was living as Mohan wishes is not satisfactory to her and she tries to find the truth beneath the layers. She realizes, "*I had to admit the truth to myself- that I had often found family life unendurable worse than anything else had been the boredom of the unchanging pattern, the unending monotony.*"(That Long Silence-4)

For an individual identity what she wants to do heartily is writing: writing about those women who are suppressed, tortured through the centuries and she wrote for the causes of women but the revelation of the fact before Mohan compels her writings confined. Mohan bursts into anger and feels worried what people will think. He fears to be believed by the people that they are their own stories. It shrills to Jaya and she abandons that kind of writing instead of that she writes in other forms and themes and finally with the current flow of time, she stops writing. Now, what she finds in her hands is only some diaries stating the expenditure of homemaking.

She gives the title to the stories- "*The Diaries of the Sane House Life*" (That Long Silence-70) Skimming of those diaries makes her vulnerable and she thinks, "*Reading through the entries, I could feel her dwindling the woman who had lived this life.*"(That Long Silence-70) Her humanly self while going through the pragmatic method acquires new vision while conserving old one. She agonizes, "*I can't cope, I can't manage, I can't go on.*"(That Long Silence-70)

Lingering with the past Jaya makes new interpretation of each fact of her life. Another instance we find Jaya to be moulded when she thinks that her father named her Jaya but after marriage she acquires new name 'Suhasini' the name which Mohan has given her. The distinction between the two names 'Jaya and Suhasini' defines and makes a perfect picture of her life. The journey from Jaya to Suhasini hints at Jaya's life as how modern-English medium educated liberal, courageous girl turns into a *"soft, smiling, placid, motherly woman... a woman who coped."*(That Long Silence-15-16) And interestingly she was unaware of the changes inside her:

I can remember a time when I was not so full of fears, when the unknown, when darkness and insects did not terrify me, so when did the process of change begin? (That Long Silence-76)

Deshpande's protagonists have same notions about religion; they do not blindly follow it. The modern man has given new interpretation to religion: they do not completely devoid of the vision of God but reshape the text according to need. Jaya as a Brahmin follows Hindu code of living but at the same time she discards the concept of moksha which God has created: *"So many chariots of Jagannath promising us moksha. But there was no moksha anymore. I knew that."*(That Long Silence-113) Life after death is rejected by humans and this rejection forms the very basis of the formation of their psyche. Jaya's grandmother believed in all the theories but Jaya disowns the vision:

Now I knew better, we didn't have to wait for another life for our punishment. It was all reserved for us right here and now. And act and retribution- they followed each other naturally and inevitably. (That Long Silence-128)

She doesn't believe in immortality, she wants "*just to live!*" (That Long Silence-181) This life leaves behind all the dogmas of previous centuries. Jaya's very psyche is formed on her English education which is transformed when she arrives in Mohan's family. This psyche is somewhere buried in her consciousness but comes on surface when she makes pragmatic decisions. James writes, "*Individual has a stock of old opinions already but he meets a new experience that puts them to a strain.*"⁹ In her exploration of her inner self Jaya thinks about her third child whom she does not let live. She makes practical decision of aborting a child without giving any hint to Mohan. She hides the fact from Mohan and he is equally ignorant about her relationship with Kamat.

Jaya's relationship with Kamat shows new dimensions of her character. It is not Mohan but Kamat who understands her vision with whom she can share fears but she never forgets that she is Mohan's wife. Her interpretation of the epic Mahabharata shows her pragmatic vision. First of all, Lord Krishna's words to Arjuna "*Do as you desire.*" (That Long Silence-192) seems to her cheating and deception but in her introspection she understands those words fully and means that God has bestowed knowledge to human to make a choice. So, humans are free for their actions: "*Krishna confers humanness on Arjuna. I have given you*

knowledge. Now you make the choice. The choice is yours. Do as you desire.”(That Long Silence-192)

Written in 1988, the novel presents the progressive psyche of human in India, where Gandhian views ‘simple living and high thinking’ no longer dwell in the mind of the people. Flood of the technological innovations imparted new dimensions in the mind of the people. The change in education system let man enter into the new interpretations of the facts and beliefs. Old Indian education system which is primarily based on religious text hardly makes assertion on physical comfort. It has been cracked by modern convent education system and leads man towards material comfort and attachment with worldly pleasure.

Science comforts human’s life. Greed of money and craving for material possession become dominant in human’s nature as Deshpande puts in the character of Mohan. Through this character, she visualizes the pragmatic self of a male in Indian society in 1980s. Belonging to poverty-stricken family and living in humiliation all his childhood spends in wearing cast off and unfit clothes of others. Acquiring education by the grace of others and his father’s irresponsible behavior towards his family is the basic ground on which Mohan’s psyche rests and all the remaining part of his life is the verdict of the initial years of his life. In Mohan’s life depravity plays a vital role.

Deshpande presents Mohan as an ambitious man of 1980s who works hard for hours, establishing himself in the society and symbolizing the typical materialistic man who metamorphoses himself according to

the need of hours. While working as an engineer in Lohnagar for long hours in a plant, he feels that he is unable to pay for all the essentials of his family, he switches his job to Bombay. Mohan pragmatically deals all the situations of his life. His father had an impact in shaping his psyche and throughout his life he tries to be responsible man much different from his father.

Mohan represents typical modern Indian man who never hesitates in involving in corruption when offered by his fellow being Agrawal. Mohan is bewildered when an enquiry is set against both of them. A chain of recurrent thoughts flows in his mind. Like Jaya, Mohan too thinks over, analyses the circumstances of past and present. For Mohan, his involvement in corruption does not signify his craving and greed of money but the need of his family. He represents that sector of society which burdens itself beneath the needs of family and by means earns money. Through Mohan, Deshpande exhibits how modern ambitious man for finding better place in the society makes pragmatic decisions without any consideration and faces its consequences.

Parents -children relationship like tradition and religious thoughts no longer remains as they are idealized. In Deshpande's novels, we find a different picture of both of them reacting towards each other as they pragmatically deal with the relationship. As for Mohan, his relationship with his father was never at ease. They both acquire their own truth in the relationship. The irresponsible and careless behavior of Mohan's father was enough to convert him into a dutiful man. The sense of duty towards others runs in his veins throughout the novel.

His hatred towards father is well seen in his comment when he says to Jaya, “*why won't he die?*”(That Long Silence-78) It seems quite abnormal to wait for parent's death. At other place Jaya finds him hostile to his son Rahul. Mohan is completely pragmatic man: all his decisions make practical sense as of marriage with Jaya. He was highly affected with the high strata of society and on that pattern he wants to live his life. He got married with Jaya because of her English speaking.

He also wishes Jaya to fit on that pattern. Once while visiting the hospital Jaya in her shabby clothes seems the doctor a woman of low strata of society who does not have any knowledge of English. The doctor made his all efforts in speaking Hindi but Jaya's fluent genuine talk in English makes him feel uneasy and ashamed of judging someone by the clothes. When Jaya amusingly narrates the incidents to Mohan, he loses his temper and says, “*Buy yourself a couple of good saris.*”(That Long Silence-61)

Mohan is highly fascinated with elite class of the society that the women whom he saw in his patron's home where he went for food. He feels highly attracted not only by their way of living but also by the way they were talking in English. That time he had seen such sophisticated women first time in his life. The very impact lingers in his mind for a long time. It is due to this that when he comes to see Jaya for marriage he finds the glimpse of those women in her:

You know, Jaya, the first day I saw you at your Ramukaka's house, you were talking to your brother Dinkar, and somehow you sounded so much like that girl, I think it was at that

moment that I decided I would marry you.”(That Long Silence-90)

Mohan’s affection to elite class of society somehow creates hurdles in their lives. Those women are always visible in his mind and after marriage he has a lot of expectations on Jaya’s part. He wishes to her living in that way: *“cut your hair, up to here, his hand lightly brushing my shoulder, ‘you know, like Mehara’s wife.”(That Long Silence-96)* And she does as he said. He settles a parameter in his mind for Jaya how she should be and each time tries to let her sit in that model but seems disappointed.

From the very beginning of her marriage life he is reluctant to let Jaya join the job but as disaster knocks his door, he wishes to let her take the job: *“why don’t you take up job”*(That Long Silence-98) Jaya feels surprised of his question and reminds him of his disliking of her joining job but like a pragmatist one he retorts, *“Oh, that was different. Circumstances were different then.”* (That Long Silence-99) He makes his choices with the needs of time.

While living in Dadar flat both Jaya and Mohan are stranger and indifferent to each other. In one of their discourse which soon turns into a dispute lays bare the layers of both of their minds. In his frustration, Mohan accuses to Jaya of not being with him: *“I’ve been going through hell, I’ve been worried to death since Agarwal warned me about what was likely to happen, but you... you’ve been so unconcerned.”*(That Long Silence-116) For his corruption charges he finds guilty to Jaya. To him her needs are responsible for this traumatic situation of his life. He clearly

wipes his hands from the matter by involving the needs of others. He clearly declares that it was not he but Jaya who was much bothered in living those type C quarters and he arranges the type B quarters for her. In doing so he gets help of CE and he was in grip of CE who took advantage of him so he got involved in the corruption with Agarwal.

Failure of pragmatic decision of Mohan leads him to utter frustration. In his frustration he accuses Jaya of what she could not offer him in the years of their marriage. Deshpande presents the pragmatic vision of parents while choosing the groom of their daughter obtaining high status of job so that she might not feel any trouble. In his angst, Mohan utters his inner feeling or pragmatic sense why Jaya had married him: *“You married me only because Dinkar told you to...”*(That Long Silence-118)

In Mohan’s vision he had never been in Jaya’s way by imparting her enough freedom to write when she started writing. But to Jaya he had limited the scope of her writing because her writing was quite similar to those of their life. He bursts into anger, *“how could you, how could you have done it/ they will know that these two persons are us.... How can I look anyone in the face again?”*(That Long Silence-143-144) and at this point she stops that kind of writing and writes the way Mohan wishes. Mohan as a complete materialistic man finds pride of Jaya being a writer because *“recognition, if it came, had pleased him enormously.”* (That Long Silence-119)

He gives new name 'Suhasini' to Jaya; not only a new name but a new identity. He had a perfect picture of Suhasini in his mind and Jaya tries to be like her but in Mohan's vision she could not even touch the surface of his criteria. He finds Jaya a failure because of not caring the children properly, for isolating herself from Moahn and with this 'Suhasini' in Jaya dies. When Jaya sees his agonized eyes, she feels, "*the eyes of a man who'd lost a dear one. Suhasini was dead.*"(That Long Silence-121) Mohan's pragmatic vision sees the cause of Suhasini's death; he thinks it was his failure which brings change in Jaya's attitude:

as long as I had my job and position, it was all right; as long as I could give you all the comforts, it was all right, But now, because I'm likely to lose it all..."(That Long Silence-121)

While living alone Jaya collects the pieces of self and appears more sound in her vision as James concludes, "*there is no particular result then, so far, but only an attitude of orientation.*"¹⁰ She has her own defenses against Mohan's charges: some were revealed before him but some remain unsaid. What she wishes to be is always moulded by Mohan though he was ignorant. One of the strong defenses of Jaya reveals her understanding of her husband's pragmatic self when she accepts Mohan's favors at each step and decisions of her life but until "*except when it inconvenienced you.*"(That Long Silence-120) In Jaya's vision she has sacrificed her life in supporting her family which has nothing to do with Mohan. When she completely finds herself misfit in Mohan's slot she behaves hysterically and Mohan leaves her abruptly.

Mohan who makes pragmatic choices could never reach the soul of his wife. Even he never wishes to know her choice while Jaya who doggedly follows her husband suppressing her inner self and emerges with new perception which is deep buried in her. She too starts thinking pragmatically. What brings close Jaya to Kamat is his proper understanding of Jaya's mental vision. It is strange through the years the thoughts which she could not offer to Mohan, discloses before Kamat. He is the one who makes realize her to identify herself.

The introduction of Kamat in the novel is to present a man with modern vision far beyond the traditional set up of society. Kamat, apart from Mohan, is too pragmatic when he deals with Jaya as a human being. The ease between the two is beyond the understanding of Jaya whose psyche is deep affected by Mohan's vision. It is Kamat, who shows Jaya the real chinks of her writing and causes of her failure. By Kamat, Deshpande presents the picture of modern man, different from those of stereotype. Kamat treats himself a sole owner of his life and never hesitates in holding domestic core, surprising to Jaya because she has not found such man in her life. Kamat also raises some questions on the selfishness of women who do not make man self-dependent abstaining them household work:

Have you noticed how the women make the men totally dependent and helpless in practical, everyday living by doing everything for them."...well, that seems to me unnatural."(That Long Silence-152)

Deshpande introduces some other minor characters viz. Jija and Deenu who too adhere with material possessions and getting them is the motto of their life by any mean for which they sacrifice their virtues like honesty, patience, humbleness and deal the matters of their life pragmatically. As Deenu finds poverty from the very time of his birth but as long as he advances in his life he starts to earn by all means: *“From the very beginning he was ready to do anything that helped him to get on.”*(That Long Silence-23)

Through Jaya and Jeeja, Deshpande represents two different strata of society so that the changes can be easily comprehended. Pragmatic self does not require any education, it makes its assertion on only seeking the own truth on the basis of circumstances. Jeeja, though uneducated acquire pragmatic vision when her husband had to leave his job because of strike, starts drinking in bad company, gets married second time when he fails achieving any heir from Jeeja. Jeeja practically accepts all the facts of her life and starts working as a maid in Jaya’s home. Her choice of doing work is as pragmatic as her way for working. Jaya sees pragmatic self of Jeeja when she thinks:

“Loyalty had nothing to do with it. Jeeja was basically realist. She badly needed the money she earned, she knew her value as a good works. She knew it was her reputation for reliability that enabled her to earn more than the other servants did...a pure professional.”(That Long Silence-51)

So, different characters belonging to different strata of society acquire practical vision towards life and present the picture of metamorphosing psyche of an average Indian.

The Dark Holds No Terrors

Shashi Deshpande presents life in her novels as it is. She does not make any effort idealizing her characters and the relationships. She presents the true picture of human's world where self plays expounded role in conducting the actions. She presents the time in which each one has his ideology of living life abandoning the standard parameter of living which was going to be followed for the centuries. Each of her characters seeks the inner truth and makes practical decision.

The novel begins with Sarita's return to her father's home as story advances with the revelation of many incidents of her life. In short period of time and confined places, plot moves forward. Deshpande exhibits that a small part of life is enough to demonstrate whole life because a moment itself is enough a life. Sarita's return arises several questions in her father's mind and some starting pages of the novel show the uneasiness between the two. The story catches its pace with mingling past and present like other novels of her. In the novel, Saru a protagonist is a middle class born girl child who faces child-discrimination from the very beginning of her life. Her sensibility toward the fact remains each time in her mind. As a child she is unable to know the reason of it but the gender-discrimination was the real cause of her rebellion nature to her mother.

Shashi Deshpande presents the life of 1980s -the developing period of India. It was a time when Indians were going to introduce all theories which were prominent in the world. Early part of her life is a complete figment of the bitterness between the two. In the initial growing up stages of her life, Saru turns to be pragmatic one. She chooses her way leaving behind her mother's will. Through Sarita's mother and Sarita, Deshpande presents two different worlds existing in India in 1980s. Her mother has traditional, cultural and social set up in her mind and careless attitude towards Saru. If ever she cares of her it is only her marriage. She presents the psyche of mother who has no concern for education of her daughter and letting her stand strong in each difficulty of her life. Saru dislikes and discards the attitude and the vision of her mother. Saru's realization of the facts causes many troubles in her life.

As for Saru's mother, Saru's dark complexion is the sign of ugliness and girls having such dark complexion are always cause of anxiety and troubles on their parents mind. They think who will marry their daughter in those eighties is vividly seen when she says to her daughter, "*Don't go out in the sun. You'll get even darker.....we have to get you married.*"¹¹ As a male child, Dhruva gets more attention than Saru from her mother's side. Dhruva's accidental death was a bolt from the blue to her who could never digest her only son's death; she always pours enormous bitterness and anger on Saru because in her thoughts Saru caused Dhruva's death. She does not ask anything about the accident but only blames her and hates her till her death. The words "*she killed her brother. She killed her*

brother.”(The Dark Holds No Terrors-145) echoes in her mind throughout life.

Saru’s mother’s bitterness continues when Saru announces that she wants to go in medicine. Her mother shows a great tantrum because she wants let her daughter to get married and her main concern was that Saru should live her life on those parameters on which her own life was spent but Saru chooses different path. Saru’s mother, though much reluctant to leave her alone in Bombay has to let her be free in life. She agonises, “*Why didn’t you die! Why are you alive, when he’s dead?*”(The Dark Holds No Terrors-191)

Saru also fails another time on her mother’s expectations when she chooses low caste man for marriage. Her mother’s deep buried thoughts of casteism let Saru excluded from her parent’s life forever. Saru’s choice of marriage with Manohar breaks the last thread of relationship with her parents. So, Saru’s mother bound in traditional set-up could not understand Saru’s pragmatic humanly self and she dies hopelessly, bitterly. Shashi Deshpande portrays the psyche of humans having seeds of age to which they actually belong; so is with Sarita’s mother. Saru pictures her mental condition as an individual as well as types. She advocates her by saying:

If only she had belonged to another time, were a woman had no choice but to go on! Human nature may not change, but isn’t there such thing as a frame of mind, a way of thinking, which is shaped by the age you live in? It was so much easier for women in those days to accept, not to struggle, because

they believed, they knew, there was nothing else for them. And they called that Fate.(The Dark Holds No Terrors-70)

The plot of the novel moves on the pragmatic perspective, vision and action of Sarita. Sarita does not follow any particular pattern to live her life, no belief in dogmas and principle but only some experiences which lead her towards knowledge as it has been earlier mentioned that a pragmatist derives knowledge from experiences rather than following any principles. The very incidents and circumstances of her life are enough to make a belief, to search her own truth and to take pragmatic decisions. Her humanly self wants to evade from what makes her life miserable. Her rebellion nature towards her mother is good enough to shape her life.

Deshpande presents Saru as a career-orientated modern educated woman who comprehends her existence from the childhood. Her emphasis is to be treated equal to her younger brother, Dhruva vividly seen in various arguments with her mother. And after Dhruva's death her pragmatic self curved in new horizons. The bitterness of her mother leads her to prove her inner self as a human. With Dhruva's accidental death her existence completely collapses and for her mother she does not exist. Saru, as a grown up girl finds refuse in her study; she secures apt marks in getting admission in medical college and her only aim is to prove her existence on her own:

I had to hard work, to be a success, to show them... her...something. What? I didn't know. But I had to make

*myself secure so that no one would ever say to me again...
why are you alive?"*(The Dark Holds No Terrors -50)

Sarita exhibits women's inner self and their cherished desires for life partner who somehow should be superior to her husband. When Saru meets Manohar, he has a great impact over her because of Smita's fascination towards him. She feels attracted towards this sprouting poet. She is a representative of female psyche of modern woman:

*I was all female and dreamt of being the adored and chosen
of a superior, superhuman male. That was glory enough.. to
be chosen by that wonderful man."*(The Dark Holds No
Terrors-53)

By picturing Saru's married life, Deshpande got an opportunity to introduce the life of career oriented woman in modern India. Saru's married life runs on track until she gets success but as soon as she steps the ladder of success her husband thinks himself shorter, the shortest. Manohar is the representative of modern worldly typical man who suffers the consequences of getting married to a woman who is much superior in her professional status to him. He is unable to cope with the circumstances and turns into a 'sadist'. Saving herself from the brutal attacks of her husband she rescues by returning to her father's home.

As a pragmatist Saru tries to save herself in many ways. She asks Manu to leave her job and live normal life of common wife: "*I want to give up working*" (The Dark Holds No Terrors-79) but Manohar pragmatically rejects her idea; he is quite worried about the expenditures if

she quits her job: *“can you bear to send the children to a third rate school? To buy them cheapest clothes, the cheapest of everything.”* (The Dark Holds No Terrors-81) By practical thinking he makes his life easy and leaves the inner battle for Saru. He said, *“we can’t go back, we have to go on”* but Saru thinks *“Go on where?”*(The Dark Holds No Terrors-82)

One other step of Saru’s life shows her dealing with situation pragmatically and making her life easy is when her father had a small amount of money by which she can either complete her study or get married. But she chooses to go on study. Her father says, *“She chooses to be educated. Let her. It’s her choice.”* (The Dark Holds NO Terrors-144) She lacks money for her essentials; she puts down her needs and concentrates on only study. But medicine degree alone has nothing any future; money plays a vital role. She understands the value of money and she *“knew now that without money life became petty and dreary. The thought of going on this way become unbearable.”*(The Dark Holds No Terrors-92) She pragmatically thinks about her life, career and hindrances she can have in future, and she practically gets favours from Boozie’s side. She thinks:

and here he was, the fairy godfather who could, with a wave of his magic wand, make things easier... easier for me... if only I could please him. I knew I could if I tried. I did.”(The Dark Holds No Terrors-92)

Within few years she climbs the ladder of success and there are numerous rumors about her and Boozie. They both ignored but the most

astonishing is Manu's behavior. Outwardly he doesn't stop her but inwardly he tries to possess her. Saru thinks it is a kind of disease which she has suffered through years of her marriage. Divorce does not seem to her a suitable medium to stop. Saru, though a maker of her life is in search of a person with whom she can share her terrors but finds no alternative: *"If only someone would tell her what to do, she would do at once, without a second thought."*(The Dark Holds No Terrors-97) Another instance of Saru's pragmatic self is found when she is reluctant of Manu's joining of a magazine; she was much against of his journalism and suggests him of joining a college as a lecturer. Her middle class ideas always remain in her mind. It seems to her good and sound to be the wife of a lecturer: *"what's your husband doing? He teaches in a college."*(The Dark Holds No Terrors-153)

Deshpande intellectualizes her heroines as it is with Saru. Saru's mother says that she will not be happy in her marriage with Manu: a man of low caste but Saru in her introspection actualizes and rationalizes her relationship with Manu and the causes of his brutality. She thinks about the ignorance of her mother of considering them of different castes and admits that both two belong the same caste: the caste of hating their inner self:

He does it not so much because he hates me, but because he hates himself. And I... I hate myself more for letting him do it to me than I hate him for doing it to me."(The Dark Holds No Terrors-98)

As Saru's self turns pragmatic, her vision of seeing, understanding and grasping the matter alters its shape. Her psyche is formed situational. Her introspection at her paternal home visualizes clearly her pragmatic self. She goes under the process which new generation follows. She watches women's conditions with new parameters of her own truth of sensing the matter. She thinks about the human freedom: freedom from those demands which they impose on each other. In her baba's home with his tenant Madhav she feels the sense of being free from responsibility as Jaya in Dadar flat: "*They made no demands on her, nor on each other, for that matter.*"(The Dark Holds No Terrors-160) She imagined life to be lived in that way forever.

She also practically thinks about the role woman have played down the centuries and how they from the very birth are trained to be a daughter, sister, wife and mother. Wife's role in life is meant to pay those relationships which truly diminish her potential as a human being: "*Everything in a girl's life, it seemed, was shaped to that single purpose of pleasing a male.*"(The Dark Holds No Terrors163) She also questions herself seeking the truth and the role played by parents in children's life. "*Can one ever possess another human being?*"(The Dark Holds No Terrors-164) by merely bringing them in the world. She throws light and satirizes on the idealized old model of parents.

Saru never wants to return to her parents' home but ultimately when there is no way out she returns to her father while her mother is dead. The reason of Saru's arrival is out of her baba's understanding but soon situations are out of way and she is unable to hide the fact. Shashi

Deshpande presents the bizarre relationship of man and woman. What Saru offers to her father is beyond his understanding but she pragmatically deals and narrates her relationship with her husband though she does not expect any help from his side but only to unburden herself and to discuss and to understand the situation for which she has nobody to share but only her father.

Patriarchy does not include such revelation of a daughter on her father's side but Saru pragmatically deals with all the situations. She not only unlocks her heart before her father but conquers her terrors also. When she finds a letter from Manu's side carrying a message of his arrival, she bothers with the thought and remains restless but soon pragmatically becomes prepare to face the horrors inside her. This unlocking of her heart before her father reminds us of Coleridge's the Ancient Mariner, who compels the wedding guest listening to him. So, Sarita and Mohan, two pillars of the society follow pragmatic code of living which troubles their lives but at the end they both move forward to erase the disease between the two:

(The woman's) emancipation is not repudiating the claims of her family, but in drawing upon untapped inner reserves of strength. The wife, in the end is therefore not a rebel but a redeemed wife- one who has broken the long silence, one who is no longer afraid of the dark. She is a wife reconceptualised as woman and individual- a marked contrast to the older generation of women around her with their uncomplaining, unresisting fatalistic attitude. Hers is the dilemma of the new

*woman that could be resolved when the claims of selfhood are reconciled with the claims made upon her by the family and society.*¹²

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