THANATOS – BREAKING RULES

In the previous chapter, the focus was on the rules of society that do not take into account the desires of women. In this chapter, the focus would be on how and when these desires don’t find an outlet they deposit themselves deep into the discarded and devalued part of the unconscious. These desires conspire about how and when they shall make a break for freedom. They seethe in the unconscious and at one time come to the point of a boil, and no matter how much a person tries to put a seal on them, they explode and direct outwards with a will of their own. When rules are made too tight, there is bound to be friction, a reaction and a chance of collapse and imbalance. Thanatos symbolises the destruction of the rules that do not take into consideration the repressed desires.

Thanatos, a Greek mythological figure, has with time evolved into a concept. It has come to represent the ‘shadow’ aspect of an individual. It is the darker side of one’s unconscious that one tries to suppress because it is considered the inferior side of the personality. In Greek mythology, Thanatos is one of the primal gods related to death. He guides the mortal on their journey to the underworld. Hesiod in his work Theogony describes Thanatos and his twin brother Hypnosis as:

And there the children of dark Night have their dwellings, Sleep and Death, awful gods. The glowing Sun never looks upon them with his beams, neither as he goes up into heaven, nor as he comes down from heaven. And the former of them roams peacefully over the earth and the sea's broad back and is kindly to men; but the other has a heart of iron, and his spirit within him is pitiless as bronze: whomsoever of men he has once seized he holds fast: and he is hateful even to the deathless gods. (758-766)

The god of death in early records is all powerful and fierce but with the expansion of Roman civilisation, the god of death had a make-over in a beautiful, winged-boy almost like Cupid and was called Sarcophagi. Therefore, a god who was related to woeful demise, gradually evolved into a God associated with gentle and peaceful death. The closest equivalent of Greek Thanatos in Indian pantheon of gods is Yama. Stephen Sturgess in The Yoga Book: A Practical Guide to Self-Realization says:
The word *yama* means ‘restraint’ – self-restraint. *Yama* basically means ‘to refrain’ from actions, words and thoughts which cause distress and harm to others. Yama is also the name of the King of Death. In this context, *yama* means there must be a dying to ignorance, which is the source of egoism, attachment and repulsion. (25)

Like Thanatos, he is also called the god of a departed soul who guides the mortals to the ‘Yamlok’ where he checks the deeds/Karma of a mortal provides them with a place in ‘Swarga’ or ‘Naraka’ accordingly.

Shiva is another god who represents the thought of Thanatos in Indian thought. The Indian thought sees Thanatos as dissolving and destructing. Although Shiva has many other aspects but the most important one is associated with the destruction. In his destructive disposition, he has come to be related to all the things undesirable and inauspicious. He has a third eye with which he kills the *Kama*, the god of desire or Eros.

It must be remembered, however, that, according to the teaching of Hinduism, death is not death in the sense of passing into non-existence, but simply a change into a new form of life. He who destroys, therefore, causes beings to assume new phases of existence – the Destroyer is really a Creator; hence the name Siva, the Bright and Happy One, is given to him, which would not have been the case had he been regarded as the ordinary meaning of the term. (Wilkins 270)

The killing of *Kama* is symbolical as Shiva doesn’t distinguish between attraction and repulsion; therefore, desires/Kama has no power over him. His third eye flames the desires as he is one with the Pure Consciousness. In Indian thought, Thanatos is not abhorrent, because, it believes that which takes form, ultimately dissolves as well.

The Western idea of Thanatos representing destruction and despair gradually metamorphosed into a concept with the likes of Nietzsche, Freud, and Jung. Nietzsche had developed a theory of eternal recurrence. This theory hypothesises that things that have happened on earth will happen again and again in an entirely identical manner. For Nietzsche, whosoever accepts this possibility and does not mind his life being subject to it, that is, say Yes to living a similar life again and again till eternity is an ideal man. Nietzsche points out that since antiquity, earthly life doesn’t hold a
privileged place in the cosmos of religion and culture. Therefore, he sees the doctrine of eternal recurrence as an uncompromised affirmation of life. Nietzsche sees a close relationship between life and death and he warned whosoever saw life as an opposite of death. He says:

Everyone wants to be foremost in this future- and yet death and the stillness of death are the only things certain and common to all in this future! How strange that this sole thing that is certain and common to all, exercises almost no influence on men, and that they are the furthest from regarding themselves as the brotherhood of death! (158)

Nietzsche has theorised the Western idea of Thanatos, according to which, the instinct of death can’t be rationalised. Nietzsche influenced Freud to a great extent, and after the disillusionment caused by World Wars, Freud in his book *Civilization and its Discontent* talks about the death instincts. He says:

Starting from speculations on the beginning of life and from biological parallels, I drew the conclusion that, besides the instinct to preserve living substance and to join into ever large units, there must exist another contrary instinct to seek to dissolve these units and to bring them back to their primeval, inorganic state. This is to say, as well as Eros, there was an instinct of death. The phenomena of life could be explained from the concurrent or mutually opposing actions of these two instincts. (40)

Freud had come to see that apart from Eros, there is another fundamental force in human nature and that is the instinct to destroy. He named it the death-instinct. It is referred as ‘Thanatos’ in post-Freudian psychoanalysis as a complement instinct to Eros. Freud, himself called it ‘Todeskriebr’, a death-drive, which was later termed as ‘Thanatos’ by his follower Wilhelm Stekel. Freud described this force and its task to lead organic life back into the inanimate state. The death-drive accounts for the degree of self-destructive behaviour in which a man unable to present his aggression against the outside world redirects and retreats it into self-destructiveness. Freud in *Civilization and its Discontents* says, “It really seems as though it is necessary for us to destroy some other thing or person in order not to destroy ourselves, in order to guard against the impulsion to self-destruction” (42).
According to Freud, the ultimate aim of life is to derive pleasure out of life, and Thanatos derives pleasure from death, destruction and by making things decrepit. It is the most unpopular of Freud’s theories. Brown in his work *Freud and the Post-Freudians* points out, “Almost alone amongst his pronouncements this conception raised a storm of protest among Freud’s orthodox supporters, much of it couched in the language of moral disapproval” (28). Irving Singer in *The Nature of Love: The Modern World* mentions Eric Fromm, the American psychologist, and social philosopher, who has suggested that “Freud confuses the destructive instinct with sadism and sadistic components in sexuality” (120). But Snowden has tried to clear the air by explaining that when Thanatos is directed towards the self, it produces self-destructive behaviour such as addictions and when it is turned outwards, it results in aggressive behaviour. Freud’s argument for the existence of Thanatos can be summarised as follows:

All behaviour is aimed at reducing tension and achieving a previously existing state of stability. Since we were all originally made from inert matter, then perhaps we are really trying constantly to return to this state. So the aim of life is death, a state where there are no tensions at all because no stimuli can impinge from within or without to disturb the everlasting peace. (117-18)

Whereas Freud’s concept of Thanatos is limited to biological drives, Jung’s concept of Thanatos is about human potential movement. As he mentions, “Life wants to live and die, to begin and to end. You are forced to live eternally, but you can also die since there is a will in you for both” (274). He called it the ‘Shadow principle.’ It’s considered negative as it is the storehouse of unwanted and unacceptable qualities of one’s unconscious. It is that part of the psyche which the ego tries to force out of the consciousness as a defence.

Dr. Jung has pointed out that the shadow cast by the conscious mind of the individual contains the hidden, repressed, and unfavourable (or nefarious) aspects of the personality. But this darkness is not just the simple converse of the conscious ego. Just as the ego contains unfavourable and destructive attitudes, so the shadow has good qualities-normal instincts and creative impulses. Ego and shadow, indeed, although separate are inextricably linked together in much the
same way that thought and feelings are related to each other. The ego, nevertheless, is in conflict with the shadow, in what Dr. Jung once called “the battle of Deliverance.” (Henderson 110)

Jung says, “Taking it in its deepest sense, the shadow is the invisible saurian [reptilian] tail that man still drags behind him” (PR 217). According to Jung, in projecting the shadow aspect of human mind, the most common variant of this archetype is Devil, who represents, “dangerous aspect of the unrecognised dark half of the personality” (TE 94). Archetypal feminists say that when unconscious materials are repressed, divided off from day-to-day experience, and not assimilated by the conscious mind, they lead to mass-eruptions. Harding explains, “When instincts and chaotic images and urges arise from the unconscious in flood proportions, they break up human or individual bounds” (Pratt 136).

But Jung has cleared, “The hero must realize that the shadow exists and that he can draw strength from it. He must come to terms with its destructive powers if he has to become sufficiently terrible to overcome the dragon” (112). Carl Jung believed in the joy of acceptance of symbolic death. To him, it provides an opportunity for Individuation, for rebirth. Physics advocate it as well. The Second Law of Thermodynamics or law of Entropy or Disorder says that order gives way to disorder in any closed system. It says that all energy seeks to become evenly distributed and diffuses to form a neutral condition of “heat death.” Helge Kragh in Entropic Creation: Religious Contexts of Thermodynamics and Cosmology examines the law of entropy within a culture and reaches the conclusion that a closed entropic system gradually turns to decay and death. But heat also symbolises warmth and new life. Biology believes in the same theory of Thanatos and considers it to be essential. Thousands of cells die each day and are replaced by new, and this process is called ‘tissue regeneration.’

Maureen describes this stage of a woman’s journey as ‘The Road of Trials’. It is a space where the heroine crosses the threshold and leaves the safety provided by patriarchy (when she lives her life according to their rules) and goes out in search of the Self (46). Therefore, the idea of Thanatos has evolved into double sided drive that destructs to renew.

The ‘Shadow’ aspect in Indian ethos is not some Devil or Satan; it is simply a projection of all that is dark and cannot be tamed, representing desires, disorder, and
bondage. When the primal urges take over, all the rules, doctrines, and morals are waylaid. Social order disrupts when a culture can’t control the dark side of nature. In India, Thanatos is not an irrational instinct but has a purpose. The purpose of Thanatos in Indian context is to destroy and ‘put to death’ all those elements that are causing stagnation in society. In Indian pantheon, the goddess that represents this dark side of a female is Kali. She in her most raw form is the archetype of Thanatos in the females of Karnad. She comes into being to shrug off all the rules that confine and restrain its energies and liberate itself from the shackles of patriarchy. During the time of imbalance, the dark goddess Kali incarnates itself in one’s life to destroy all the darkness and create new space for new consciousness to emerge. Being a feminine aspect of Kala (time), she is both the beginning and the end. She embodies both the qualities of Thanatos; of destruction and renewal.

Kali is represented as a black woman with four arms; in one hand she has a sword, in other the head of a giant she has slain, with the other two she is encouraging her worshippers. For earring she has two dead bodies; wears a necklace of skulls; her only clothing is a girdle made of dead man’s hands, and her tongue protrudes from her mouth. Her eyes are red as those of a drunkard, and her face and breasts are besmeared with blood. She stands with one foot on the thigh, and another on the breast of her husband. This position of Kali is accounted for by the fact that, when her victory over the giants was won she danced for joy so furiously that the earth trembled beneath her weight. At the request of gods, Siva asked her to desist, but as, owing to her excitement, she did not notice him he lay down amongst the slain. She continued dancing until she caught sight of her husband under her feet; immediately she thrusts out her tongue with shame at the disrespect she had shown him. (Wilkins 318)

Kali represents the energy of time as she stands on the corpse of the cosmos, Shiva. Shiva without Shakti is called ‘Shav’, that is, corpse. Her black colour is the colour that eventually assimilates all the colours. The blood on her body and in her eyes draws attention to the violence in nature. She represents the Tamas guna, the quality of inertia. Tamas suggests darkness, rest, and sleep. David Frawley in Inner Tantric Yoga: Working with the Universal Shakti says:
*Tamo-guna* as the power of form (or matter) has *Stambhana Shakti*, ‘the power to resist or to stop’. This allows for the formation of the body, the holding of the life-force and the mind in the body, and the quieting of the emotions through sleep, but can be a force of inertia, obstruction and resistance. (71)

*Tamas guna* represents heedlessness that binds the Self to ego by making it ignorant, sleepy, and indifferent. It takes away the power of judgment. Kali represents *Tamas guna* because she destroys this indifference and makes space for wisdom that is the rebirth. Kali is a blend of ‘Kal’ and ‘I.’ ‘Kal’ represents ‘Time’ and ‘I’ represents ‘Ego.’ Kali represents the destructive time for ego. She represents the destruction of ego that manifests itself as a separate entity. When the ego of rules and identity begin to shut the sense of righteousness, Kali strikes and destroys it to make space for a new consciousness.

There are many versions of her coming into being, thus many names for Kali. One of them is Chinnamastika, “the headless goddess who drinks her own blood while copulating with her spouse or while sitting on a couple who are making love with the woman on top” (*IM* 40). It describes both her life giving and life taking form. Another name for her is Kaushika (The Sheath), as it is believed that Kali came into being when Goddess Parvati shed her dark skin and became the fairer one (Gauri). The most famous one is that she is the warrior aspect of goddess Durga. Goddess Durga, who had been created by Gods for battling demons got so enraged while killing the demons that her anger got out of her head in the form of Kali, she destroyed the demons by tearing and crushing them and also by sucking their blood away. Sally says, “In nearly all of them, she compels you to bow down” (125). She also has a special place in Tantric rituals, where she is the union of opposites; a union of both life and death. Tantric rituals celebrate Kali. Sally mentions, “In the Tantric traditions, Kali is the central deity of the left-handed path, where transgressive activities are practiced in ritual settings for the sake of discovering the blissful state where dualities like pleasure/pain, pure/impure, and even life/death dissolves” (128).

Karnad’s heroines transform into archetypes of Kali from being the archetypes of Lakshmi when their Eros is hurt. Their unconscious desires seethe and create chaos in their psyche that leads them to make choices that are not in alignment with the rules of society. When these desires become too strong, they break down all the rules and
codes and cause destruction. Kali comes into being when there is a clash between these heroines’ attempt to keep up with the rules and their constitutional inability to meet this challenge. Eric Fromm says:

Life has inner dynamism of its own: it tends to grow, to be expressed, to be lived. When this tendency is thwarted, the energy directed towards life undergoes a process of decomposition and changes into energies directed towards destruction. In other words, the drive for life and the drive for destruction aren’t mutually independent factors but are in a reversed interdependence. The more the drive towards life is thwarted, the stronger is the drive towards destruction. (158)

It is interesting to note that it is in the temple of Kali itself that Padmini transposed the heads. In transposing the heads, her innermost desires manifested themselves and became the reality. But this euphoria ended as soon as the respective heads of Devadatta and Kapila started governing their bodies. Though Padmini tried to keep up with the changes but her primal urges take over. She crosses the Lakshmana-rekha by rejecting the set norms and moves into the wilderness of inhibited desires. Unbarred and unbridled, she turns to Kapila in the forest. The archetype of forest marks transformation and is also associated with Kali. She is the goddess of wilderness and darkness and “Padmini’s surreptitious violation of conventional territories- in her running away to the forest-renders the forest a symbol of nature’s sexualized bounty as well as spiritual solitude” (Tripathi 55). Entering into a forest marks her transformation from a cultured Lakshmi to wild Kali. Sally says:

Kali is the force many young woman call on in those moments when they courageously face and move beyond their own trauma, or when they want to break through sexual shyness, politesse, insecurity, and discomfort. Kali’s image offers an entrance into a wild audacity that has historically been denied both to the divine feminine and to the individual women. (131)

On seeing Padmini, Kapila feels a pang of the identity he has lost because of her and says: “I am Kapila now. The rough and violent Kapila. Kapila without a crack between his head and his shoulders. What do you want now? Another head? Another suicide? Listen to me. Do me a favour. Go back. Back to Devadatta” (Karnad 1:170). Kapila, the dark animus of Padmini has sensed the destruction her entry in the forest
will bring to the culture outside. Her uninhibited desire for Kapila’s body will only bring Thanatos.

Padmini’s desire to unite with an immaculate combination of Devadatta’s mind and Kapila’s body is thwarted. Her purpose is destroyed. Padmini’s conflict can be seen in her statement, "Yes, you won Kapila. Devadatta won too. But I - better half of two bodies- I neither win nor lose" (Karnad 1:170). The scene emphasises the irony of Padmini’s life. Though she had freely chosen Kapila over Devadatta, but in this free choice, she trapped herself. She is caught between two different identities of association. Padmini’s pathos melts Kapila, and he admits that he had buried all those memories in his skin. His body never made him forget her touch and pierced his head day and night. He confides in her the sense of incompleteness that his body has given him. He mentions that his body has the memories of her touch and her body swaying in his arms though his head doesn’t have any such memory. Carl Jung in *Psyche and Symbol* suggested that body has its pre-established individual definiteness. Susan E. Smith in her paper *Body Memories: And Other Pseudo-Scientific Notions of ‘Survivor Psychology* says, “The theory of body memories is used to describe feelings for which the individual usually has no visual, auditory or other sensory memory imprint. It is claimed that the cells, DNA or simply the body contains 100 percent recall of what the mind represses or forgets.”

These memories stir his body with passion, but his mind doesn't identify with this desire. Only a union with Padmini can relieve him of this anxiety of being a pariah to his cravings. Padmini’s lovelorn condition and her insatiate bodily Eros sends a chill through the veins of Kapila. She says: “Be quiet, stupid. Your body bathed in a river, swam and danced in it. Shouldn’t your head know what river it was, what swim? Your head too must submerge in that river: the flow must rumple your hair, run its tongue in your ears and press your head to its bosom. Until that's done, you'll continue to be incomplete” (171). In archetypal psychology, swimming is seen as a symbol of intercourse and denotes river with female sexuality. The primal passion of body arises in both like the poetic union of Yin and Yang.

Bhagavata’s suggestive description of the couple’s meeting and mating renders the union in the images of water, waterfall, and rain representing in terms of male sexuality. The instances of this occur in Sanskrit texts where male potency is described in metaphors of rain.
Padmini lives with Kapila for few days. Bhagavata seems to be speaking on her behalf. The words resonate with joys of pure elemental delight born of the physical proximity with the man. (Tripathi 56)

Devadatta with his hurt pride and wounded heart reaches the door of Kapila, and the dance of Thanatos begins. Devadatta symbolises rules and Kapila symbolise the instincts. When rules and natural instincts come into a dual, the result is Thanatos. They realised that they couldn't live together and entered into a fight. They decide that the only solution to this problem is: “Kapila: We must both die. Devadatta: We must both die” (Karnad 1:175). They fight like lions and kill like cobras. Their fight is stylised like a dance; a *tandava* of burning hearts and wounded pride. In Indian tradition, *Tandava* is a dance form associated with Lord Shiva; also it is interesting to note here that Shiva in Indian myths is considered to be the spouse of Kali. *Tandava* symbolises the cosmic cycles of creation, preservation, and dissolution. “Shiva communicates the truth of life through dance. Dance is the symbol of life. It is impermanent, lasting as long as the dancer dances. It flows through space and time, unfettered by any dimension or moment. The wheel around the dancing Shiva is the merry-go-round of worldly events.” (*MM* 162)

They both fight unto death because they have lost all hope. They don't want to live anymore. They can't find escape from this deathly dance:

He knows, and I know
All there's to be known:
The witch's burning thirst
Burns for blood alone.
Hence this frozen smile,
Which cracks and drips to earth,
And claw-knives, digging flesh
For piecemeal death. (Karnad 1:175)

The above dialogue establishes the fiery side of Padmini. She, at once, becomes an archetype of Chinnamastika, a form of Kali.

Chinnamastika’s female form indicates that she is a visual representation of the observation that is experienced in life. Chinnamastika’s violence (Cutting the neck) is an act of defence,
drinking (suggested by the scimitar) and nourishment (suggested by
the drinking of the blood spurting from the severed neck). Sex brings
about self-propagation; violence ensures self-preservation. The image
of Goddess is unabashedly sexual and violent. Her nakedness and lack
of modesty in both the sexual and violent acts indicate the
impersonality of sex and violence in nature, their only intention being
to sustain life. (IM 40)

Padmini as an archetype of a Kali is not after the lives of Kapila and
Devadatta, but it was their ego that she tried to destroy. Their egos that didn’t let them
share the woman they both loved. It was easy for them to die, then to share her. Kali
attacks when rules become too tight, and egos inflate. She strikes her sword when
both rules and ego do not make space for the feelings and instincts. She destroys to
create space for new beginnings. Padmini says:

They burned, lived, fought, embraced, and died. I stood silent. If I’d
said, “Yes, I’ll live with you both; perhaps they would have been alive
yet. But I couldn’t say it. I couldn’t say, ‘Yes’. No, Kapila, no,
Devadatta. I know it in my blood you couldn't have lived together. You
wouldn't have had to share not only me but your bodies as well.
Because you knew death you died in each other’s arms. You could
have only lived ripping each other to pieces. I had to drive you to
death. You forgave each other, but again, left me out. (176)

The practical wisdom that is associated with Eros is there in Padmini. She
knew it deep down her soul that the two can share her body, but they can't share each
other's body. The culture can forgive the man, but it doesn’t forgive the transgressions
of a woman. This makes her both the creator and the destroyer, thus making her a
double-sided archetype. “The creation mother is always also the Death Mother and
vice-versa” (Estes 32). The rhythmic dance reaches its climax with Kapila wounding
Devadatta, who falls to his feet and stabs Kapila and both die.

Kali is usually depicted as an independent deity but whenever she is with a
God, it is with Shiva who is her consort and companion. Often, Kali dominates Shiva,
who is portrayed as passive in her presence. She becomes his active principle.
Eventually, she activates Shiva, not with rage but with ecstasy. While Parvati tames,
socialise, and domesticates Shiva, Kali incites him to passion. Parvati is Shiva’s
numinous anima, while Kali symbolises Shiva’s dark and erotic anima (Bedi 119). Sharmishtha is the dark anima of Yayati; she is the archetype of Kali. Suffering, sacrifice, injustice, and disappointments have scarred her life, yet she is undefeated, unbroken and strong. She had adopted satire as the mode of expression to give voice to her anger, and this entices Yayati, and he fell for her wits. Her logical discussions and arguments open certain gates of Yayati’s mind, which he had never experienced before.

Because I feel bewitched by her. Even now, at this moment, I want her. I have never felt so entranced by a woman. What is it? Is it some spell she has cast? Some secret sorcery? I can feel youth bursting out within me again. Her beauty, her intelligence, her wit, her abandon in love. Not to marry her is to lose her. I must have her. I have to keep her with me. (Yayati 30)

Sharmishtha’s life is filled with pain and agony. The rejection from Devyani was her first close experience of neglect. Being in exile and away from home in the palace of Yayati makes her an archetype of the exiled. The rejection in the palace because of her class and clan had only deepened her misery.

The problem of the exiled one is primaeval. Many fairy tales and mythos centre around the theme of the outcast. In such tales, the central figure is tortured by events outside her venue, often due to a poignant oversight...sometimes exile is enforced through sheer meanness...other times exile comes about as the result of a naive error...When culture narrowly defines what constitutes success or desirable perfection in anything—looks, height, strength, form, acquisitive power, economics, manliness, womanliness, good children, good behaviour, religious belief –then corresponding mandates to measure oneself against these criteria are introjected into the psyches of all the members of that culture. So the issue of the exiled wildish woman are usually twofold: inner and personal, and outer and cultural. (Estes 183-185)

Sharmishtha’s constant satire is her struggle to suppress her sorrow. With her relentless jibes and satire, Sharmishtha is in the constant pursuit of Devyani, because it is only in Devyani’s acceptance that Sharmishtha would find her life worthy. But the shadow aspect sneaked its way out. The deep-rooted trauma triggered her
attraction for Yayati. The starved and dark unconscious elements of her psyche found a chance of escape in Yayati even when she knew her connection with Yayati would only bring problems. Sally comments:

Women, as we know, have suppressed their power for thousands of years, becoming masters of passive aggression and vicarious backstage manipulation. So the process of finding and harnessing that energy in ourselves is fraught with missteps. We don’t always know how to separate the transformative anger that can stand against injustice from the rage of wounded feminine, which all of us, whether we know it or not, hold in our cells. (133)

In her vindictiveness for Devyani, Sharmishtha broke all the rule of class hierarchies and sneaked into forming a relationship with Yayati.

When a woman feels compelled to sneak life, she is in minimal subsistence mode. She sneaks life away from the hearing of “them,” whoever the “them” is in her life. She acts disinterested and calm on the surface, but whenever there is a crack of light, her starved self-leaps out, runs for the nearest life form, lights up, kicks back, charges madly, dances herself silly, exhausts herself, then tries to creep back to the black cell before anyone notices she is gone. (Estes 257)

Sharmishtha’s sneaking doesn’t make Devyani happy. Sharmishtha is a Rakshasi, and an outcast. Her only identity is that of being a handmaid to Devyani. Therefore, she is in no way Devyani’s equal. Devyani asks Yayati to do away with her or “I too can bare my fangs. I too can draw blood. Don’t provoke me on account of this woman” (Yayati 30). In her anger, Devyani becomes an archetype of Kali. Devyani wanted a relationship with Yayati that would satisfy her core need for love. But the down-side of her desire is that she felt good about herself with Yayati alone. Her self-worth depends on the treatment she gets from Yayati. Devyani opposes the desire of Yayati to make Sharmishtha his queen. Sharmishtha’s presence in the palace is already a reminder to Devyani of her baleful act, and if Yayati would exalt Sharmishtha to the position of a queen, it will make Devyani question her self-worth. All this had a profound impact on her ego consciousness. When Devyani’s inflated ego suffered at the hands of both Yayati and Sharmishtha, her archetypal defences got activated. Bedi says, “When archetypal defences are activated, they have archaic,
primitive qualities; they are demonic or angelic; they have a black or white quality; they are disrespectful of the ego and may even be destructive of it with the sole aim of the survival of the archaic, rudimentary self” (127).

Thus, in her uncontainable rage, Devyani used the Kali image in justifying her ego and shadow becomes the cause of the Thanatos. Sharmishtha and Swarnlata try to dissuade Devyani, but her rage knows no bounds. “I have nothing to do with this lot. I’m finished with them” (31). Sally says:

After several thousand years of patriarchy, we’re used to masculine anger and rage, even when we fear it. But the rage of the feminine—the terrible face of the mother—seems to threaten the very ground of existence. It reminds us that the earth itself could turn on us, could refuse to play its supportive role, and could erupt as a volcano or a tornado. (135)

Swarnlata tries to infuse some sense into her “the damage will be forever. You will never be able to undo it” (31). Sharmishtha too tries her best to undo the Thanatos which her passion has brought, by trying to dissuade Devyani.

Sharmishtha: I don’t know. I don’t know what I’m doing here. But Devyani, don’t do anything rash. Your temper...

Devyani: You are the fine one to talk. Do you think I don’t know why you have come to me now? You have heard about the father. And you are here to prevent me from seeing him. You want to keep me trapped in here till the prince arrives.

Sharmishtha: Yes, perhaps you are right. I don’t know what to do. But Devyani, I can sense disaster, I can feel it looming. And only you can avert it. (33)

Shukracharya in his rage for the treatment meted out to his daughter cursed Yayati of old age and decrepitude by nightfall. It is still easy to accept death, but decrepitude that too in the prime of youth is hell, especially for Yayati. Yayati is a man of passion who always wants people around him. When Pooru asks Shukracharya to forgive his father, Shukracharya relents and provides a solution. According to it, the curse will not have its effect on Yayati if some young man takes it upon himself and offers his youth to Yayati in exchange. But nobody is ready to
exchange his youth for Yayati’s old age. Sharmishtha once again tries to put sense in Yayti and tells him that there are more important things in life than pleasures of life. She had fallen in love with Yayati in the state of her rebellion and advised him to leave this all, and she even was ready to go into the wilderness with him.

Kali provides a world-view through the shadow lens. She gives context to why we have disease, disorder, and anarchy, why the dark side prevails over the light forces of the numinous. She imparts a view that existence is not only about life but also about death, not only about the order but also about chaos, not only about health but also about illness, not only about virtue but also about vice. (Bedi 119)

But all her advice falls short on Yayati. Pooru in his rebellion against the superficial lifestyle of his father accepts the curse and becomes old and decrepitated. Pooru’s actions crushed Chitralekha and thwarted her Eros in the cob-web weaved by the desires of Yayati. She laments, “This morning I was the mistress of all that I had yearned for. But within half a day- no, within half an hour actually- half a century has driven across my bed and crushed the dreams on my pillows” (Yayati 65). When one is skewed in the instinctual role of life, the negative shadow aspect tends to get out, stealing balance from life. Pinkola says, “For women especially, the shadow almost always contains very fine aspects of being that are forbidden or given little support by her culture” (Estes 225). She becomes the archetype of Kali and destroys the calm Yayati had asked her to maintain.

She tells Yayati, “I didn’t know Pooru when I married him. I married him for his youth. For his potential to plant the seed of the Bharatas clan in my womb” (66, Yayati). Pinkola says, “For woman- the light is located not in woman heart, not behind her eyes, but in her ovaries, where all the seed stock is laid down before she is even born. To have the seed means to have the key to life” (32). The shadow life occurred for Chitralekha when her innermost desire of motherhood were left unfulfilled. The desires of Yayati and the selfish act of Pooru snatched the light and energy from the Eros of Chitralekha. In the state of her captured Eros, she tries to sneak the motherhood in an unsanctioned way. She tells Yayati:

Chitralekha: He has lost that potency now. He doesn’t possess any of the qualities for which I married him. But you do.

Yayati (flabbergast): Chitralekha!
Chitralekha: You have taken over your son’s youth. It follows that you should accept everything that comes attached to it.

Yayati: Whore! Are you inviting me to fornication?

Chirtalekha: Oh, come, Sir. These are trite considerations. We have to rise above such trivialities. We have to be superhuman. Nothing like this has ever happened before. Nothing like this is likely to...

Yayati: Where did you learn such filth, you beast?

(*Yayati stands, speechless.*)

So, Sir, you refuse to return my youthful husband to me. Nor will you accept my logic. I know. It is part of the sacrifice we all have to make. Your Majesty, would you say this sacrifice measures up to the demand?

(*She picks up the vial of poison from the bed, walks up to him, and holds it up to him.*)

Yayati (terrified): Chitralekha, don’t be foolish!

Chitralekha: Foolish? What else is there for me to do? You have your youth. Prince Pooru has his old age. Where do I fit in? (*Yayati 66*)

But sneaking didn’t work in Chirtalekha’s case. Chitralekha attempted and tried all the ways to save her Eros and soul. All her attempts failed and resulted in misery all around. Chitralekha swallows the poison and dies and becomes the archetype of the Scapegoat of Yayati’s desires. The cycle of destruction culminated in her death, leaving Swarnalata mad and Sharmishtha in danger of her life. Both Pooru and Yayati suppressed Chitralekha’s animus. Yayati masked his fragile ego behind his false youth and masculinity and projected his anima on Chitralekha by suggesting her to stay weak and submissive. When her animus didn’t find a way out, she directed her destructive energy inwards, and this resulted in depression all around. Chitralekha became the archetype of Kali that carried the “blood scent of chaos—the all-bets-are-off chaos that arises when the abused and betrayed feminine rises in vengeance or simply with a cry of “Enough.” When woman are seized by the rage of shadow Kali, it can wreak massive personal destruction” (Kempton 134). The poison of Sharmishtha was symbolic of her rage. The poison held Swarnalata’s pain, and in consuming that poison, Chitralekha opened herself up to the “accumulated anger of
millions of wounded women, layered into the collective unconscious, demanding some form of release” (Kempton 135).

In the play Bali: The Sacrifice Queen is against non-violence, and the society forces her into violence which becomes the cause of Thanatos. Jainism “is a very old form of non-Vedic religion. Like Vaishnavism, it also seems to represent a reform of Brahmanism, but only on far less conservative lines. For instance, it repudiates animal sacrifices” (Hiriyanna 59). The sacrifice has been a part of rites of passage since ancient times, and it marks symbolic death and resurrection. The Vedic cultures, however, have a mature view of violence that is different from the religious view of Jainism. For them, sacrifice means to make things sacred. Kirk Thomas in his article The Nature of Sacrifice says that ‘Sacrifice’ is derived from the words, ‘Sacer’ meaning ‘holy’, and ‘facere’ meaning ‘to make.’ Jefferey Carter explains Henri Hubert and Marcel Mauss’s take on Sacrifice as:

Hubert and Mauss believe that religious ideas are “social facts,” and that ritual ultimately has a “social function,” for it helps define and maintain social solidarity by working to reinforce shared values and collective conceptions. The heart of this sociological position is a distinction Hubert Mauss make between the “sacred” and the “profane.” This is a distinction between the “ordinary” and the “religious,” the sacred being a certain quality or character added to particular things, individuals, places, and so forth . . . How then can human beings tap “the very source of life” (the sacred), while avoiding the deadly consequences of “desecration,” disregarding the sacred/profane opposition? The answer is sacrifice. In sacrifice rituals, the victim serves as an “intermediary” between the sacred and profane. (88-89)

Jainism believes in Nirvana, and Vedic scriptures believe in the doctrine of rebirth. It suggests that to exist and to survive, violence becomes necessary. Culture exists by consuming the Nature. Sanskriti survives when it consumes Prakriti. Pattnaik in his article Cow Slaughter and Dharma said:

Vedas recognize that violence is integral to the defence of the notion of property, which is itself seen as a necessary delusion. So, Parushuram slaughter’s the king who steals his father’s cow, and those who support
him. So Ram fights Ravana to rescue his wife. And when things get ambiguous on who is the proprietor then, Krishna takes the side of the weak, the Pandavas, and not the strong Kauravas, not because the former are good but the latter refuses to compromise. This understanding, not endorsement of violence is why the Goddess alone, not the male gods are offered the sacrifice of male, only male animals-the bull, the buffalo, the goat, the rooster. She embodies nature, and this blood offering to her is to remind us of the aggressive dominating alpha tendency that needs to be kept in check, often violently, for civilization to thrive and dharma to grow.

To atone for the adultery Queen has committed, King asks her to make a sacrifice of the dough-cock. Being a Jain, she refuses to commit violence even in a symbolic sense. But the King belongs to the Kshatriya clan where violence isn’t something that is looked down upon. The dough-cock is not an individual but a collective symbol of sacrifice in Hindu religion. It is a part of buried mysterious of past, primal dreams and collective representation.

Hubert and Mauss claim sacrificial practices, while being employed for a diversity of purposes, share a common logic –they are a way of creating a link “between the sacred and profane worlds through the mediation of a victim, that is, of a thing that in the course of the ceremony is destroyed.” Working with the etymology of the word “sacrifice” (“to make sacred”), Hubert and Mauss argue that sacrifices do indeed make something sacred (consecrated), namely the object sacrificed (what they call the “victim”). The victim gains a sacred quality by virtue of it being employed as an intermediary between the sacred and profane realms, for it serves as a conduit of sorts for moving religious power in either direction between the human and divine realms. (Carter 88-89)

The King is in a dilemma either to follow his mother or his religion which teaches against the doctrine of non-violence. When Queen-Mother comes to know of Queen’s adultery, she is horrified and tells King to “Throw her bones to the dogs. She has betrayed you. You are not bound by your vows now. All this nonsense about non-violence. It had to go. Let it go” (Karnad 1:223). King feels caged in his feelings, the
possessiveness of Mother-Queen and aloofness and unfaithfulness of Queen deteriorates his mental equilibrium. The King felt empty and suffocated. The only relief comes when Mother-Queen offers the symbolic gesture of sacrificing a cock of dough. The idea of Bali provided him with some solace as the blame of breaching the relationship would be transformed to the cock from Queen. It can make him go back to constructing a balanced relationship with Queen. King suffers from the Mother-complex, where the mother is both a figure of nourishment and devouring possessiveness. A cut has to be made to let the pain out, and shedding of blood becomes necessary. King feels as if this piece of dough will help him to ease his suffering. King could feel this comfort because the mother is the first place in the life of a child, where he lives in full participation with her and a state of complete unconsciousness. Jung says, “Mother is the psychic as well as the physical precondition of the child” (FA 188). Though King has adopted the religion of his wife but his unconscious found relief in the violent religion of his mother.

Rather than disengaging from the mother, we are seeking a wild and wise mother. We are not, cannot be, separate from her. Our relationship to this mother is meant to turn and turn, and to change and change, and it is a paradox. This mother is a school we are born into, a school we are students in, a school we are teachers at, all at the same time, for the rest of our lives. (Estes 194)

But the Queen doesn’t comply, and the dilemma enlarges. The fight is between the two women, the Mother-Queen and the Queen. It is the struggle of power vying for the upper hand over King, and it becomes the reason of Thanatos in the play. Queen is disgusted at the very idea of the sacrifice; it is against her upbringing. The dough cock is the symbol of adultery she had committed and King, and his mother wanted her to sacrifice that moment. She is Karnad’s enlightened female who has accepted the wholeness of her personality. She doesn’t repress her personal side which is dark and unsuitable for society. Her Eros doesn’t allow her to attach guilt to her natural act. The sacrifice that King and his mother demanded from her was symbolic of suppressing her natural wholeness and reinforcing the collective consciousness on her. It was society’s way of making her submit to the societal ideals. But she is unapologetic and says, “I’m sorry. If this rite is going to blot the moment
out, that would be the real betrayal. I’ll do anything else” (Karnad1:235). But the society considers it to be a sin. Pratt says:

The outside world provides little encouragement to the deviant hero who wants to escape her enclosure since its norms are the very ones that make human behaviour “abnormal” for women. Nor are husbands the only gothic villains presiding over such enclosures: they are aided and abetted by the heroes’ relatives, including their mothers. (53)

In her vindictiveness, the Queen-Mother becomes an archetype of Rudra Kali. She tells Queen, “We should strip ourselves bare and stand naked face to face. Let us. There’s no one else. No one else can be here”, “Don’t agree to the sacrifice. Refuse. Let him plead. Don’t yield. That’s what I’ve come to tell you” (230). The Queen-Mother is the archetype of the woman of over-developed Eros. “When the maternal instinct is atrophied, an overdeveloped Eros forms . . . the intensified Eros causes an abnormal emphasis on the personality of others. The woman of this type is often seen to engage in sensational behaviour for its own sake.” (CW 91)

Interestingly King becomes the object of Bali. He becomes the object of the sacrifice in the power struggle between the cultured queen and his wild mother. The Queen-Mother represents Mother-Goddess, the goddess Kali in all its rawness. The cultural Queen gets overwhelmed by seeing the unabashed display of violence in Queen-Mother. Queen-Mother displays the antithesis of the stereotyped maternal mother. The cultured Queen finds this face of motherhood disgusting. Jung says, “But this type, uninviting as it appears, also has positive aspects which society could ill afford to do without. This type is wholly a thrall of nature, purely instinctive and therefore, all-devouring” (FA176). The Queen-Mother tells her about all the blood and gore that is natural to bringing new life.

Mother: What do you know of violence? Or of Pain? You seem so averse to blood that I wonder you didn’t prefer to remain a Virgin. For many years, I was Childless, Then-One day- I became pregnant. (The Queen turns away).
Queen: I don’t want to know.
Mother: Of course you don’t. You have a fickle womb. False Pregnancy! Miscarriage! Mine is made of Steel. We were ecstatic.
But labour began and the Child refused to come out. They said the foetus was set transverse in the womb. For four days and nights, I screamed in pain. I prayed for death so my child could live. Ultimately they pinned me down to the floor, spread-eagled and the nurse shoved her hand into my uterus, twisted him around and pulled him out. I was screaming through the gag they had thrust into my mouth. You couldn’t begin to imagine what I went through then. I knew I was going to die. I cast one last glance at my darling son- a farewell look, I thought -and saw him drenched in blood, half-wrapped in my placenta, and I began to laugh. I lived, I drowned him in blood. You, however, are drowning him in guilt. (232)

Stanislav Grof, a psychiatrist and the founder of transpersonal psychology, has studied the fundamental structures of the human psyche and has developed the ‘holotropic breathwork’ (from holos=wholeness and trepein=moving forward) based on Yogic and Shamanic technique. With this method, he found that humans, who enter the holotropic state of consciousness, go through three layers of experience. One of those layers is the struggle of death and rebirth. In The Holotropic Mind, he suggests that the body goes through cathartic experiences which include passing through death and rebirth experience. Grof explains that this experience can also lead one to the experience of transcendence. He explains it by giving the example of the stage of labour where the passage of a child through the birth canal includes mucus, blood and possibly even urine and faeces. The death here represents the primal patterns of dysfunction, and the rebirth means accepting these dysfunctions instead of repressing to find a resource of life within and beyond. Nature is naturally violent. The process of birth involves blood. The darkness of blood is the place where the shadow resides; it is the seat of all creativity.

Queen-Mother, a symbol of nature, brought up her son according to the religion she knew in which violence is natural. Queen-Mother in vengeance tells Queen to, “Twist the knife in his wound. Let him flagellate himself, revel in self-hatred. Make him bleed” (232). King fails to separate his anima from either of the women in his life. Queen-Mother “is an anachronism, a throw-back to a primitive state of matriarchy where the man leads an insipid existence as a mere procreator and serf of the soil” (FA 176). In the fight between the two, King realises himself to be
the desire of both the women in their raw state. He feels these woman represents the woman who, “sinks her teeth into the man and drinks blood, plucks his entrails like the strings, the man’s head only laughs and sings” (Karnad1:232). This woman is Kali, and the man is the ego, in whom she sinks her teeth. The blood represents the passion and desires which she drinks because the moment these desires hit the consciousness, they start to double and gain strength. The man’s head laughs and sings because it gets liberated from dilemmas and attains the wholeness.

To avoid the psychological warfare and to save her marriage, Queen agrees to perform the sacrifice. Queen’s further reluctance in the participation of Bali is because of her knowledge that this act will only lead to her self-destruction. She accepts it with the realisation that ultimately there can be no substitute victim in this sacrificial rite. Pratt says that repressed critical intelligence is a cause of wifehood at times. Wifehood comes with limitations and restrictions on the freedom of thought and choice. It demands of wife to be submissive and results in a diminishing of her eroticism. It results in a blurred personality between the real self and social dictates. King asks her:

King: You do?
Queen: Yes.
King: Then come.

(He raises the sword. The Queen places her hand on the hilt of the Sword).

Singer: Fowl, bird, Cock of nine new moons,
Bless us. Raise us from our Darkness,
Cleanse us of our sins.
Your curse covers not as words
But as the dying breath of an infant,
Grows as the thorny cactus between bleached
Rib- cages.
Remove the poison from the seed.
Remove the rust from the blade.
The worm from the flower.
Only you can save us now.
Only You.

Cock.

Divine Bird, help us-

(The King tries to plunge the sword into the cock when the cock begins to crow).

Cock: Cock...a...doodle...doo-cock...a..doodle...doo.

(Total silence. The King drops the sword and stumbles back).

King: What’s that? What’s that?

Queen: It’s alive. The cock...is crowing. The cock crowing.

(Bursts into laughter.). (239)

When one gives too much energy to a thought, the energy around it starts vibrating. They start manifesting themselves. Jung says:

It often seems that even inanimate objects co-operate with the unconscious in the arrangement of symbolic patterns. There are numerous well-authenticated stories of clock-stopping at the moment of their owner’s death; one was the pendulum clock in the Palace of Frederick the Great at Sans Souci which stopped when the emperor died. Other common examples are those of a mirror that breaks, or a picture that falls, when a death occurs; or minor but unexplained breakages in a house where someone is passing through an emotional crisis. (M&S 41)

The energy associated with thoughts gave it life. It got a soul. The most sought after thing attains energy, which is silent more often than it speaks. Jaffe in *Symbolism in the Visual Arts* while explaining the paintings of different painter says that everything has a secret soul:

What the artist, like the alchemists, probably did not realise was the psychological fact that they were projecting part of their psyche into the matter or inanimate objects. Hence the “mysterious animation” that entered into such things, and the great value attached even to rubbish. They projected their own darkness, their earthly shadow, a psychic content that they and their time had lost and abandoned. (292)
The King was horrified, and Queen began to coddle the cock. The cock’s crowing mocks at King’s false ego. He smashes it, and the dance of Thanatos reaches its climax. Von Franz says, “The shadow is not the whole of the unconscious personality. In some aspects, the shadow can also consist of collective factors that stem from a source outside the individual’s personal life” (174). Though violence is the way of life but King and Queen-Mother forced their beliefs on Queen. Their action is also violence, but it is a different form of violence altogether. Their violence is the violence of invasion and annexation of other’s beliefs and feelings. Queen tried to save her marriage but was disgusted at the King for taking away from her the source of her joy. King behaved like a beast and guarded his belief at the expense of his Dharma. His refusal to accept Queen’s feelings and suppressing them forcefully made him demonic, who deserved no pity. Queen, an archetype of Shakti transformed into Kali and stabbed his ego which was creating Adharma.

The archetype of Kali is not related to destruction alone, but also with putting the imbalanced life back on track. Though dark, she also becomes the source of destroying the darkness from the personality and creates room for fresh light to enter. It makes one acknowledge the dark aspects of one’s personality and become one with it. Gauri is another form of Kali. They both are the manifestations of Goddess Parvati, the consort of Lord Shiva.

Parvati is represented in pictures as a fair and beautiful woman, with no superfluity of limbs. Few miraculous deeds are claimed for her. It is when she appears as Durga, Kali, etc. that she manifests divine powers, and exhibits a very different spirit from that which appears in her as Parvati. Hence the supposition that these were originally distinct deities, though now believed to be one and the same. (Wilkins 304)

Kali and Gauri are both the same, but whereas Gauri is identified as domesticated, Kali is untamed. Kali is associated with wilderness and Gauri is related to culture. Queen disgusted with the violence becomes an archetype of Kali in the dark sanctum of temple and Rani in order to bend the rules in her favour in the panchayat becomes the archetype of Gauri. In the play Naga-Mandala, Rani embodies the mellowed aspect of Kali archetype.

Appanna is oblivious to his unconscious self. Rani comes in his life and begins her primitive participation in life with him. The Eros in Rani understands that her
husband needs the very thing he resists and she moves to the unconscious side of Appanna, that is Naga and entices it. Appanna’s unconscious is the centre and Rani is the periphery. His unconscious is sleepy, and Rani with her red curry nudges it and evokes passion in him. He slithers towards her and participates with her in making a new life in the form of Naga, completing the figure of Naga-Mandala. Appanna and Naga, thus, together evoke the image of ancient symbol of Ouroboros. It is a symbol of the snake biting its own tail. It is an archetype of the eternal cycle of life, life in motion and the integration of one’s conscious with unconscious. Carl Jung himself has described it as:

The Ouroboros has been said to have a meaning of infinity or wholeness. In the age-old image of the Ouroboros lies the thought of devouring oneself and turning oneself into a circulatory process, for it was clear to the more astute alchemists that the prima materia of the art was man himself. The Oroboros is a dramatic symbol for the integration and assimilation of the opposite, i.e., of the shadow. This “feedback” process is at the same time a symbol of immortality, since it is said of the Oroboros that he slays himself and brings himself to life, fertilize himself and gives birth to himself. He symbolizes the one, who proceed from the clash of opposites and therefore constitutes the secret of prima material . . . unquestionably stems from man’s unconscious. (CW 513)

The conscious side of Appanna keeps its distance from Rani by applying all sorts of tricks, but paradoxically his unconscious gets more invested in her and creates new life. This new life frightened Appanna to the extent that he creates another hurdle in the way of Rani. He asks her to take the Naga-test to create as much distance as possible between him and her. His thoughts are jumbled together, and he is desperate to keep his unconscious hidden. His heart hammers frantically and flutters like a bird ambushed in a net. Though the test appears to be about Rani’s Chastity, in real it is a test to ascertain Appanna’s real identity. Rani is fearful of the whole Naga-test but is once again helped by Kurudavva. In her interaction with Kurudavva, Rani became conscious of her unconscious strength. Kurudavva informs Rani that a yaksha woman has taken her son. She tells Rani
If only I had eyes! I would have seen her. I would have recognized.
But what can one do with these pebbles? When he tried to tell me I
didn’t listen. I was deaf. A woman? But not a human being. No.
What woman would come inside our house at that hour? And how?
She wasn’t even breathing. I shouted: ‘Who are you? What do you
want from us? Go away! Suddenly the door burst open. The rushing
wind shook the rafters. He slipped from my hands and was gone.
Never came back. (Karnad 1: 291)

Society reduced Kurudavva to the status of a mad woman. Kurudavva is the
example of the wise woman of ancient times, who were declared “witches” and were
put to tortures and cruel death. Daly in Beyond God the Father says:

The role of a witch, then, was often ascribed to social deviants whose
power was feared. All women are deviants from the male norm of
humanity (a point emphasized by the “misbegotten male” theory of
Aristotle and Aquinas, the ‘penis-envy’ dogma of the Freidians, and
other psychological theories such as the “inner space” doctrine of
Erikson and the ‘anima’ theory of Jung). However, those singled out as
witches were frequently characterized by the fact that they had or were
believed to have power arising from a particular kind of knowledge, as
in the case of ‘wise women’ who knew the curative powers of herbs
and to whom people went for counsel and help. Defined as evil, they
become the scapegoats of society, and in the process, the dominant
ethos was reinforced. The Inquisitor functioned as the protector of
society against deviance- against deviant behaviour which was
threatening because powerful. In modern times psychiatric ideology
has a large extent replaced theology as custodian of society’s values.
Clearly, the semantics of “good” and “evil” have been replaced by
“health” and “mental illness.”(64)

Kurudavva’s son Kappanna is also symbolic of Appanna’s unconscious and
was taken away by a Yaksha woman who is representative of the desires of Rani.
Kurudavva comes as a guiding force in the testing situation for Rani. In Kurudavva
and her son’s situation, Rani realises that if desires are strong and then they can take
any shape. She asks herself, “Do desires really reach out from some world beyond
right into our beds?” (Karnad 1:291). Her desire to make Appanna meet Naga is strong. It is through this determined expression of her desire that she reaches for the ant-hill and puts her hand into it and pulls the Cobra out. Pinkola says:

The holes, cellars, dungeons symbols are all related to one another. They are ancient initiatory environs; places to or through which a woman descends, break taboos to find the truth and through wit and/or travail triumphs by banishing, transforming or exterminating the assassin of the psyche so that she can assert herself in a powerful manner. (Estes 59)

Rani speaks her truth

Rani: Since coming to this village, I have held by this hand, only two...
Appanna (triumphant): There. She admits it. Two, she says, Two!

Who are they?

Rani: My husband and . . .
Appanna: And- say it, who else?
Rani: And this Cobra.
(Suddenly words pour out).

Yes, my husband and this King Cobra. Except these two, I have not touched anyone of the male sex. Nor have I allowed any other male to touch me. If I lie, let the Cobra bite me. (Karnad 1:292)

Rani ascends in the public eye. She used equivocation to bend the rules and changed her desire. As an archetype of Gauri, she manifests her Life/Death/Life symbol. She provides life to the unconscious of Appanna and kills his ego that doesn’t recognise Naga.

(The Cobra slides up her shoulder and spreads its hood like an umbrella over her head. The crowd gasps. The Cobra sways its hood gently for a while, then becomes docile and moves over her shoulder like a garland. Music fills the skies. The light changes into a soft, luminous glow. Rani stares uncomprehendingly as the Cobra slips back into the ant-hill. There are hosannas and cheers from the crowd). [emphasis in original] (292)
The Goddess Kali’s most shared and known image is that of the angry goddess who destroys the evil. Vishakha in the play *The Fire and the Rain* is an archetype of this form of Kali. Her dance of Thanatos came into being because of the jolt she got from all the males in her life. Vishakha’s constant repression of her instincts of Eros found a way out in Yavakri. His words brought the showers of rain in her burnt life. Vishakha’s image in her nine years’ marriage conjures up to that of the sexually exploited and emotionally drained woman. Her husband abused her body and life. In his search for some esoteric knowledge, Paravasu had reduced her to an instrument to serve his tantric goals. Karnad draws a parallel between the state of Vishakha and the drought in the state; both had dried up and were waiting for the rains. So when Yavakri comes back in her life, all her suppressions and frustration swell up and flow towards him in a non-channelled torrent. Vishakha’s adultery becomes dishonour for her father-in-law Raibhaya. It infuriates him, and he beats her to disclose the name of her lover.

Chastity comes to play a part here as well. Patriarchy punishes, “any woman who initiates courtship, or any wife who conventionally enjoys her sexuality, becomes a threat to inheritance system; she is “fallen” in the scale of social values, and “abnormal” in the sense of acting in an autonormative manner” (Pratt 42). It incensed Raibhaya when he comes to know it to be Yavakri. He beats Vishaka and curses Yavakri. Raibhya invokes a Brahma-Rakshasa to kill Yavakri. Vishakha begs her father-in-law and asks him to punish her instead. Vishakha in fear and anxiety, pleaded with Yavakri to “Run, Please I’ve never asked anything of you till now. Just this once. Go run” (128). But irony lands hard on Vishakha. Yavakri in whom she had invested her long dried up Eros brings out the worst in her. Yavakri tells her that his actions were all pre-planned. It was not out of love but out of revenge that he had made love to her.

**Yavakri:** Do you think all this happened accidently? You think I would leave anything to chance? How do you think Arvasu happened to arrive at the river-bank at the right moment? Who called your father-in-law back?

**Vishakha (Scared):** Enough, Yavakari. Don’t say anything more. I don’t want to know. It’s my fault. I shouldn’t have yielded to you-I-
Yavakri: It was fortunate that you yielded. If you hadn’t I would have had to take you by force.

*(Vishakha stares at him in horror).*

This is the moment toward which my entire life has rushed headlong. I will not let anything stand in its way. Your father-in-law will die, Vishakha. Let’s see what your husband does then. Will he continue to hide like a bandicoot in his ritual world? Or will he commit sacrilege by stepping out to face me? Look, I am trembling. I am drenched in sweat. Because everything has worked out just right.

(Karnad 2:131)

“Heroes who decide to become mistress suffer for it heavily” (Pratt 80). Vishakha realizes that Yavakri had reduced her to just an instrument of revenge. To him, she was not a person to be loved, but an object to be used. She is horrified and reaches a state of complete vulnerability. Vishakha had attached all her worth to the male figures in her life. First, her father didn’t ask for her will and married her off to Paravasu. Paravasu used her and now Yavakri had scarred her psyche for a lifetime.

Since they (women) live in a society that recognizes only men as primary existents and women as auxiliaries, they feel more secure in subordinating themselves to and identifying with some man. The result, which we see reflected in the state of mind of many characters in modern fiction, is that women’s life becomes “a hell, vacillating between an all consuming need for male love and approval to raise her from her class subjection, to persistent feelings of inauthenticity when she does achieve this love. Thus her whole identity hangs in the balance of her love life. She is allowed to love herself only if a man finds her worthy of love. (Pratt 78)

At first, she is in the denial mode; she denies his confessions consciously to get away from the pain but the split it caused in her psyche is visible. She tells Yavakri, “I was so happy this morning. You were so good. So warm. I wanted to envelop you in everything I could give. It was more as a mother that I offered my breasts to you- why is life so contrary, Yavkri? One thinks one has stepped on a bit of solid ground -a little haven -and the earth gives way” (Karnad 2:132).
Vishakha goes through a state of trauma, and it becomes difficult for her to grasp this crisis in her life. Her ego couldn’t cope with it, and she became overwhelmed. The archetype of Kali takes over in such emergency situations and become one’s presiding principle. Her bruised and scathed psyche came into the defence mode and attacked everything and everyone who has wounded it.

(Slowly, Calmly, Vishakha starts pouring the water out. He looks at her and for a moment can’t comprehend what she is doing. He suddenly screams).

Yavakri: Oh God! What are you doing? The water—the sanctified water! My life! What are you doing?

(He grabs the Kamandalu from her hand. It’s empty. He starts banging it on the ground).

Yavakri: Water, please! Just a drop. Oh Gods! Only a drop . . . you devil. I trusted you... A drop of water.

(Suddenly a very strange wail is heard from the distance, unearthly, terrifying and evil). (132)

As an archetype of Kali, Vishakha let her rage loose with all the fire-power she had in response to what Yavakri had done against her soul and spirit. She drops all that is there to save Yavakri and let Thanatos take over. All her suppressed power festered into a rage, and she destroyed Yavakri’s life-saving water. Yavakri runs for his life from the Brahma Rakshasa but fails in the end. The Thanatos doesn’t stop here. The message of Yavakri’s death reaches the sacrificial alter, and it stirs Paravasu. When he returned, Vishakha’s Thanatos rises again. Her rage is blood-thirsty, and she tells Paravasu about his father’s lust for her. Her true or false story, of his father’s story, aggravates his hostility and gives him a legitimate motive to the disgruntled anger of Paravasu. He was angry of being disturbed by his father’s action in between the fire sacrifice and to eliminate the chance of any such thing in future again; he kills his father.

Vishakha in her Kali form destroys the Adharma. In a patriarchal society, the parameters of Dharma are different for the woman. Her Dharma is limited and restricted to Stree-Dharma that is the duty to follow the rules of the husband. Vishakha followed her duty religiously, but when love and sacrifice saw no life forth-
coming from it, she changed the colour of her desires to the blackness of grief. It is in
the pain and sorrow that she broke all the hell loose. Sally comments:

For many women, especially third-wave feminists in their twenties and thirties, owing their Kali side is a metaphor for learning to love their own rage and sexuality. Kali storms through us as the repressed power that women hide as they try to live up to the image of the loving, nurturing feminine archetype that every society idealizes. It’s no wonder that “Kali” and “Kaliesque” are more often than not used as shorthand terms for feminine rage. (132)