Chapter V
CHAPTER V

MARITAL RELATIONSHIP IN INDIAN CULTURE

Introduction:

Traditionally, in all societies, marriage and family are considered to be the most sacred institutions. They are the source of comfort and nurture members living within it. As a wonderful bridge between nature and civilization, biology and culture, sex and righteousness, private rivalry and public order, the institutions of marriage marks a unique development in the evolutionary history of humanity. A union of souls, marriage is an honest recognition of the native equality between man and woman. As an agreement to share between themselves the joys and responsibilities of the joint adventure, marriage is an equal necessity for both parents. It does not set up the one above the other. No other human relationship is an intensely bilateral and mutually enjoyable as the partnership between a man and a woman. The key to marriage is the ability to endure and go on. Simone De Beauvoir remarks:

There is a unanimous agreement that getting a husband-or in some cases a ‘Protector’- is for her (woman) the most important Undertaking… She will free herself from the parental home, from her mother’s hold, she will open up her future not only by active conquest but by delivering herself up, passive and docile, in the hands of a new master. (352)

There are many marriages where women are dominated by their husbands and do not find freedom and space in their marital life. In spite of the difficulties and obstacles that emerge in a patriarchal society, women endeavour to channelize their emotions in
different ways because of their strong urge to survive marital life. Many women are
subjected to rape in marriage and they were being supersensitive. Woman has a great
repulsion for the so called ‘Love’ or sexual act where no love is involved. Such marriages are
only physical and never a marriage of minds or hearts. Thus frustrated with the physicality of
marital life, some women try to discover their true identity through other relationships.

Indian society is still very conventional in its approach to marriage and numerous
customs and traditions help to keep a successful marriage. Husband and wife strive to
maintain an outward show of balance and harmony even if they disagree on various
issues of their relationships. In most cases, marriage cuts woman off from the main
stream of life and prevents from achieving her goals. A successful marriage is supposed
to be one where the woman restricts herself to the household affairs. Beyond the
threshold of her house, a woman finds life insecure and confusing due to separation and
social activities. Rose states “Marriage in many instanced proves to trap which is a
hindrance to her growth as an individual” (45). According to society woman is
considered to be a slave or caretaker to her husband, children and the whole family.
She is depicted as a silent sufferer and is given a secondary position in the family and
society. Indian manu states that woman is dependent on a man first father, later husband
and finally son.

**Marital Life Between Baba and Parvati:**

Devi’s father-in-law, Baba and Mahesh resent Parvati’s absence in their huge
house. Parvati is known for real presence, a guardian angel and an unseen mother.
Parvati’s domestic exit to gain entry into heaven made a powerful statement. Her spiritual
choice was known as sense of escape from domestic duty and responsibility. It was a
negation of wifehood and motherhood experiences. Mahesh saw nothing but rejection and treachery in his peculiar identity. According to Premila Paul, “a mother seeking space for herself outside home is so unimaginable and treacherous a deed Parvati becomes a taboo for him’’ (TFN109). It is a shocking news for Baba when Parvati left his house without giving any information to her husband and a loveable son. Parvati once strongly suggested that “a man needs a wife to help him with the business of living” (TFN 61). Baba always follows the theories and ideas of womanhood and brahminhood. He represents the benevolent and patronising aspects of patriarchy.

All men ...are enjoined to cherish women, and look after them as their most precious wards...Fathers, brothers, husbands and brothers-in-law should honour brides, if they desire welfare. Where women are honoured, there the gods delight; where they are not honoured, there all acts become fruitless” (TFN 65).

Baba invests so much confidence in woman and thereby assigns a great deal of responsibility to her. All her stories attempt to canonize woman and put her on spiritual pedestal thereby depriving her of the right to be human mere castration by canonization. According to Baba, woman is instrumental in the initiation and spiritual progress of a man. “it takes the wife’s flame of dharma, to light within a man, the divine lamp that is rusting with neglect”( TFN 66). He says woman or wife should be “the house wife should always be joyous, adept at domestic work, neat in her domestic wares, and restrained in expenses. Controlled in mind, word and body, she who does not transgress her lord, attains heaven even as her lord does” (TFN 70-71). When wife is not happy in
marital life. They always search for another source to engage themselves. Here Parvati is not an exception. She searched her root through spiritual entity. Baba had so many restrictions on wife and womanhood. As per the saying of Hindu mythology, the women are treated as sacrificing, dependent, anxious to please, subordinate and submissive (Sharma 569). Baba is baffled by Parvati’s quest beyond human relations. In herself absorbed spiritual pursuit she has stripped herself of the life allotted to her, that of a householder. Parvati is clever wife she has turned Baba’s theories upside down. “the path a woman must walk to reach heaven is a clear, well-lit one. The woman has no independent sacrifice to perform, no vow, no fasting; by serving her husband, she is honoured in the heavens” (TFN 55). Instead of helping her husband achieve spiritual fulfilment, through these achievements she realises her independent identity. Premila Paul observes that, “Parvathi seeks independent salvation. Parvati affirms that spiritual search is not gender specific and leaving the house for that purpose is not the prerogative of the man as in the case of Siddartha but could be that of a woman as well”(110).

Positive Notion of Marital Life:

Sits is a house wife, her husband Mahadevan was a successful business executive. He allowed himself to be the raw material in Sita’s hand to be shaped into any form she wanted because Mahadevan found it easier to yield than to assert. She smothered Aannapurna with her generosity, sanded her out and emerged as “dignified in triumph”. She would protect the institution of marriage at all costs even if it is empty of passionate love. Sita as a wonderful supporting wife she used to calculate thinks for success of a household desires. Mahadevan was a picture of reticence, his heart distant from mundane
life, in dreams and folklore. When he was no more, Sita burns her dream with all his unfinished papers even before his body is burned. Driven to material success by Sita, he lives and dies alone, not sharing even his last struggle with her.

The characteristic of Sita’s can be easily compared with Gandhari’s story in Mahabharata. Both were symbol of pride, self-denial, and even anger. The photo of Sita holding the veena like Saraswati that prompts the significance of Gandhari. She loved her husband and blind folded her eyes. Gandhari sacrificed everything for her husband. Like Gandhari, Sita also sacrificed her art of veena and supported her husband, Mahadevan. According to Simone De Beauvoir the subjectivity of women as : “Women must ‘dream through the dream of men’ (48). Her merciless crushes on Mahadevan’s passion for folklore and pressurize him to become a successful family man, gentle father and respectful husband. It is the recognition of the latent importance of the seemingly powerless position that enables her to subvert the assigned role and emerge as head of the family.

Sita created a vicious cycle of dependency where she needs others to live her life vicariously. But others are dependent on her because she was a strong commanding presence in their lives and they had no sense of direction without her. Ironic is that Sita thinks of a “life devoted to being the ideal woman” (TFN 107) as “soiled” and undesirable but is taking all efforts to make her life appear to be ideal and also make a similar like for her daughter. The dichotomy of action versus belief is at the root of Sita’s oppression. It is neither possible for her to act out her beliefs nor believed truly in her actions. Loss of inner harmony was the direct result and what follows suit was an attempt to put down the harmony in Mahadevan’s life. Mahadevan too is forced to live two lives-one internally and the other externally.
The End of a Fairytale Beginning in *The Thousand Faces of Night*:

Devi, the protagonist of the novel, had a very good intention to marry, but her life was ripe for disillusionment when she walked into an arranged marriage, at once alien and familiar. First impression is the best impression as the proverb says, Devi is highly impressed by Mahesh’s frankness when he talks of his expectations of marriage. Devi soon realized the reality of life. A woman can be a daughter, wife, mother and mother-in-law not as a heroine in her marital life. The lonesome life of Devi reminded her of grandmother stories and Baba evoke mixed responses in life. The stories of puranas were retard her progress, some envelope Devi in complacent comfort and stifle her with difficult role models. When Baba narrates his stories Devi slowly became a sceptical adult aware of the golden traps in marriage. She was moved on her childhood stories with an adult awareness and consciousness of wife who did not graduate to motherhood.

Devi was under the care of Sita till her marriage. Even after Devi’s marriage to Mahesh, Sita explained the enjoyment of motherhood. But Devi did not care about the importance of marital life. In fact Sita’s words,

All through the ages, my dear Devi, Amma wrote, women have sought the deep content that comes with motherhood. When I held you helpless in my protecting arms, when you first smiled at my face bent over years, when you lisped that precious word Amma, what vistas of joy opened up before me! Mahesh writes that you are tired, depressed. Would you like to take a holiday in Madras? Or we could go somewhere cool and fresh, just you and I, and talk about everything, your plans for the future, as wife and perhaps mother? (TFN 86)
Even her grandmother through her mythical stories explained the importance of motherhood in a woman life. “Motherhood is more than the pretty picture you see of a tender woman bent over the baby she is feeding at her breast. A mother has to walk strange and tortuous paths” (TFN 88). Through the stories and words of her mother Devi came to the different version of motherhood stage.

Mahesh comes across as a rude person even when he likes to have a child. He is not ready to spend time with his wife yet he expects news of pregnancy from Devi. She remains “all bones and flat stomach” (TFN 86) Mahesh behaviour is that of an egoistic person. The fact that he thought there is no problem with his body and it is a mistake of Devi one to consult a gynaecologist. Childlessness can leave a woman utterly powerless. Devi at last found a route for rebellion when Mahesh, the giver, says “I want you to have my child” (TFN 74). Devi was innocent but silent and strong. The sterilized instruments that would send her to a whole fertility course and the wonder working hormones will not made her “an efficient receptacle for motherhood” (TFN89). The rejection of Mahesh’s sperm was the unconscious but important step to the assertion of herself. Mahesh may possess her body but cannot direct and control the function of it. The unread story of Baba tells the anger of women. Here Devi showed her revenge. She taught about Kritya, which means

A ferocious woman who haunts and destroys the house in which women are insulted. She burns with anger, she spits fire. She sets the world ablaze like Kali shouting in hunger. Each age has its Kritya. In the age of Kali,... each household shelters a Kritya (TFN 69-70).
The Kritya reaction as a possibility was what Baba tried to keep away from Devi as a lethal weapon kept away from children. However it was the unread Kritya story that appeals to Devi the most. Baba tried to pull out the stubborn weeds from the garden. But Devi decided to grow a garden of weeds that could survive against all odds.

Devi leaves the oppressive house on Jacaranda road. The huge house with its unfriendly empty rooms, dusty photographs of unremembered people, unused shelves sheltering cockroaches and lizards and a visiting husband had absolutely no promise of life. It can enshrine no true motherhood. It is a place from where people flee; Parvati, Baba and Devi. It is the wild growth and the gulmohar flowers in the garden outside that allures and offers fresh air. The irresistible music of Gopal, rich in cowherd charm may be a symbolic call for confrontation of oneself. To start with, it was a romantic fascination for the unavailable, a longing for a union that defies social sanction. It promises escape from the institutional trap, an escape verging on fantasy. Devi was quite caught up in illusion of womanhood and her knight Gopal served as the deliverer. Gopal was a great performer as a lover too. He had provided all excitement, travel and importance that Mahesh failed in marital life. Gopal referred to Devi as his inspiration and supported her through whispers and leers. But typical of Devi, once she has something or someone, she lost interest in the same. Gopal can fulfil only her temptations. She cannot do something that can match up with the mythical women. She left Gopal as she had earlier left Mahesh like a coward.

By stepping out of marriage Devi dismissed the voice of reason represented by both Mahesh and Sita. An identity achieved through relationships can never provide fulfilment. Baba’s statement “Whatever is dependent on others is misery; whatever rests
on oneself is happiness” (TFN68) the proclamation correctly conveys the meaning for her. She realized that her position as mistress was not very different from that of a wife. Neither of them offer enough space for her.

**Exploration of Marriage in The God of Small Things:**

R.K. Dhawan observed Arundhati Roy’s uniqueness of writing style as,

She is young, charming, rich and famous. She is the writer of the mega wonder novel. “The God of Small Things” a writer whose novel is authentically Indian as is her writing style. One who has put India on the map of English-Speaking world? She is Arundhati Roy, the novelist is an extraordinary. (1)

This book has various themes, number style and techniques were used by Arundhati Roy. In this novel marital relationship is one of the main themes of her writing style. In human relationship, marital relationship is main part of human life. The primary idea of the book is human relationship, particularly on man-woman relationship how far it has used by the author to maintain the successful relationship in the family surroundings. Arundhati Roy presents a various way of tragic scene in her works. A close study of the novel shows the three generations of the Ayemenem house. Love is the prime pillar of all the human relationships, but here in the Ayemenem house, remains only an unfulfilled dream or just a fleeting experience for most of them. The Indian familial urges of the individual.

Marriage which seals the bond of love turns out to be a social obligation, which has to be lived through for the generation which vows by the family
code. However, the succeeding generation is governed by no such rigid ethical code and finds a loveless marriage a burden fit to be shrugged off. The trend continues in the third generation when marriage breaks off even before it develops into a family (78).

The novel, *The God of Small Things*, gives only a brief glimpse into the marital life of John Ipe family. Out of seven children of John Ipe only two children, Baby Kochamma and Pappachi focused on the family relationship which also fails to set an example. This novel can be a fertile ground for feminist critics. It amply demonstrated that women did not merit much freedom in the family code of the Ayemenem House. But here the novelist viewed as a unique house. It has “Love Laws (that) lay down who should be loved and how and how much” (GST 177) in that house children used to play. Male dominance in the family matters sheltered their voice in personal matter like marriage. This is the one of the reason, why Baby Kochamma had lived the life of a spinster even at the age of eighty three. Her love for Father Mulligan continues even after she achieves the status of a grandmother. The life of spinsterhood or unfulfilled yearning for love, accounts for her treacherous nature.

**Life Style of Pappachi and Mammachi:**

However, Marriage does not ensure happiness in the Ayemenem household. Ayemenem house is a respectable family joined with high social position but remains from male chauvinism. The novel recounts in detail the relationship of Pappachi and Mammachi, his wife. Naturally Pappachi, though he was an entomologist and have been a respectable position, Pappachi never lived his life as an educated person rather than he was mended for cruelty his in all action towards the family members, particularly towards
his wife and daughter, Ammu. In her growing years...relations (GST180). Till his death
Pappachi was not changed at the same time his family members and the society are
helpless to change his character. Pappachi not only made physical torture even his mental
cruelty was too strong in all action. He was at pains to project himself as the neglected
husband. Usually the husband is the superior or head of the decision maker of the family.
So his role of torture is meant for inside the house but here Pappachi’s action and cruelty
is viewed outside the veranda of the house, where whole village people known the
Mammachi’s silence and way of accepting the life as it is. Pappachi sat outside of the
veranda and sewing his buttons on his shirts that are missing. Though Mammachi was
ready to do all the work by herself, Pappachi made his mind to insult his wife. He sat
outside and is viewed by all the visitors of his home. S.T. MohiniKhot says, “Pappachi’s
cold-blood cruelty is all the more terrible for the almost deadpan way in which it is
narrated as an incontrovertible fact of their life, which they are helpless to change” (214).

Mammachi lived in Ayemenem and suffers because of the narrow confines that
define her own world. The real name of Mammachi is Soshamma, but Rahel and Estha
know her Mammachi, a victim of prolonged physical and mental violence. Mammachi
had number of marks on her head. Pappachi used his brass vase to beat his wife, always
she used to get beating regularly from of her husband. As the day passed his beating also
increase directly in proportion to the degree of success. She achieves in her
entrepreneurial project, Paradise Pickles and Preserves. Mammachi was a silent sufferer
for many years. Mammachi accepted all the cruelty and torture in the hands of Pappachi.
Though Mammachi belongs to the first generation they believe that, whatever husband
said and gave it should be accepted by the wife. The husband is like a god and nothing to
say against his words and action. So Mammachi takes the words as it is and lived with her husband. She had weals and bumps on her head as evidence of beating by her husband. “Every night he beats her with a brass flower vase. The beating weren’t new, which was new was only the frequency with which they took place” (GST47).

Mammachi was a silent woman, wife and loveable mother of a son. She was the representation of a typical Indian wife who was always beaten up and looked down by her husband, Pappachi. Her character is symbolic representation of the harsh reality regarding the place of a women in the patriarchal set up of India. Mammachi belongs to the older generation, to a group such Indian woman humiliated who graciously accepted their struggle and adjusts with her fate. Mammachi was completely and exploited by her husband, still she strived to preserve, protect and care for the thrilling notions of her husband’s needs but she was not known for her own needs.

The psychological set up of Pappachi suffered and increased because of his bad humour. His life experience did not bring him a good nature throughout his life. He developed an embittered mind, the repercussion of which marked in his family life. His psychic behaviour made him in different ways, such as ill-treatment, violence and hatred towards the family members particularly torturing his wife, Mammachi. Pappachi failed to cope with the new set up at Ayemenem coincidently he became jealous of his wife’s youth and bodily charm. He was seventeen years older than Mammachi. He is not only jealous of her beauty but also her talent of music and running a business. The man taught that helping and supporting to wife or mother was not considered as a dignity work of a man in the older generation. So Pappachi instead of helping Mammachi, he hates the business of Mammachi. He considered pickle making below the dignity of a
retied government officer’s wife. He resents the attention and regard; she receives from people at Ayemenem and tries to take revenge on her every field. He finds out several pretexts for thrashing her forth and back. Once he got anger and breaks her violin’s bow and throws the broken parts into the river.

Pappachi hated his wife’s achievement in life. Paradise Pickle and Preserves just happens. Mammachi did not have any ambition for a long time to earn money nor did she gone for any professional training course to achieve her aim. It was just an interest of her own. It was merely an extension of her house work. She made pickle at home like any other woman in the house. People prised her pickles and encouraged her. It became an enterprise. At the end she made it one big family kitchen. The men in the family are zero contributors to the successful business. Neither Pappachi nor Chacko supported for Mammachi’s business. As the business developed Chacko appears on the scene, promptly takes over the administrative reins of paradise pickles and informs Mammachi that she was a “Sleeping Partner”. Though Ammu’s contributions was great in the achievement in pickles factory but Chacko always said “It is my factory” never does he say “ours”. According to Indian norms, the property goes neither for son nor for daughter. Later Paradise Pickles factory was closed down because of the complaint.

**Woman as a Social Victim:**

The most and an unbearable violence is, Pappachi rejected all type of communication with his wife. Pappachi, whatever he wants for himinstead of telling to his wife, indirectly says to Baby Kochamma but all the work should be done by Mammachi. According to him this was the worst of all revenge and torture made by Pappachi. Mammachi did not find any kind love and affection her husband. Even the
children Ammu and Chacko found an escape from Pappachi. The lack of love is a primary reason for their children to select and find their own life partners. But their choice also becomes wrong because of their parents. Ammu and Chacko used to see the fights, beating, torture and violence in their house.

Mammachi remained a silent victim her whole life. When Pappachi dies, she even mourns for his death. As a natural wife, Mammaci also felt a definite sense of loss though her husband violent actions. She was a creature of habit, Ammu said Rahel, Mammachi was totally upset because of her husband, Pappachi who was considered to be a valuable person has taken out of her life. She seems to have no realization that she has been deeply wronged. As Mohini Khot says in her article, The Feminist Voice in Arundhati Roy’s *The God of Small Things* “Mammachi has thoroughly internalized the patriarchal definition of woman a as subservient to man, of a wife as one who servers her husband” (GST 215).

As a son Chacko protects his mother from his father. Once Chacko caught his father’s hand while he was beating his wife and ordered to stop beating, that is the time Pappachi cuts Mammachi out of his life, never spoke to her directly. Released from her husband tormentor, she promptly takes up a new protector her son. Pappachi throws her things into son’s room. “She moves her wifely luggage into her son’s room” (GST160). The Indian sage Manu says that a woman should depend on her father, later her husband and finally son. Here in the Mammachi’s life style are same like that of Indian Manu sutra. Mammachi never lived as an independent woman. Her dependence on Chacko became great that when his ex-wife came to visit Chacko. Mammachi and Ammu are established as his standard victims.
Mammachi was actually a successful person in the family but no credit came her way. Her achievement was minimized by making out that her factory is just an extension of her kitchen. Without love and fulfilment Mammachi is able to achieve anything in her life. Here Mammachi’s sacrifice, love, adjustment and willingness to do anything for the sake of her husband are beautifully created by Arundhati Roy. Pappachi failed to understand the feelings of women particularly that of his wife. The lack of love, adjustment and bad temper, without having a very good understanding and unknowing support are the reason for mismatch of husband and wife relationship.

**Marital Frustrations of the Female Characters:**

Arundhati Roy concerns herself with the social predicament of women in India. Life offers little choice for women who yearn for happiness. The childhood days of Ammu, the Protagonist not as good as expected, because of her father. Her father, Pappachi was a well settled man in the Ayemenem society but did not care about anyone in the family. As a man, he knows very well that all the responsibility of decision making and ordering thoughts are his, Pappachi never loved his daughter, Ammu. He never allowed Ammu to attend college education because she was a girl. So he does not saved any money for the future spending in her name. All this made Ammu to take her own decision on life. As a girl child without much exposure she made a wrong choice thinking that escape from Ayemenem or from her father, Pappachi was the best way. Ammu selected her husband as she liked but it was burden for her life. There was no one to support Ammu, to bring her up, though she was a girl. A marriage of convenience can be as disastrous as an arranged marriage. If two individuals belonging to the same community, identical moral code, fail to sail together happily, the relationship forged
between two different communities, runs the risk of being more fragile. The severest below to such marriages came from within the girls own family, as such marriage rarely get parental approval in a traditional Indian set-up like Ayemenem family. The relationship between the Mammachi and Pappachi made Ammu to escape from Ayemenem house not only from her parents but also her whole community. Ammu married a Bengali, whom she accidentally met as a result of such an escape rather than a well-considered decision. She got married to Baba. Within a short term of meeting, her choice of love and marriage finished quickly. If she could get a proper education, there is a way to think about the choice or her life would be saved from drunkard.

He proposed to Ammu five days after they first met, Ammu didn’t pretend to be in love with him. She just weighed the odds and accepted. She thought that anything, anyone at all, would be better than retuning to Ayemenem (GST39).

The marital relationship fails due to lack of love. Couples with unhappiness seem to be fated lot of problems in their marital life. Ammu’s husband was a male chauvinist, drunkard. Ammu thought that, she escaped from Ayemenem and her father Pappachi, but unknowingly she was caught up in the hands of another man in Assam. In the beginning Ammu and Baba had a happy life all the couples had in their life. But the twist had happened in their life. Ammu also used to get beating and suffered a lot. Ammu however, fares better than her mother. Bitter childhood experiences had created rough edges of a rebel in her life. Ammu was not able to undergo all the torture made by her husband. She was totally different from her mother because of the generation gap. She refuses to be a silent sufferer and retaliates violently when her husband’s cruelty exceeded its limits.
Baba thinks that Ammu will agree for his words and orders. But Ammu never accepted her words of Baba rather she threw her relationship with her husband and ran to her own unwelcomed Ayemenem village. The boss dismissed from his job, agrees to the English man’s word and ready to send his wife, Ammu according to the desire of his boss. It was a problem collapsed whole relationship. Mammachi, Ammu are also able to withstand the suffering, violence and even the torture but refused to succumb to immorality against their wishes. This is the reason, Ammu breaks the relationship of Baba and returns back to Ayemenem.

Ammu returned flip side to the native village, no one liked her home coming. Particularly Baby Kochamma, Mammachi and Chacko disliked the arrival of Ammu. Her return to Ayemenem indirectly signifies the end of marriage. The book failed to give a single enthusiastic scene between the husband and wife. Here in the novel man- woman relationship once again turned out to be disastrous. The end of this relationship was sadder since it was solemnized through mutual consent.

**Plotting the Lives of Women Character in Ladies Coupe:**

*Ladies Coupe* is an enlightening attempt to reveal the psychological trauma. It was about five women who talk freely about their personal relationships which ultimately leads to a mutual sensitivity about their needs. The novel is primarily the story of Akhila who was forty-five and a spinster. Being the oldest in a conservative Brahmin family, she was expected to sacrifice her emotions and throttle her bottled up desires at the altar of duty following the death of her father. The insensitivity of her family bogs her down and she developed a keen urge to find whatever little that remains of the real
woman in her, prompting her to undertake a distant journey to Kanyakumari. On the train she found herself in a ladies compartment with five other women. She opened her heart to them just as they do to her.

There is old Janaki married for forty years to a man absolutely who adores her. In spite of her mood swings, Janaki cannot understand Akhila because she taught it was unnatural for a woman wanting to stay alone without a husband for a prop. Then there is Margaret Shanthi, a gold medallist in chemistry, married to a narcissistic husband, whom she gradually grows to hate. At one point, blind love for Paulraj had compelled her to abort child only because Margaret thought it was the right thing to do. As their marriage grows, so does his indifference towards her, making her toy with the idea of revenge. This Margaret did by cooking sumptuous meals for him which he cannot resisted thereby reducing him to a caricature of his former self and her revenge was complete. Prabha Devi, is a typical example of a woman who loosed her identity and her sense of self-worth several years down the marriage time. Marikolanthu whose character is the most interesting, had suffered personal anguish more than all of them put together. Marikolanthu planned for future came to a halt after she was raped at the age of eighteen. She forsaken her son soon after his birth, unwilling to acknowledge his place in her life, and was ostracized by own brothers. For a brief period, Marikolanthu became the lover of the mistress Sujata Akka and her husband Sridhar Anna much misunderstood. She was asked to leave. Marikolanthu’ perpetrator later died with Murugesen for her bitterness. Later she accepted son, Muthu. As for Akka, Akhils gave the love of a younger man, Hari, for fear of social contempt. Now she reduced a younger man to prove to herself that this sort of relationship does not matter. Akhila desired and called Hari, wondering if he would still had affection for her after so many years.
The three women Janaki, Margaret Shanthi and Prabha Devi from the ladies compartment looked marriage from totally opposite perspectives. They are tolerant in their married lives but gradually Margaret Shanthi changed her life according to her will while Janaki remains comfortable being submissive all through her life and Prabha Devi lived an acquiescent life and seeks happiness. ‘Marriage’ is usually considered as a destiny traditionally offered to women by society and this is clearly depicted by Anita Nair in her work *Ladies Coupe*.

**Mutual Understanding between Husband and Wife:**

Janaki, an elderly lady, was an ideal wife, submissive, tolerant and ready to sacrifice. She was confused and could not understand that though she had not even spoken to the man until their first night together, it is suddenly okay even if he undress her and as her aunties in the family said, it is the solemn duty of every woman to please their husband and be submissive to whatever he does. In spite of the series of adjustment by Janaki, she was not recognised as equal to her husband, Prabhakar. For Janaki, marriage provides greater fulfilment and happiness than staying unmarried. Janaki recalled her marriage which took place according to traditional customs, “Thirs was an arranged marriage; the horoscopes matched, the families liked each other and they were considered perfectly suited for each other. Janaki didn’t know what to expect of marriage” (LC 24).

As per the custom of Indian traditional a woman should always prepared for marriage. Janaki groomed by her mother and aunts to perfect her in all the “skills of marriage-cooking and cleaning, sewing and pickling ... she wasn’t expected to know what it really meant to be married” (LC 25). Her aunts main intension was to advise her to hold
the strings of marriage no matter whatever is the altitude of the man. They said “That if
she didn’t give him what he wanted, he would go looking for it elsewhere” (LC 25).
So Janaki learned to conquer her revulsion, match her husband’s caresses and discovered
the pleasure hidden in togetherness within weeks after her marriage.

Janaki was well cared for and adored by her husband. Being married for forty
years, she lived a life with a man who made her feel comfortable and happy in all aspects
of life to the extent that, Janaki was unable to think or to act on her own. When Janaki
gave birth to a son she feels proud like that of a perfect wife. She had fulfilled the duty of
a good wife according to the Indian Manu, the Hindu law giver. Each time “they looked
at the child and saw themselves in him. He was an extension of their images” (LC 28).
Janaki and Prabhakar’s married life is fulfilled to a large extend by their son whom both
are proud of.

At parties they were the golden couple. When she was ready to leave, he
knew it would rise from his chair, setting aside the drink he had been nursing
all evening. She would smile and murmur polite words of farewell while he
pumped various hands and laughed through his leave –taking (LC 29).

Thiers is an understanding of each other’s needs and their strong blend was forged
over a long period by the husband who pampers. Janaki said all men, even Prabhakar
grew bald a little but still insisted on checking the door after the door locked when she was
in. She also stated that, “The beating of his heart slowed him down, sometimes it crashed in
his ears, but he didn’t forget his place as a husband, father and provider” (LC 31). After the
forty years of married life, its marriage that filled her with satisfaction, security, happiness
and pride. This revealed when she spoke to her co passenger Akhila, “Tell me, do you know of any other couple like us? Our son is well settled. We are secure and healthy. We live in our own house. After forty years together, what more can one ask for?” (LC 31)

To maintain a perfect companionship and friendship between the couples are trust, mutual understanding, love communication, and acceptance which bring domestic peace to their marital relationship. Prabhakar gave a helping hand in the household chores whenever Janaki need it.

A synchronized performance that year of practice had fine-tuned to perfection. He chopped. She cooked. He washed the dishes. She dried and stacked them. She hung out the clothes to dry. He brought them in. She turned down the bedclothes. He switched off the lights (LC 33).

This kind of love made the woman absolutely dependent on the man. She was unable to do a single thing in the house without his help. When their daughter—in-law, Jaya talk of her own mother she said, “Even since Papa died, Mamma has had to do everything by herself. But she says that has made her a stronger woman than most” (LC 34). The hint made Prabhakar defend his wife and he said,

just because she needs me to open the mixer jar or chop onions for her, you mustn’t think mummy is a weak woman... she might seem delicate and cosseted to you, but she is a strong woman. Mummy is very capable when she wants to be (LC 34).

Janaki did not worry about the space ‘she should get in marriage because she takes the role of a wife for granted, as she has no expectations from it’. There is no
marital discard as such, but certain aspects made her feel uneasy, especially when Prabhakar referred to her as ‘mummy’ she wanted to scream,

Don’t call me mummy. I’m not your mummy. I am your wife. Remember, you used to call Me Januonce. Wife. Darling. Sweetheart. And if you find it hard saying those, call me woman, but don’t call me mummy” (LC 34).

Whenever their son, Siddharth asked Janaki, “mummy, when daddy is gone, how will you, stay by herself in that huge house?” (LC 35). Janaki was petrified. The very thought of her husband’s death and being no more filled her eyes with tears and a fear creeps into her. She was unable to think of being “Alone, alone” (LC 35). Friction developed between mother and son after the marriage of Siddharth. She found some transformation in his character.

Siddharth told his mother that Janaki had spoiled his family and his dad. He blamed her for behaving like a princess wanting everything to be done by others, in her own way. Siddharth also compares Janaki with his mother -in-law and unkindly asked, “When have you ever thought of anyone but yourself?” (LC 36). This made Janaki to feel bad and that indirectly she was responsible for her trouble and suffering. Prabhakar hearing all this came from his room and said in an ice-cold voice, “Janaki, pack your things. We are leaving right now. You don’t have to take any of this nonsense from him. How dare he talk to you in that tone of voice”(LC 36). This concern and understanding shown by her husband helped Janaki regains her strength. It relieved her sorrows and pain. Siddharth blamed his father for making Janaki the way she was. However Prabhakar was not ready to listen to his son’s words. Instead he wanted his son to apologize to his mother saying, “all if blame to Janaki and she feels a sense of
belonging and trust in Prabhakar’s strength. Their relationship grows stronger as the years pass by they rely on each other for comfort, support, love and care. Janaki ever expressed her love for him through words in spite of living with him for so long. For the first time she whispered, “I am tired of sharing you with everyone, I want you to myself ”. (LC 38) The warmth between them was felt and understood by the concern they have for each other. Their love for each other is strong, true, and pure and gains its strength in the togetherness of years. Prabhakar, was an understanding husband who respected Janaki’s individuality and feelings. Janaki also accommodates her body and mind to marriage and what it offers to her in life. From a wife to a mother to grandmother, Janaki’s life actions revolved around the necessitated care of her husband.

Thus Prabhakar and Janaki isthe couple portrayed as the “Golden Couple”. Rachel Bari observes the nature of a woman as, “unprotesting and self – sacrificing nature is typical of the ideal traditional Indian wife and mother”. (44) Prabhakar, was a provider, supporter and caretaker who loves his wife and son, he was an ideal husband and father. Married for so long, they are still in the process “of hand holding hand, hear linking heart heading in the direction of a successful marriage and everlasting love” (ibid).

In submissive Nature:

Margaret Shanthi, the chemistry teacher in Ladies Coupe is exposed as a wife, who hates the husband whom she once adored and worshipped. She had gone through a number of physical, mental and spiritual crises. Margaret Shanti’s love for Ebe her husband, was deeply devoted and affectionate on nature. She was a highly imaginative and emotional individual but Ebe was a middling kind of man, prosaic and phlegmatic. Thus they are temperamentally poles apart which accounts for their being unable to forge
a harmonious marital relationship. She kept on changing her attitude and mind till she found happiness and dignity. All her expectations from marriage filled her heart and soul as she stepped into her marital life with Ebe. Like all newly married woman says ‘yes’ to whatever husband says and does things to please him, she taught chemistry in Ebe’s school where he was the head. She was a wife always should be loyal, faithful, putting in more efforts than him to make her marriage successful. She proudly says, “I was marrying the man I had fallen in love with and not someone picked for me simply because he was suitable” (LC 103).

Everyone in her family including herself praised Ebe. She felt Ebe was a strong and capable man. Margaret wanted everyone to love Ebe. Her family loved him as much as she loved him. She visualized her life with him and says, “We are going to be so happy together (LC 103)”. Being so drunk with her feelings for Ebe, all she wanted to do is to be with him, please him and show in thousand way her love for him. She described the effort of love thus. “Love is a colourless, volatile liquid. Love ignites and burns. Love leaves no residue—neither smoke nor ash. Love is a poison masquerading as the spirit of wine” (LC 104).

However, Ebe treated her as someone of lesser importance, and that was his mistake. Although she was educated and employed as a teacher and marries a man of her choice after falling in love at first sight, she was very much dejected by Ebe’s altitude towards her husband. Ebe loved her; but did not recognize her individuality. After one and a half years of married life, she discovered that her pregnancy. She felt so excited and happy about the baby but Ebe on the other hand withdraws himself. She was extremely shocked when Ebe says, “Margaret I’m not so sure if we should have a baby now” (LC 104).
The feelings of being alienated in her own home sprouts when Ebe paid little attention to Margaret. This intensifies the friction between the two. He dominated her in every way. Although she was terrified she agreed for an abortion because she was so much in love with him. Margaret only wanted to please him and ready to do the sacrifice. She followed all his dictates from cutting her long hair to giving up her doctoral research and taking up B.Ed. Margaret and made her accept the abortion, thus causing a rift in their relationship. Their different viewpoints lead to fights. The temperamental incompatibility that characterizes their relationship brings about an unbridgeable gulf between them causing acute mental agony. All her quest for true love ends in disaster when she realize that she had married an insensitive and unsympathetic man for whom love is only physical. He is ignorant of the emotional or spiritual dimensions of love.

Ebe devoted all his time to his work, and spares no leisure time for this wife who hankers for fulfilment in love through an emotional attachment. Margaret’s marriage was a total failure, all her romantic expectations leads to terrible disappointments and disharmony in her marital relationship. After the abortion, she felt a new sense of love. “Love demands you drink of it. And then love burns the tongue, the senses. Love blinds. Love maddens. Love separates reason from thought. Love kills. Love is methyl alcohol pretending to be ethyl alcohol.” (LC 111).

Margaret tried to manage the whole household and even the school activities, Ebe never praised for hard work. He used to found fault with her. His words and altitude made her feel very inferior, an insignificant creature, Margaret thought Ebe was responsible for shattering her dreams of happiness in marriage and she wanted to be free from her terrifying trap, by calling off their marriage. Gradually, Ebe’s nature made her
feel depressed, the charm of marital bliss soon evaporates in her and his self – importance. He wanted everyone obey his orders, and listen to no one except himself, he felt all the power is with him. In spite of her losing her own life partner, she led an unhappy life. Margaret also forgot the ambition to pursue higher studies dispute being a gold medallist in chemistry.

On the advice of her mother she clings onto her married life and begins to feel she has to face the situation courageously. Her mother advices, it is normal to quarrel with one’s husband. Every day won’t be the same when you’ve been married to a man for years. There will be bad days and there will be good days. The trick is to remember the good days. “And like I have said many times before, it was a woman’s responsibility to keep the marriage happy. Men have so many preoccupations that they might not have the time or the inclination to keep the wheels of a marriage oiled” (LC 112).

But Ebe constantly found fault with Margaret be it her body or her poor culinary skills. He neglects her totally. All that beauty and romance disappeared from her life. She was so disenchanted that she gave the idea to please Ebe or look attractive for him. She was disgusted with their mechanical relationship. She suffered in silence, and found revolt in peace. Her suppression spoiled the relationship with her husband. She encouraged herself to get happiness through eating. Soon the excess eating shows on her body, whereas Ebe who loved food was on strict diet control and exercise. However, in spite of his strict routine daily life, Ebe had one weakness – food. He loves eating- the richer the food, the better he liked it. This weakness of Ebe became a tool in Margaret’s hand. He depended on Margaret for this. Margaret reflected on all the years she had swallowed her sense of pride, and the good and noble things in her life which Ebe had
destroyed. She felt shattered when she taught of her child who dies before it had a soul. She felt nothing was left for her to dream. All that she valued was ruined by person whom she had once loved with all her heart and soul. Finally, she became frustrated with her married life and decided to take revenge on Ebe by making him dependent. This was evident in her words,

I, Margaret Shanthi did it with the sole desire for revenge. To erode his self-esteem and shake the very foundations of his being. To rid this world of a creature who if allowed to remain the way he was, slim, lithe and arrogant, would continue to harvest sorrow with a single-minded joy” (LC 96).

Margaret decided to take revenge on Ebe in order to forget the unpleasant memories of her married life. This was evident where she seeks pleasure in eating but later showers love, sex and food on Ebe. She watched the goldfish twice a day to reduce the stress in her mind because it was advocated by Ebe. While watching the goldfish she noticed a dead goldfish. It was the male fish James, floating with his belly split open. She foreseen the fate of her husband, Ebe. After a mutual relationship that night, Margaret says,

I rose at dawn and rushed into the kitchen. Your time begins now Ebe, I told a sleeping Ebe. Your time begins with this breakfast. Puris fried in ghee and a potato, peas and cauliflower kroma. Two fried eggs sunny side up and a tall glass of cold creamy milk into which I stirred two big spoons of sugar (LC 133).

From then onwards she gave a big breakfast, lunches, dinners. He ate and eat relishing very meal. She waited patiently and in almost a year, Ebe grown fatter. She was proud to see her culinary skills working on Ebe, “The breath shortened and the pace
slowed. Folds appeared around the neck. A second chin. A belly that jiggled”. (133) Not only Ebe’s appearance but his character also changed. Ebe was not the old tyrant anymore and limits himself in all the activities in school as well as in home. Margaret uttered these words with a sense of achievement and pride,

Ebe slowly became a fat man. As easy man, man who no longer needed to coterie or deface books. A man whose fondness for eating blunted his razor edge. Since I was the one to appease his appetite, he sought me more and more tantalized his appetite for food and occasionally for sex (LC 134).

Inspite of the difficulties and obstacles caused by the patriarchal nature of Ebe, Margaret endeavours to channelize her emotions in a different way because of her strong urge to survive. The process of change was gradual and effective. Their marriage was never of minds or hearts, only bodies. Frustrated with the physicality of marital life, Margaret strived to achieve her true identity. In doing so she gained her lost happiness. She became pregnant for the second time and a baby girl was born. She was at peace with herself now. She now knew how to balance the chemical equation of their marital relationship. “When you add water to sulphuric acid, it splutters at first. But soon it loses its strength; it loses its bite. The trick is to know when to add it, and how much?” (LC 134) says Margaret. After suffering silently for years Margaret found a unique way of getting back on her own fact. Margaret tried and finally succeeded in their struggle to realize herself and achieved domestic peace, but now wonders at what cost, when there is no mutual care and concern for one another in marriage, and one partner began to dominate the other, all communications break down between the couple. This break down
was destructive to the institution of marriage. The words of Margaret “God didn’t make Ebnezer Paulraj a fat man. I did” (LC 96) depicted her as a woman in discreet rebellion against her husband’s tyranny. Kishore utters on Margaret as

understanding the emotional intelligence called women, says Margaret may not be an example of a typical woman in an Indian household, but she depict an image of those women with emotions and .... desires for gratifying a dictating husband. Thus, Margaret the thwarted female, who loved her husband, but could not tolerate her husband’s tyrannical behaviour, becomes revengeful attains her self esteem and happiness through revenge (56).

A New Sense on Marital Life:

Prabha Devi, in the novel *Ladies Coupe*, a woman who tried to gain social recognition, to attain a sense of identity and sexual fulfilment throughout her life. Prabha Devi clung on to the traditional aspects of being a typical home maker and at the same time she seeks to gain an identity and a meaningful life by overcoming fear. Prabha Devi, was a pampered, well brought up girl, the only daughter among four sons. Her father disapproved of her birth because he felt a daughter was a nuisance. But her mother who sees in Prabha a replica of herself was pleased to have someone to leave her recipes and jewellery. She convinced her husband by saying that “We have four sons. A daughter can do no harm. Besides, when it is time for her to be married, you can choose a family that will aid your business interests” (LC 169). This made the father accept the baby and he takes care to educate her in a convent. At the age of eighteen, he searched for a groom from a reputed family. Her family was against his decision to wed Prabha Devi to
Jagadeesh, the only son and heir of a prosperous diamond merchant. Its only Prabha Devi’s mother who was saddened by the news. She consoled herself by saying, “Jagadeesh was good looking and smart; his family pedigree was excellent and her daughter was lucky to marry into such a fine family” (LC 171).

Prabha Devi thus enters into married life not knowing exactly what it means. She was typical example of a woman who loosed her identity and sense of self-worth several years down the marriage line. She spent all her life waiting for others; for a groom to make her father happy in business; for the groom to come home each night as a typical, traditional housewife, for her children to grow up for someone all her life. In the beginning of her married life. “She felt a huge swell of emotions – love, fear, hope, expectations ... she had been a wife for less than a day. Then she waited.”( LC172).

For the next many years, all what she does is to wait and pass her life in a blur of insignificant days. She discovers that she has become a woman. Deepthi, V.S. says,

Prabha Devi is a woman who has her own opinions and plans for her life. A woman who goes out of routine to make her life interesting, who likes to be the way she is completely assured of her identity, and knows what she wants and what she does not like (7).

Prabha Devi was a woman who was confident and content with what she was clearly noticed when Jagadeesh, her husband takes her with him to New York on a business trip. She was left dumbfounded at the confidence of western women. She decided to give herself a modern look. She started to wear western clothes and high heels. Jagadeesh fears this change in her. Her intension was not to have a baby and the explanation she gives him regarding the various ways in which pregnancy can be
avoided, shocks Jagadeesh and makes him feel “for the hundred time, he wished he had never taken her with him on that trip abroad. She had come back a completely changed person” (LC 179). Her imagination was ignited by the assertive and self-confident way women walk in New York and she seeks sexual liberation in an extra marital liaison. When people shoot admiring looks at Prabha Devi, she pretended not to notice. She attracted attention wherever she goes and proud to reveal that she was young, beautiful, and desirable and she often says with pride, “How lucky I am to be me” (LC 179). But this kind of change in Prabha brought a distance between them. There was a rift in their relationship. She avoids Jagadeesh’s advances to a relationship and assumes her view to be right until her body sends wrong signal to Pramod her husband’s friend. When Pramod was apparently unaffected by her charms, she made an extra effort to attract his attention. But when he comes on too strong to her and approached her when she was alone, with full of passion and lust, she withdraws herself and realizes her fault. Priyanka Singh says, Prabha Devi decides she would revert to being a coy, dutiful wife. She becomes a loving wife and a mother of a son and a daughter. She possesses a great sense of happiness and this altitude brings their family together. The marital relationship is once again strengthened and Jagadeesh feels a sense of pride within himself and utters “she was a good wife and an excellent mother. What more could a man ask for?” (184).

Their marriage was a peaceful one with abundant love, affection and understanding, sharing and waiting. Prabha and Jagadeesh relished their marital life with total acceptance and a healthy understanding relationship. Jagadeesh patiently waited even when she refused to have a baby in the early stage of their marriage. He gave
respect to her feelings and opinions. This shows how the mutual understanding between them is resumed. He did not prohibit Prabha Devi from wearing western clothes, dressing up herself or beautifying herself, or making friends. But, though she now experiences freedom in her marital life, she still feels a sense of loss somewhere because of the routine household chores that makes her feel incapable of achieving anything in her life, her decision to abide by her parents -in-law and her responsibility towards her family.

When life goes back to its dull drudgery, she decided to do something out of the routine to make her life interesting. One day she went to the pool and watched it shine in its beauty mirroring the sky. She felt that it is beckoning her to come in. Prabha steps into it and feels that water desires to possess her. She had never known anything like this before, and she decided to learn to swim, because it metaphorically, gave her a sense of achievement. Prabha wished to express what she felt to someone but she wants to keep it a secret. Jagadeesh would neither approve her decision.

Prabha secretly learns swimming all by herself. This altitude shows that she was a woman who was capable of deciding and planning for her life. She was also a woman who knew what to do and what not to do. She took seven days to learn to stay afloat. The seventh day, Prabha Devi rested. That night she felt a tiny fist of desire unfurl. A flowering of senses of feeling that never ends in her life. A passion tinged with recklessness that made her press the line of her body against her husband’s. Jagdeesh, half asleep, felt the warmth of her body against his. A sensuality ripe and about to explode. For so long, there had been none of that between them. When Jagdeesh wanted to, they coupled quickly and quietly. For him, a mere satiation of a bodily need. For her, a dutiful acceptance of her role in his life (LC 194).
All the year through their married life, she knew only a sense of fear. This fear of what would happen if things do not work out the way she wants them to happen constantly drags her confident spirit down even in her relationship with Jagadeesh. What would happen if she let Jagadeesh know that she wanted to make love. Would he be repelled by the nakedness of her hunger? Would he turn away? Would he lose his respect for her? But she had discovered that desire spawns desire; fulfilment begets fulfilment. A kiss for a kiss. A caress for a caress. What one gives comes back manifold (LC 195).

But now she attains total confidence and understanding that this is the only way to stay afloat and lead a peaceful and meaningful life. Her ability to conquer fear helps her to view life differently and bridge her marital relationship. Thus in spite of all ups and downs in their relationship, Prabha Devi and Jagadeesh showed immense patience, acceptance and mutual understanding throughout their life which brings harmony for even in their marital relationship.

**Pre-marital Relationship:**

In a pre-marital relationship, an individual is attracted to the opposite sex for various reasons like longing for comfort, intimacy, infatuation, curiosity, suppressed emotions and sexual obsession. Both youngsters and adults may indulge in pre-marital relationships. This part of the study intends to examine the pre-marital relations used by Githa Hariharan and Anita Nair.

Akhila in *Ladies Coupe* whose life had never been in her control, was a spinster. She was a daughter, sister, aunt and the sole breadwinner of her family after the death of her father. Akhila was deprived of the opportunity of getting married and having a family of her own because her family was dependent on her. She had to shoulder all the
responsibilities and facing all experiences and challenges that the world brings in everybody’s life. Akhila encountered new experiences and relationships in her whole life span. Like all working women, she faced the problems of male harassment during the peak hours while travelling to and fro from work. Akhila found no way. She tries to suppress her emotions and desires constantly. However Akhila’s inner urges to shake off her stupor and personal stagnation was mirrored in her dreams. She preferred to dismiss as accident the experience on the bus where “a hand brushed against her waist” (LC 139).

When Akhila felt again she permitted her emotions to rule her and she “Akhila stood there, willing enough, and let the hand send a thousand messages to her almost dead verve ends; wake up, wake up”( LC 139). Akhila’s resilience surfaces when she began to break the boundary of her personal space and lets in freshness and newness in the form of Hari, into her life. They became friends, although Hari was much the same age as her younger brother. Akhila and Hari began to spend time together to talk, walk and eat. Like colleagues they share all matters frustration in their job likes and dislikes and moves. “Slowly he began to fill Akhila’s every thought and waking moment” (LC 14). Their relationship gradually strengthens with mutual sharing, understanding. It flowers into a liberal man-woman relationship. He was frank with her and tells her to stop treating him like a younger brother. He says that “you should start seeing me as a man. As a man who is interested in you and in love with you” (LC 144). Akhila longed to see Hari and be with him but she did not allow herself to get his telephone number or address yet she was so involved with Hari that her eagerness to see him and spend time with Hari was because of her loneliness and no one was there to ask her about the desire for a shared future.
Akhila longed for companionship so her innocent relationship with Hari gradually changes into serious affairs. She was very happy about a shoulder to cry on, a listening ear or word of encouragement and appreciation. When Akhila received care, concern, attention, respect, interest and other things missing in her life from Hari, they move several steps closer to an affair. Akhila tells herself that relationship is harmless, that she was not doing anything wrong, its just a friendship. They found peace, satisfaction and comfort in each other. Once when they are stopped by the policeman and questioned Hari says Akhila is “My life” (LC 148). They spend most of the time together, loving each other brings delight to both. “She sometimes wishes, they could go away and spend a night together” (LC 149).

Akhila and Hari planned to marry one day but Hari had a younger sister to be married off and so he asks her to wait she is able to understand his problem. On a few occasions Akhila tried to tell him what he means to her but his love was an uncomplicated feelings that needs neither explanation nor reasoning. She always gives in to him, for the weight of Hari’s love was such. Akhila’s emergence as an autonomous individual may not be written the sacred parameters of the institution of marriage caught in the swirl of passionate love, she did not see sex demeaning the body, rather in an expression of love that is intense and overpowering. She pays scant attention whether her mother objects to her going on an office tour with her colleagues. She planned to spend a day with Hari, office was a remedy for her escape. Akhila thinks, “That night they made love for the first time. Proper adult love and not all those tentative fumbling that had been the sum total of their lovemaking before. It hurt first and then the sheer rapture of being with him swamped her and the hurt dwindled to content” (LC 152).
Although Akhila was so much in love with Hari she decided to call off their affair because of her constant fear that she would age before he did and that he would turn away from her and perhaps even regret their relationship. She fears that,

This constant fear that she would age before he did and he would turn away from her. That someday he would regret their relationship, regret having spurned his family to be with her, regret being bound to her when he could have been with someone younger and more suitable. This constant weight of an unbearable love that would destroy everything and leave her with nothing, not even her self-respect (LC 153).

Stella Rose observes that, Akhila does not allow her mind to ponder on marriage. She is convinced that “A woman can live Alone” (LC 46). She did not want to be hemmed in by the institution of marriage which has often been a source of oppression over the centuries. Akhila was in quest of free and harmonious world and she did not want to subjugate her freedom as a woman to the carnal dictates of a man. It was Akhila’s act of and haunted courage that beckons her to take calculated risks in her life. Thomas Doris, states “Akhila who is ‘excluded’ and ‘dislocated’ gradually discovers what life and love are” (LC 50).

At the end of her journey Akhila found answer to her question ‘can a woman live alone’? (LC 21). This experience from her life and her other co-passengers made her decide on the kind of life she would like to lead. So, she stayed at the sea breeze hotel for two days all by herself, unashamed and unabashed. There she encountered a young man on the beach. She causally picks up a conversation with the stranger and thus she made her first move. She liked a new Eve, asserts her individuality with sparkling confidence.
Akhila and the stranger without any spend that night together and having discovered her true self in shared love, she experienced a world of pure sensations without scarifying her independence as a woman; she feels that she has been able to make a life with a man. She thus represents the image of the new Indian woman who can fear or qualms enter into a relationship with a man anchored in mutual concert without any commitment to one another or ending up as a subjugated sex mate and glorified housekeeper. Thus the affairs experienced by Akhila only revealed that she needs constant reassurance that she is attractive and loveable. Her affairs start as a means of making life more interesting and an outlet for her suppressed emotions. Gradually the excitement of sex with someone new and the romantic trimmings that accompany all new relationship seem irresistible to Akhila. Perhaps, it is the desire for attention or to enhance her self-image that Akhila indulged in sexual activities. She seems to use it to fill up an emotional emptiness or to numb her inner pain she sees sex as an escape from her desire. She is so obsessed with it that she has several affairs without any qualms. But in spite of being dauntless Akhila is unable to love another man as she loved Hari. Only in Hari’s love did she find fulfilment. This is perhaps the reason why after her sexual encounter with a total stranger she feels a strong urge to contact Hari.

Marikolanthu in *Ladies Coupe* was a young victim of sexual exploitation. Born in a poor farmer family, suffered a lot because of social and economic containment. Her mother brings her up working as a cook. She shouldered the family responsibility with her mother, after the father’s death. Being young and energetic and cheerful, she planned to live a comfortable and peaceful life. But all her plans for the future are buried by a brutal act of one night. Marikolanthu who was deprived of her early education, was
filled with great hope when she got an offer to work with foreigners in a hospital. She planned to complete her SSLC. However her life had a sudden turn to the road of suffering and depression. Murugesan, a member in the chettiar’s house sports her. On the eve of pongal and the day of Bogi when everyone is burns old things of the past Marikolanthu’s innocent youth and future dreams are burnt like ashes. She was raped by Murugesan and this episode mars her life completely. It was in vain that eighteen years old girl, Marikolanthu pleads before the lusty beast. In a bulling tone, full of male superiority Murugesan asks, “Why are you pretending to be a guileless virgin? I know all about women like you. If the chettiar sons can feast on this body of yours...remember I’m a relative” (LC 239).

Marikolanthu pleas “Let me go... don’t ruin my life” (LC 239) was a hard behaviour of Murugesan. When Marikolanthu became pregnant her mother and other blames her. She learned that neither truth nor the voice of the poor was ever heard. Her mother tries various method to abort the child; but fails. Marikolunthu gave birth to a baby boy and hands him over to her mother. The sight of the baby brings pain to Marikolunthu as she recalls the disastrous night. Savitha Singh says that Marikolunthu adores the child. So she did all odd jobs. The first to take care of mad chettiar Amma. Later Sujata Akka sees Marikolanthu for physical fulfilment in the afternoon. Marikolanthu knew that SujataAkka was not satisfied with the relationship with her husband. Later she understood Sujata Akka that found the touch of a man irksome.

Sujata Akka looked into Marikolanthu eyes Marikolanthu says “I saw a hunger three” (LC 260). This altitude of Sujata Akka reminded Marikolanthu of the lesbian
relationship of Missy.K and Missy.V not averse to their new relationship Marikolanthu says, “I had loved her with my heart for so long; it seemed natural that I love her now with my body; my thwarted dreams and unfulfilled desire” (LC 261).

Marikolanthu was happy being went to Sujata Akka and to preserve the happiness of Sujata Akka. Marikolanthu was ready to welcome Sridhar Anna into her body. She satisfied the bodily desires and appetite of both Sujata Akka and Sridhar Anna. However, she faced humiliation again when Sujata Akka discovered her escapades with Sridhar Anna. She blamed Marikolunthu for seducing her husband and when Marikolanthu confesses and explains “I did it for you,’ I tried to explain.’ I know how much you hated it when he came near you and at the same time I didn’t want you to lose him to another woman” (LC 263). Her struggles are not only against a patriarchal society, Marikolanthu was portrayed as a helpless woman who does not get security, freedom or happiness from any relationship.

In spite of all the difficulties and obstacles caused by the people who utilize her and later abandons her, Marikolanthu was able to endure all sufferings. Her grit to channelize her emotions in the right way in order to survive was admirable. For Marikolunthu life was a continual process of sacrifice, adjustment and compromise. This was indeed true of Marikolanthu’s struggle to stay above the troubled waters. Ultimately her sufferings and failure helped her to transforms her life into a meaningful one with her son, Muthu.

**Post-marital Relationship:**

The extra marital relationship is part of marital life. When the couple did not get satisfied with their partners, they automatically search for another companion in their life. Where they find a new love, affection, freedom, adjustment and an understanding
between each other they automatically search for another companion. According to the Indian society, either the pre- or extra marital life is not considered to be a wealthy or successful marriage. The extra marital relationship takes place when the couple does not have a very good understanding and adjustment in their life. The dislike of pairs, parents benefit of marriage and for many other reason they both get married. Sometime the parent does not permit either their son or daughter to get married as per their own choice. Because they think that the society will not support or accept the love marriage. After marriage the couples either stay alone or live an uncomfortable life with the husband or wife. These are the reason for the extra marital relationship in the human life. Another very fine reason for their extra marital life is their loneliness, alienation, misunderstanding, unfaithful between the pairs. These are the prime reason for this pre-or extra marital relationship in the society. Indian society blames either the husband or wife when they are not able to run a successful life. Though it is an arranged marriage, if it fails they are not ready to accept the pits and falls of the couple. Sometimes people in our society go for the second marriage. But if the couple had an extra relationship it should completely destroyed or demolished.

In the novel *Thousand Faces of Night*, Devi got married with Mahesh. They both have a happy life with each other in the beginning. Devi’s loneliness made to search for another person. Gopal was a musician, full of musical words. Devi was completely inspired by his words and appearance. As the days goes by Gopal and Devi became friends. Later their friendship turned into love.

Gopal strolls into our garden every day, his raw-silk kurta strangely out of place among the coarse, weed-ridden bushes. His music is his life; he walks a straight and narrow path as purposeful as Mahesh’s. But he misses
nothing. He knows every muscle on my face, he sees the shadow before it falls across his eyes. We talk, he sings. When he takes my hand and brushes the fingertips with his moist mouth, the lush prison around me dissolves into a green blur. I sleep less and less every night. I ache for that drug, that blissful numbness. Waiting for him, even the trees outside do not stir in their breathless anticipation. (TFN 77-78)

Devi’s dream also began with Gopal rather than Mahesh. Devi did not find any relaxation in the buddy of Mahesh. Mahesh as a business man thinks that he can manage everything. According to Devi’s husband, wife means who always take care of household work, help for husband’s work, and care of children. When Devi taught she can search for a job but Mahesh did not allowed her. Instead he asked her to join in the painting class. He did not take her anywhere outside to get pleasure rather he took her to the hospital. Where all this torture makes Devi to run away with Gopal. At the same time Gopal also says, “A letter from Gopal like a Mirror. He sees himself, the artist, scaling dizzy heights with arrogance. Come with me, he says. You must decide yourself, he says” (TFN89).

Gopal was performing a music presentation on stage. Devi taught that it was like a call for her. She experienced a romantic, magnetic and her heart felt that as light – weight. When Gopal played his music, Devi completely forgot her whole spirit and stated to enjoy for the sake of bodily pleasure.

The music did more; it pushed into some remote region of her mind the image of Gopal, the beautiful despot, his body freshly massaged, bathed and perfumed, holding court every evening, all the favoured courtiers women (TFN128).
Devi was not able to make a good decision when Mahesh claims to want a child. Devi suggested they can adopt a child. But Mahesh did not like this adoption of a child from the homage. He frankly told Mahesh cannot love the other’s child as his own. Devi felt that Mahesh was not a good husband to her. And finally she ran away in October along with Gopal.

A restless Devi went into the October night with Gopal’s entourage. They were driven in a long, white car that sped swiftly across the deserted, tree-lined avenues of imperial Delhi. Gopal’silk-covered thighs pressed against her legs. The hallow base of the tanpura lay hard and unyielding on her lap. A sweet, cloying smell of perfume hung in the air (TFN 131-132).

Devi felt like a foreigner. She destroyed her life without thinking of anyone in her life. Though she belongs to India, her education was abroad. But here she twisted between Indian and western culture. Her wit never allowed to decide the right choice, because of Makesh. At last Devi awaken from her sleep and decide to stay along with her mother. Devi knew well about the three generation women are Mayamma, Sita and her life story. Finally Devi reached her mother’s house. Suitcase in hand, Devi opened the gate and looked wonderingly at the garden, wild and over-grown, but lush inspite of its sand-choked roots.

Ammu had loved Velutha as her childhood companion not so much for his exceptional talents as for his fiery spirit of protest which she herself wanted to articulate but could not. Roy abrupt,

As she grew older, Ammu learned to live with this cold calculating cruelty. She developed a lofty sense of injustice and the mulish, reckless streak that develops in someone small who has been bullied all their lives
by someone Big. She did exactly nothing to avoid quarrels and confrontations. In fact, it could be argued that she sought them out, perhaps even enjoyed them (GST 181-182).

On his return to Ayemenem, Velutha secretly joined the communist party which promised the salvation for the underdogs and, one day, by chance she saw along with her brother and children, “Velutha marching with a red flag. In a white shirt and mundu with angry veins in his neck” (GST 71) the reaction of Ammu, as Rahel remembers it is profoundly significantly utters that, “Rahel saw that Ammu had a film of perspiration on her forehead and upper lip, and that her eyes had become hard like marbles” (GST 71-72) year later, Rahel still remembers Ammu’s expression. “Like a rogue piece in a puzzle. Like a question mark that drifted through the pages of a book and never settled at the end of a sentence” (GST 72). She wondered “What had it all meant?” (GST 72) it meant that she loved Velutha heart and soul for his indomitable spirit of protest which she also nursed in her heart but could not articulate “ she hoped that under against the smug, ordered world that she so raged against” (GST 176) so, she touched the untouchable. Velutha’s father was angry with his son and profusely apologized to his masters. But, secretly, love went on just for about a fortnight, and then Velutha was arrested and tortured to death on a false charge. As soon as Ammu came to know about it, she rushed to the police station to tell the truth, but the treatment that she received at the hands of the Station House Officer shows how pitiable is the condition of women in the society, particularly when a woman is a divorcee and has loved an untouchable. The author drops a large hint that the police officer knows that he can freely insult this woman without any fear or compunction. He has the sanction of the society. So, he “stared at Ammu’s breasts as he spoke.
The officer represents society’s attitude to a woman who has loved outside the rules of “Love Laws”. And, Chacko, Ammu’s brother had already threatened her with all the authority of a patriarch in his own house. “Get out of my house before I break every bone in your body” (GST 255) So, having no “Locusts Stand I” anywhere, “she had to leave and die helpless, sick, alone in a hotel in strange bed in the strange room in the strange town” (GST 161) where she had gone for a job interview, her last frantic effort to make a living in her struggle for survival mainly for the sake of her children. She died at the age of thirty-one, “not old, not young, but a viable, die-able age”( GST 161).

**Summing Up:**

Women had been humiliated and cornered by her father, ill-treated and betrayed by her husband, insulted by the police and rendered destitute by her brother. Everyone voiced on the patriarchal ideology which commanded that she should have no right anywhere- as daughter, wife, sister and citizen. She was not an individual to society but just an object, a role necessarily submissive. Even women who have been deprived in their life, cannot disturb society in the least, but rather choose to come down will all the unspent force of their frustration on another helpless woman because of their extra marital life.

i. The Indian Society will not allow the Pre-Or Post Marital life.

ii. The Indian women have put the costume that once they married them never search for second life.

iii. In the novel Devi, Akhila and Ammu are searched for second life either it fails or they changed the mind and returns back.
iv. Devi proceeds back to her mother’s house. Ammu also destroyed the idea of getting married Velutha. Akhila left the idea of love with Hari.

v. Society and the individual will never support the idea of pre or post marital life if it is in the false notion.