Chapter - IV

SOME GREAT FACES
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In the previous chapters we saw how woman in two of her social roles, namely lover and wife, reaches unimaginable heights of excellence, despite the pain and suffering that naturally accompany such excellence. But the social woman is such placed that a happy blend of the two roles - lover and wife - seldom achieves the fulfilment of being. When the two faces of woman mingle in happy measure to some extent, we have a Cleopatra or Draupadi. This, however, is not the general lot of woman. The essence of femininity is always above the roles that woman has to play, individually, creating her own role-model in the time, setting and socio-natural circumstances available to her. Woman is not a wife or lover: She is an essence, a being that cannot be absorbed by any one role. Lover-Wife-Mother are not just roles which she has to play. She has to create the patterns of her soul or essence in different areas of life and living by “playing” wife-mother-lover. These patterns emanate from a soul that has an infinite urge for creative manifestation. That soul is never totally immersed in the social roles, one is compelled to play in society. Like the actor/actress playing Viola (Shakespeare, Twelfth Night) and remaining a person with a total identity of her own, the essence of woman is never fully expended in one or two roles alone. The lover, wife, and mother are not
predetermined models and the script has to be written by the player herself. Utmost creativity is demanded of the player who is never immersed completely in any role. If the “pre-determination” concept is ruled out by the logic of reality, the player is larger than the role she (he) portrays; otherwise she (he) is a mere actor, not a woman. And, this woman, like the male essence in its own sphere, pines for better, more comforting and spiritually satisfying forms of life. This is the essence of the life principle. Woman too carves out her Utopia and rises above the roles. Woman loves, wives and mothers man but the essence that loves, wives, and mothers is the energy that does not dissipate in just a few roles. This woman is very often the tragic energy of life (like all full-souled men and women) attaining fulfilment, however, flawed or incomplete.

In this chapter we will examine how the role-self relationship determines the total identity of woman. If the role and self are inseparably blended the role is the fulfilment of the self. But if the role and self are differently or divergently oriented, woman remains incomplete. The social roles within the available parameters of life, often, are the outlets through which the self finds expression. The happier the self with the role, the greater the self-expression. The interfusion of the “self and soul” opens up outlets for a meaningful expression. This aesthetic projection of the self on the outer reality into which it ultimately gets blended as the Atman into the Brahmań.
while drawing the full circle of life, brings it to its fullest. The conflict between the self and the role most often terminates all the natural outlets for the emergence of the self, and the role that should supplement the self is left as an empty coat from which the self withdraws. It is neither surprising nor shocking to find many such cases around us; for a woman is not a mere recipient or a passive absorbant. She is an individual, a distinct self, separate and independent, wishing to create her image, beautiful and exceptional.

There are women who passively play roles and suppress the creative urge; yet, there are others who pursue their love or free will to fulfil themselves. In this chapter we will study some great women in literature who by their free quest for larger reality have achieved more authenticity in terms of feminine space and time. Helen of Troy in Homer's great epic *The Iliad*, is one such woman trying to take in a large segment of reality. Homer describes Helen as, "Unearthliness. A goddess the woman is to look at" (*The Iliad* 47).

**Helen**

Such is Helen, the queen of Menelaus, the image of beauty that a man wants a woman to be and a woman ever aspires to become. And what woman is she? How high or vast is the being in her? When she ran away with the seductive Paris of Troy, her husband's guest, what did she expect to get? The mother of a grown up child, the queen of a country where she was paid homage with riches, royal splendours, pomp and ceremony - what tempted
her to elope with her guest who was entrusted to her hospitality by her husband? Most obviously, it cannot be the desire for riches and splendours or to possess power, for she is already the first lady of her nation. Except that Paris might have been more handsome than Menelaus and must have been irresistible in his attraction.

It is sometimes astonishing to see that sensible women suddenly yielding to a fickle mood allow themselves to be carried away by undeserving men, like the naughty wind blowing off a little green leaf which in the hope of reaching high heavens only somersaults in the sky and falls into nothingness. Helen, perhaps was possessed by one such mood or was inspired by the god like Alexandrus to seek and find new splendour and new worlds. It may also be that she felt limited as the wife of Menelaus and the mother of his child. She did not want her life wasted, fate sealed, and her self encircled without any creative possibility.

Helen perhaps had come to realize that her beauty and dreams of life had entered a dead end. Husband, child, palace and the royalty around could not satisfy the creative woman in Helen. Homer has not given what Eliot would call an “objective correlative”, in respect of Helen’s sudden love for Paris. Her life with Menelaus has not been fully focussed in Homer’s epic. It is, perhaps, the intention of Homer to show Helen’s “new” life of love, adventure and war. Helen is removed from the placid setting of a wife to the
more turbulent areas of love. She uses her freedom to choose between love 
and the security of home, mother-wife-queen identity. And she chooses love. 
Forsaking her mother-wife-queen persona she takes a leap into the lover’s 
world. The handsome Paris invites her to adventures where beauty and love 
would create a different world not reminding her of the world of Menelaus. 
Her self supercedes the role and tries to discover its expressive potential in 
the new reality of wife and lover. In the process, Helen discovers the disgrace 
she led herself into, for, here in Troy, she was reduced to a mere wax doll, 
weaving with other women of the royal household of Priam and serving the 
sexual urges of Paris. She, every moment thereafter, regrets her folly; for, now, 
she has lost her prestigious position at home: “Was that life a dream?” (48), 
and has become an object worthy of fear and scorn here in Troy. Besides, her 
elopement awakens the pride of Menelaus, challenging his manly temper. 
Unable to stand such a humiliation at the hands of another man, who 
cuckolded him so easily, who wooed away his beautiful wife, Menelaus was 
hellbent on winning back his woman; for now, she ceases to be a woman 
even. She is now the pride of his manhood for which he must either die or 
win her back at the teeth of death. With the warriors of his whole nation up 
in arms and the Greek gods and goddesses provoked and infurious, Menelaus 
decides to besiege Troy:
Let him be humbled, brought down at my hands,
and hearts in those born after us will shrink
from treachery to a host who offers love.

(Homer, *The Iliad* 53)

Unknown to herself, ignorantly or innocently, Helen releases a bloody
war, brooding passions, clashing egos and wounded pride both among
mortals and immortals while she herself loses her pride and dignity. The
people of Troy wondered at her divine beauty, but were appalled by it:

We cannot rage at her, it is no wonder
that Trojans and Acheans under arms
should for so long have the pains of war
for one like this. (47)

'Flower of young girls that she is' (6), they wished her off their hands; for the
woman is ruinous; she brought war with her, devastation of life and happiness
with her, derision of gods with her; death and dark future with her. Her
beauty is fatal charm; a fearsome curse:

Ah, but still,

Still, even so, being all that she is, let her go in the ships
and take her scourge from us and from our children. (47)
Helen perceiving the murmurs of the assembled men while she was called by Paris' old father, to identify the Greek warriors, realizes her compromising position and regrets her act:

Painful death

would have been sweeter for me, on that day

I joined your son, and left my bridal chamber

my brothers, my grown child, my childhood friends!

But no death came, though I have pined and wept! (48)

Calling herself a 'wanton' she now wishes for death, for, running after a mirage, she ran out of her 'self'. Homer, surprisingly enough, does not give us sufficient cause for Helen's elopement, that prompted her to leave her 'bridal chamber', 'brothers', 'child' and even 'childhood friends.' Her rejection of the wife status, as has been already indicated, was for a life of love which she, perhaps, had not experienced in full measure. But this love was also a betrayal of family, home and kingdom. Helen therefore is caught between the order of home, family and kingdom and the orderless expanse of love. But love does not operate in social vaccum. The romantic dream and sexual passion fail to establish social harmony. Love that starts with betrayal cannot set any order or harmony. Helen therefore is reduced to the state of a mistress
to Paris, a scourge for the Trojans and a coveted property that is to be won and taken back to Greece. Socially, she loses her place even as an individual and becomes a debatable object, a disputed property which must be settled through clash of arms. Helen loses the royalty of her self and the essence of home. In her wanton search for love she loses her roots and becomes an object of hate. The unintended role-reversal is the natural result of unnatural love. Helen elopes for love but in Troy she lives like a mistress not wife (if not whore). She brings in war and death: her love becoming fatal to the Trozans.

Marlowe, the contemporary of Shakespeare in his Doctor Faustus invokes the Helen vision in proper terms:

Was this the face that launched ten thousand ships
and burnt the topless towers of Illium...

(V, i, 50)

She shows that love is a curse. It destroys kingdoms and causes misery. Her beauty and love come to nought.

From another perspective more important for a woman, she fails to project herself upon Paris, the man she chose as her lover and through him on the 'new' world into which she comes with him. She finds that she is a mere pleasure-giver, a medium of relaxation for him, but not an inspiration to glories. The man, who she thought would excel the whole world, is a mere coward who ran in fear of his life, away from his rival, her former husband.
In the call for single combat between Paris and Menelaus, he runs away under Menelaus' cloud cover from the battle field to the bedroom and sends for Helen to soothe his taut nerves. The moment of revelation comes to Helen, she sees that the man she ran away with is a man whose maleness is merely phallocentric. Unable to sustain this blow to her pride, she tries to awaken his male ego:

Home from the war? you should have perished there,
brought down by that strong soldier, once my husband.
You used to say you were the better man,
more skilful with your hands, your spear. So why not challenge him to fight again? (55)

And the next instant she teases and challenges him:

I wouldn't
if I were you. No, don't go back to war
against the tawny - headed man of war
like a rash fool. You'd crumple under his lance. (55)

No matter, however sharp her words, she fails to induce her man to go back to battle leaving the 'inland ivory bed' (54) where he invites her to love
Helen had no power on Paris's mind or heart. She could not use her love to make a greater man of Paris; instead she demeans her love to a "four lettered word".

Helen loses a personal world, which she wanted to project through Paris, for ever. Whatever dreams of love, femininity and life she dreamt of realizing with Paris are now collapsed, like a castle of cards. Her attempts to project her 'self' through another role other than that assigned to her, end in fickleminded harlotry. Addressing herself to Hector who comes to evoke Paris' warring instincts, she admits her failure more to herself than to anyone:

Brother dear -

dear to a whore, a nightmare of a woman!

That day my mother gave me to the world

I wish a hurricane - blast had torn me away
to wild mountains, or into tumbling sea
to be washed under by a breaking wave,
before these evil days could come! - or, granted
terrible years were in the god's design,

I wish I had had a good man for a lover

who knew the sharp tongues and just rage of men.

This one - his heart's unsound, and always will be,

and he will win what he deserves. (107)
Such self-reproach and self-pity can come only out of the disgust of failure. The failure, again, like the elopement, is the failure of the 'feminine being' in Helen, a being that ends up in nonexistence. Helen fails in love and she knows it. Her birth in the Greek myths was a forced one, that is, she was a rape-child. Leda was raped by Zeus and Helen was born as a scourge to the world. She was also a revenge figure in the myths. W.B.Yeats in his celebrated poem "Leda and the Swan" commemorates the myth:

A shudder in the loins engenders there

The broken wall, the burning roof and tower

And Agamemnon dead.

Being so caught up,

So mastered by the brute blood of the air,

Did she put on his knowledge with his power

Before the indifferent beak could let her drop? (127)

Helen's unearthiness is established by the myth. But the helplessness of her birth and her being a rape-child do not exonerate her free choice to leave her home and world in quest of an alien promise of love. Homer releases, as it were, Helen's open world to her own choice. And she chooses ruin. Love inspires new confidence of life but Helen's love ruins life.
Sita

Helen is often compared to Sita in the great Indian epic *The Ramayana*. There is a great deal of similarity in the contours of both plots as far as Sita and Helen are concerned. Helen is "kidnapped" by Paris, son of Priam of Troy. And Sita too is kidnapped by Rāvana, the King of Lanka. Their husbands Rama and Menelaus, respectively, attack the kidnappers and heroically rescue their wives. But in the case of Sita there was no complicity on her part as was with Helen, who had developed an infatuation, bordering on love for Paris and willingly ran away with him. Helen, therefore, is a partner to the crime. But Sita is forcibly kidnapped by Rāvana who used disguise and magical powers to hoodwink and overpower her. The superficial similarity, however, does not penetrate the affective or soul areas of Sita.

A further probe of their beings, however, is necessary. Helen's love for Paris is lust, mere physical attraction. Paris no doubt, was handsome and brave but compared to Menelaus her wedded husband, Paris was no "Hyperion to a Satyr" to quote Hamlet's words (I, ii, 89) in a reversed context. Moreover, Helen was already a mother. She does not think about the child, and the lover in her supersedes the mother and wife in her. In the case of Sita, the 'wife' and the lover resist. She refuses the overtures, as it were, of Rāvana. She is, however, tricked into her unwilling fall. Sita unlike Helen operates in a moral frame and shows a greater personality. Rāvana is a
wellbred scholar, a musician, great warrior, a religious minded man (a staunch devotee of Lord Siva) and a man of enormous physical strength, a man of multi dimensional variety - symbolically, he is a ten headed man. To win him at war, without the assistance of the divine was beyond Rāmachandra’s power. Even then, Sita, identifying her `self' with the role of `wife' refuses to be played upon by Rāvana. In otherwords, Sita resists as wife and lover until she is deceived and kidnapped by physical and magical powers. She hopes and waits in Rāvana’s open - air prison, the `Ashoka garden'. She waits, though she is not sure, for her husband to come and win her back, saving her from forcible imprisonment. The woman is imprisoned in a strange land, among strange people forcing her constantly to yield her wifedom, and love to another man. But she waits. By waiting for her husband, by hoping against hope to go back to him, by sticking to her being’s conviction of chastity and purity, Sita demonstrates the personal value of the Sati and love. She displays a very strong feminine `self' that is not fickle like Helen’s. The self in her is totally dedicated to that of her social role. The `woman' in her is totally submitted to her man, Rāmachandra. The dreams and hopes of her life are all centred round her hero - Rāmachandra. Without him, she refuses life, however, beautiful and colourful it may be. That was the only strength she possessed. Her lonely dignity and faith in her wifely love makes her bold and brave. But she choicelessly languishes in her “unprojected” self. She withdraws to her
faith centre. In reply to the torments of the ogresses appointed by Rāvana to win her to his arms, she asserts her faith:

\begin{verse}
deeno vā rājayahino vā yo me bharta sa me guruḥ  
tam nityamanuraktāṃ yathā sūrye suvarchalā 11911  
yathā saṣṭī mahabhāgā sākram samupatiṣṭhati 111  
arundhatī vasiṣṭham ca rohini sasinaṃ yathā 1101  
lopāmudrā yathāgasthyam sukanyā cyavanam yathā 1  
sāvitri satyavantani ca kapilaṃ srīmatī yathā 1111  
soudāsari madayantīva kesinī sagaraṃ yathā 1121  
neiṣadham damayantīva bheimi patimanuvratā 11211  
tathāhamikṣvakuvarām rāmaṃ patimanuvratā 1
\end{verse}

(Valmiki, The Ramayan, Canto 24, 1201)

[Destitute or deprived of his kingdom, he who is my husband is my adorable deity. I am ever devoted to him, (even) as Suvarchala (consort of the sun-god) is to the sun-god. I am devoted to my husband, Sri Rāma, the foremost of the Ikṣvakus, in the same way as the highly blessed Sachi waits upon Indra (the ruler of gods), as does Arundhatī upon Sage Vasiṣṭha and Rohini (the foremost of the twentyseven spouses of the moon-god, presiding over the same number of constellations appearing in the heavens) on the moon-god, as does Lopāmudrā upon Sage Agasthya and Sukanyā did upon Sage Chyavana and Savitri did upon Satyavān and
Srimati upon Lord Kapila, as Madayanti did upon King Soudāsa and Kesīnī upon King Sagara and as Damayanti, daughter of Bhima, was devoted to her husband Nala, (King of Nīṣadhās).

Sita displays a greater moral and psychic strength. She is prepared to suffer her moral convictions than fall into a life of pleasure with another man, however great he might be. She stubbornly remains Rāma's 'wife' in her prison and identifies her self and soul with that ideal. And when her moral convictions are vindicated by Rāma's war of rescue she rises as wife and lover in our esteem. Helen's case is different. She is won back as a woman who has neither love nor motherhood or wifely loyalties to make her comparable to Sita. But Helen is requited with her original home and family which was not fated for Sita.

Although after a fierce political and military engagement with Rāvana, Sita is taken back as his wife, he does not accept her immediately, betraying thereby his moral doubts:

kah pumānstu kule jātah striyam pariṃghoṣitaṁ

tejasvī punarādadyāt suhrullobhena cetasā
drśtāṁ duṣṭena caṅkṣasa

kathāṁ tvāṁ punarādadyāṁ kulāṁ vyapadiśānmahaṁ

(Canto CXV, Sl. 19 & 20, 1849)

[What man of noble spirit and noble lineage would ever eagerly take back
a wife (woman) who has dwelt in another's house though she has been loving and languishing for him? Being proud of my lineage, how could I accept you again, you, who were squeezed in the arms of Rāvana (while being carried away by him) and glanced by him with evil lustful eyes?]

Sita's "wife-lover" psyche is shattered and her selfhood and womanhood are challenged by evil doubts, thereby lowering the moral stature of Rāma.

She mutters:

kim māma sadṛśam vākyamīdṛśam sotradūraṇām 1
rūkṣam srāvayase vīra prakṛtah prākṛtāmiva 11

(Canto CXVI, Sl. 5, 1850)

[Why do you, like a common man, address to me, O hero, such unkind and unbecoming words, which are (so) jarring to the ear, as a common man would do to an ordinary woman?]

And finally she walks into fire and emerges pure. But bitter fate awaits her at Ayodha where she is taken by Rāma in a victory - procession. After the first flush of reunion and homecoming, her imprisoned state in Rāvana's Lanka crops up again with its unsavoury horror. When her chastity is doubted by the people and her husband abandons her in the forest, she lets herself lapse into incognito. She never thinks of questioning the appropriateness of her husband's strange act of abandoning her, judging him through popular verdict. She never thinks of challenging the people of Ayodhya, the court and
royal family like Draupadi about the justice of humiliating the *kula vadhu* or the daughter in law of the clan, the sustainer of the clan.

Although she was pregnant and everybody knew about it, she never thought of awakening social passions about the injustice done to womankind through her. She passively accepts her being cast away into the forests. Sita accepts her punishment as the justice of Ayodhya. Rāma the King has punished Sita the Queen, on charges of betrayal of chastity. She accepts it because she knows that a king has the larger responsibility of the kingdom before which the royal family is insignificant. She does not betray her sorrow. All her protest is to withdraw into herself. At the Valmiki Āśram she raises her children with loyal determination and love. She does not train them up to be her avengers on her husband. She brings them up as great soldiers and as the authentic moral creations of their racial values. Her sons Lava and Kusa grow up to defeat the Ayodhya army, including the great Hanuman and Lxman. Sita exhibits greater hold on life and reality. Her love is demonstrated at the 'Asoka Garden' of Rāvana; her motherhood is demonstrated at the Valmiki Āśram; But in all her roles she demonstrates the power of her womanhood. She grows in stature as she moves from palace to forest, forest to palace, and finally to the forest again. Sita cannot be accommodated in an ordinary home. She must live in nature. The totality of life must be her province.
Yet, Sita, despite her strength of being, fails like Helen, to project herself. In the case of Helen, rejection of social role resulted in an individual vacumm, while in that of Sita, abject subjection to the social role led to the same state of experience. The self in Sita 'the woman' as it is, descends into the Earth, where she withdraws herself finally.

The failure of the self, ultimately culminates in 'self' burial. The self and role could not be properly assimilated. In this process of self subjugation, Sita's self does not bloom up like Draupadi's rather it is dwarfed. Draupadi as an independent entity blooms through her role. The individual or the woman in Sita is neither fully independent nor totally passive. When she is asked to stay back at home, while Rāmachandra is sent to forest, she protests and refuses to stay back. When she is doubted by her husband and is asked to go her ways, after having been rescued from Rāvana, she protests and loudly resents Rāmachandra's lowliness in doubting her:

\[\text{tvayā tu nṛpaśārdūla rośamevānuvartatā́} \]

\[\text{laghuneva manuṣyeṇa strīvameva pūraskṛtam} \]

(Canto CXVI, Sl. 14, 1851)

[By you, however, who, like a small man, gave yourself up to anger alone, O jewel among the rulers of men, womanliness (feminine fraility?) alone has been mainly taken into consideration.]
Her fire-walk (a chastity test to which she was submitted by Rāma) is a protest walk, her way of challenging such humiliating treatment by her husband. She declares that she is no common woman to be abused thus.

\[
\text{apadeso me janakānnotpattirvāsudhātalāt} \\
\text{mama vṛttam ca vṛttajña bahu te na puraskṛtam} \\
\]

(Canto CXVI, Sl. 15, 1851)

[(Only) my appellation (Janaki or Vaidehi) has been derived from King Janaka (not that I owe my descent to him), since my birth took place from the sacrificial ground of Janaka. This divine origin of mine, was, however, not taken into account by you. My exalted character was not prized by you either, O appraiser of good conduct?]

She shows a personality in not giving way to Rāvana's seductive words. And after all such tenacity of purpose, and her conviction of being an uncommon woman - she submits herself to be played upon by her husband, her family, her society. With her determination, she could have changed the then pattern of the society, had she but protested; had she but challenged the cultural norms of Ayodhya which made room for accommodating the atrocities of a woman like Kaikeyi, simply because she was the queen and rejected another woman even though she was a queen, on flimsy grounds stemming from the laity (the washerman couple). Sita's passive acceptance of such norms caused the total loss of self that finally ended up in a psychic withdrawal. She
could not stand up to the challenges of reality and transcend it, but rather shrank from it and closed herself.

**Hermione and Desdemona**

Sita is not the only woman who has been victimised by the machinations of social forces or the passions of jealous husbands. Hermione in *Winter's Tale* and Desdemona in *Othello*, from Shakespeare's world, stand as wives of dubious chastity, who effaced their 'selves' failing to project an authentic identity or emerge as individuals of independent selves that could rise above the reality, life offered to them and shape a new reality for themselves. Hermione, went into a death-like exile while Desdemona yielded to death with a docile "commend me to my lord" (V, ii) on her lips. The determination and good sense that Desdemona displays at the beginning when she was obstructed by her father in marrying Othello, is strangely lacking when she was doubted by Othello. She never tried to see into Othello's heart - a woman who could see love for her under such rude exterior, could not use her senses to know his jealousy and suspicions. Perhaps she took herself and her man for granted and lost herself. Had she evinced the same initial determination to make her life beautiful and happy with love, she could have very well averted the disaster and havoc that cost her, her life and her man's too. What is the 'being' in that woman, which could fight for her love, but does not fight for her moral honour? Desdemona is sweet, beautiful, sensible,
but she goes off like a sacrificial goat without the slightest effort to know the emotional strife through which her husband passed.

Hermione is bold, witty and resourceful. She too like Sita has to face a very baseless accusation. She too implores the king to consider her royal upbringing and noble birth as Sita does, and prefers death if she is doubted by her husband. She asks for the Oracle to prove her innocence. She is mated here by fate with a jealous tyrant, who is stubborn and unreasonable and ultimately causes havoc to himself, family and friends. Yet, Hermione, had she but chosen to know this part of her husband, could have averted the tragedy, which was resolved by fate and time. When the wife fails to interweave her 'self' with that of her 'husband' she fails in raising the stature of the family.

The value construct, the social structure, the cultural mould which she should have built on the basis of her family through her man and children, collapses and life falls loosely about the woman. Her exile, a withdrawal from life's reality, is symbolically her failure as wife. She dies as wife, ceases as woman and lives only as mother:

'For thou shalt hear

that I,

Knowing by Paulina that the oracle

Gave hope thou wast in being, have preserved

Myself to see the issue.

(Shakespeare, Winter's Tale V, iii., 125-128, 354)
Not a single word is spoken to her overwhelmed husband - whom she once considered as 'The crown and comfort of my life', (III, ii, 95, 335). Hermione posits only an empty structure of family. Her mini universe is a vacuum. After her chastity is proven, she literally dies; for she has no other purpose, or aim in her life: no goals for her man to win; no beautiful world to posit, with one child dead and another lost. The loss of the children and her death like exile, self imposed, symbolically lead to an empty future.

Hermione and Desdemona, however, do not display intensity of being despite the great poetry of Shakespeare. The intensity of Cleopatra or even Lady Macbeth is not seen in Hermione and Desdemona.

The wives discussed so far show the failure of woman who could not conceive of the total structure of the family they were to raise and hold up to the world, with pride and dignity. They could neither comprehend nor penetrate their men to make them their medium to shine through by realizing their full potential as women. Marriage which should have opened up various avenues for their femininity to come to its fullest bloom, turns out to be a blind alley for them. Helen fades out as a mere sex object; Sita and Hermione remain incongruently more or less equal to psychic death. Desdemona dies untimely and without trying to know why. They posit the failure of woman as a whole. The woman fails to project herself on a surrounding world either
directly or through her man. The failure is that of her self. She is her own tormentor, passively accepting the turns of knife in unprotesting grace.

Compared with Draupadi these women raise the questions: What universe have they created? How did they attain the fulness of feminine being in them? What values of family have they posited in their world? What were their expectations from reality? A chance is given to them by Nature and by society to create and nurture a beautiful family but they fail. Draupadi succeeds in her endeavours to bring out her full femininity through constant thrusts of her moral self. Even though she loses the crown of a Queen and is compelled to go to the forest, she creates her world, her universe outside social reality. Draupadi has a mind of her own and knows how to goad others to her own fulfilment. It is obvious that the quality of the soul and its energies determine the nature of reality a woman creates. If Draupadi succeeds and Helen and others fail, their beings are deficient.
We have shown that the energies of woman are modulated by love. It is love that a woman projects to change reality to her own specifications. In the case of a man love is not the total absorber of his being, but for woman love is her totality. It is like a religion for her. It is interesting to quote the words of Nietzsche on this theme:

The single word love in fact signifies two different things for man and woman. What woman understands by love is clear enough: it is not only devotion, it is a total gift of body and soul, without reservation, without regard for anything whatever. This unconditional nature of her love is what makes it a faith, the only one she has. As for man, if he loves a woman, what he wants is that love from her; he is in consequence far from postulating the same sentiment for himself as for woman, if there should be men who also felt that desire for complete abandonment, upon any word, they would not be men.

(Nietzsche, *The Gay Science* 73)

Love for women, then, is a faith, a faith of the body and soul. In this section we will examine some of the celebrated women in great literature. The women selected, for the purpose, are Virgil's Dido in *Aeneid*, Kālidās's Sakuntala in *Abhijñāna Śakuntalam*, in reference to the lover archetype Rādha.
the great consort of Kṛṣṇā. We also have included Anna of Tolstoy's Anna Karenina to bring in a modern temper to contrast the classical women.

These women make determined efforts to change the existing reality of life through their love. In Section-I, the women discussed were mostly wives, while the women in this section can be categorized more or less as lovers. This categorizing is purely for broad functional reasons; for every woman has both the faces of lover and wife in her being. A wife is a lover to her man and a lover "wives" her man -- this is an unconscious process which goes on like two powerful currents in constant interface. The fullness of the being is attained through either of these two faces or by conjoining the two faces.

Dido

Dido, the queen of Carthage appears at the beginning as a woman of determination and courage who refuses to be a prisoner of circumstances. She had married for love, Sichæus, who was killed by his brother Pygmalion. The ghost of the wronged man reveals the truth to her (as in Hamlet) and warns her of the danger looming on her head in the form of a villainous brother. Dido is not disheartened nor does she despair. Showing a rare courage and strength of mind, she raises forces and flies secretly with her husband's treasure that caused his untimely death —

The queen provides companions of her flight;

They meet, and all combine to leave the state,

Who hate the tyrant, or who fear his hate.
They seize a fleet, which ready rigg'd they find;

Nor is Pygmalion's treasure left behind.

The vessels, heavy laden, put to sea

with prosperous winds; a woman leads the way.

(Virgil, Aeneid 21)

One can not but read a similarity between Cleopatra and Dido; for she too is driven out of her state and status in to the deserts of Egypt by her brother-husband; raises an army against him and fights not only for her existence but also for her queenhood. Dido too instead of living in a secluded corner of non-being rises above the circumstances to face the challenges of Pygmalion by nourishing her kingdom. She queens Carthage.

She turns Carthage into a beautiful strong fortress protective and productive:

The prince with wonder sees the stately towers,

Which late were huts and shepherd's homely bowers,

The gates and streets; and hears, from ev'ry part,

The noise and busy concourse of the mart.

The toiling Tyrians on each other call

To play their labor: some extend the wall;

some build the citadel; the brawny throng

Or dig or push unwieldy stones along.
Some for their dwellings choose a spot of ground,
Which, first designed, with ditches they surround,
some laws ordain; and some attend the choice
of holy senates, and elect by voice,
Here some design a mole, while others there
Lay deep foundations for a theatre;
from marble quarries mighty columns hew,
For ornaments of sciences and future view. (23-24)

Like the Nature Goddess, she sets tasks to her people and beautifies Carthage,
setting an order and a system. The hutment area is transformed into a
township. The stately towers, the gates and streets, speak of a mind
determined and orderly. The leisurely shepherd's life is changed into a busy
business world. The homely towers yield place to human dwellings. Laws and
regulations for a peaceful and secure life are framed. Theatres are established
which relate her mind to visions of beauty and art. Not only her life as the
queen of this happy state, but the lives of her people, her subjects, Dido
planned. In this effort, she has not forgotten their gods and goddesses. An
emblem of moral values is also to be kept in the minds of the people, and for
that she builds Juno's temple:

Full in the centre the town there stood,
Thick set with trees, a venerable wood
The Tyrians, landing near the holy ground,
And digging here, a prosperous omen found:
From under earth a courser's head they drew,
Their growth and future fortune to foreshow.
This fated sign their foundress Juno gave,
of a soil fruitful, and a people brave.
Sidonian Dido here with solemn state
Did Juno's temple build and consecrate,
Enriched with gifts, and with a golden shrine,
But more the goddess made the place divine.
On frozen steps the marble threshold rose,
And frozen plates the cedar beams inclose:
The rafters are with frozen cov'ring crowned;
The lofty doors on frozen hinges sound. (24)

The temple — a symbol of faith and moral values and justice is thus erected
and the lady further enriches it with art. Temples, in all culture have been the
faith centres of art, sculpture, literature, philosophy and cultural growth:

What first Aeneas in this place beheld,
Reviv'd his courage, and his fear expell'd.
For while, expecting there the queen, he rais'd
His wondering eyes, and round the temple gazed,
Admired the fortune of the rising town,
The striving artists and their arts' renown; (24-25)

Dido could conceive of everything that is needed in a kingdom whose people she would rule. The range of the mind that is displayed in the lines quoted above is not ordinary. It is a mind that has a vision of life; dreams to beautify the available reality and love for an enriched life. Life for her has not yet become an empty picture. Her suffering has not enchained her being and dragged her into helpless nothingness. The loss of her husband whose return she awaits, and the warnings of her husband's ghost about the impending doom have not altogether stilled her zest for life. She takes up the challenge thrown by fate and with an increased force reinstates herself as the queen of Carthage:

Thus while the Trojan prince employs his eyes,
Fix'd on the walls with wonder and surprise,
The beauteous Dido, with a num'rous train
And prop of guards, ascends the scared fame.
Such on Eurota's banks, or Cynthus' height,
Diana seems; and so she charms the sight,
When in the dance the graceful goddess leads
The choir of nymphs, and overtops their heads:
Known by her quiver and her lofty mien,
She walks majestic, and she looks their queen;

Latona sees her shine above the rest,

And feeds with secret joy her silent breast,

Such Dido was; with such becoming state,

Amidst the crowd, she walks serenely great.

This labor to her future sway she speeds,

And passing with a gracious glance proceeds;

Then mounts the throne, high placed before the shine;

In crowds around, the swarming people join.

She takes petitions, and dispenses laws,

Hears and determines ev'ry private cause;

Their tasks in equal portions she divides,

And, where unequal, there by lots decides. (25-26)

The wild inhabitants are civilized by the woman and are restrained by statutes. An empire is found in abandoned forests. A town is built in the woods. A citadel is constructed. A rural wild habitation is wrought in to a civilized, orderly place with elegance, ethics and aesthetics. The idle shepherds are replaced by hard working men. A small world is created and is strengthened by a pattern of values. Sitting in the temple of Juno to dispense her queenly duties, Dido symbolically becomes the Juno of the Carthagians. Her husband's murder and her brother's villainy do not widow her dreams
and expectations of reality. Unless a being is in love with life, such constructive mind and creative spirit are impossible, for love's genius is creative in essence. Here in Carthage, the widow Dido, young and bright, hopeful and energetic builds a small world for herself which she rules. Unlike Cleopatra, however, Dido's soul is not involved in the cosmic totality around her; she lives only on the memories of the by gone life and love: "For whom I loved on earth, I worship in the grave" (89). She rejects the hand of King Hyarbas and many a Tyrian prince with an obstinate allegiance and loyalty to a past faith, vowed to her dead man. With her heart immersed in the past she lives in the present. But, the Trojan hero, Aeneas wakes her up from the dead past and the woman in her liberates herself from the past. Love for the Trojan hero brings her out of the dead. She comes out of memory and sealed time to the moving present. Aeneas arouses new passions in her. Dido's love for this man, intensifying every moment, burns her being like a flame. Love, here, however, is no medium through which her being develops an awareness of her own self; it is rather a passion that goads her to possess him. Inventing ways and means of entertaining the Trojan prince, Dido marries him. But to what purpose? She has no visions of future, no dreams of a different and beautiful world of her own. Her clinging to the past is suddenly severed; she is carried away by the immediate presence of her reality. But her entry into the new reality is fraught with frozen moments of passion. The procession of moments
do not make her aware of any movement. Life for her ends there. Her emergence from the past appears to be a descent into an enclosure where love and lust keep her prisoner:

Meantime the rising tow'rs are at a stand;
No labors exercise the youthful band,
Nor use of arts, nor toils of arms they know;
The mole is left unfinish'd to the foe;
The mounds, the works, the walls, neglected lie,
Short of their promised height, that seemed to threat the sky. (91)

Dido makes wordly time stop. Her love isolates her from the world she had made in the woods. Love does not bring the self and soul to bloom; On the other hand her love has dwarfed them. The being in the woman becomes mono dimensional, lacking in variety and versatility. Hence she stoops to seduce the prince's attention.

And now she leads the Trojan chief along
The lofty walls, amidst the busy throng;
Displays her Tyrian wealth, and rising town,
Which love, without his labor, makes his own,
This pomp she shows, to tempt her wand'ring guest. (90)

Except beauty and riches, she does not have that presence of being, which could transform reality. Aeneas too was not worthy of anything else except
breeding like an animal. Dido's marriage simply becomes a surrogate woodland without towers and order. Teeming and mating are her self-chosen love-lot. Is marriage a mere contract for children? The interweaving of two human souls to create a beautiful universe through each other has never been conceived here. Dido's intentions are to possess the man, not to fulfil herself through him. Consequently, when Aeneas realizes that his ambitions remain unfulfilled, he decides to steal away without her knowledge. Rather he tries to escape Dido's love which enslaves him. Her love does not free man and woman to a free expanse of feeling. The woman could not penetrate the being of her man; she could not absorb him into her, she fails to make Aeneas her General of the world. Trying all methods of persuasion to keep him with her, Dido fails. The awareness that she has no hold on him makes her lose head. In order to seal his escape she tries to burn his ships but in vain. Failing to keeping him as her man, Dido fails to fulfil her being.

Symbolically, it is the failure of her femininity. After Aeneas' departure she has nothing to look forward to in her future. She was nothing before he came, and she is nothing now. The emptiness of her being kills her. She is no Cleopatra who waited for Antony to come back and even contrived his coming back by sending soothsayers to him. The woman in Dido is a small one that is further stunted in growth by misconception of love's reality. Aeneas' parting is
no mere political or divine manipulation. It amounts to her failure as a woman. Her love instead of widening the fields of reality circumscribes it, confining Aeneas to her kingdom and curtailing his freedom. She could exercise no power as a lover nor does she have the capacity to activate Aeneas to greater heights. Here love for Aeneas does not bestow any order of social or spiritual inclusiveness. Dido trying to burn the ships, burns herself, loses her being and loses life. She has no alternative to nothingness. Her conjugal life led her to nothingness and her love too led her to the same emptiness. The woman attains no fulfilment, her creativity turns uncreative, she remains incomplete. She fails as lover and wife.

Sakuntala

Sakuntala, in Kalidās’s famous drama of the same name, exhibits another kind of failure as lover and wife. She grows up in the āśram of sage Goutam as nature’s darling. Beauty, grace, poise and complexion evenly composed her being. In Abhijñana Sakuntalam Sakuntala is presented as a beauty that excels nature:

sarasijamanuviddham sāivalenaṇī paṇam |  
malinamapi himānsor lakṣmīna lakṣmīnī tanoti ||  
iyamadhikamanojna valkalenaṇī tanvi ||  
kimiva hi madhuraḥmad mandanam naṅkritiṇām ||

(I, Sl. 20, 18)
[The lotus, though moss may overlay it, is, nevertheless, beautiful; the spot on the moon, for all its darkness, heightens the charm of the moon; this slender maiden is more lovely even in her dress of bark : for what indeed is not an embellishment of sweet forms ?]

She is ripe and ready for love. All around she sees union; between a tree and creeper, the humming bee hovering around her face attracted by her cherubic lips. The trees, saplings, the love of the human and the natural, create an aura of love and union. King Duṣyanta becomes the object of her love at first sight. More than the king, Āśkuntala is in love:

Śākuntala : (ātmagatam) kim nu khalvimāṁ prekṣya
tapovanavirodhino vikārasya gamaniyāsmi saṁvṛtā
tapovanavirodhino vikārasya gamaniyāsmi saṁvṛtā

(I, 24)

[Śākuntala : (Aside) I do not know why rebellious symptoms countering the discipline of āśram life appear in me at the sight of this man !]

The first stirrings of love, for a royal person, is Śākuntala’s maiden response to worldly awareness (like Miranda in Shakespeare’s Tempest). She grew up not only as nature’s darling but as supernature, more-refined, poised and beautiful. At first sight Duṣyanta too is struck by her beauty:

sudhāṁtadurlabhamidami vapurāsramavāsino yadi janasya ।
dūrikṛtāḥ khalu guneirudyānalatā vanalatābhīḥ । ।

(I, Sl. 17, 14)
[If such is the beauty of maids, who dwell in woodland retreats, the like of which is not easily to be found in the recesses of a palace, then the wild woodland creepers surpass the well kempt and carefully tended garden plants.]

Duṣyanta wonders whether such beauty, not usually noticed in the plentifulness of the royal palaces, draws nourishment from nature’s wild creepers! He appreciates the physical form of the sage’s daughter. Beauty, form and grace attract the King more than love. Lost in a moment of aesthetic ecstasy the King’s eyes fawn around Śakuntala’s lips, arms, body and youth:

priyamati tathyaṁaḥ śakuntalāṁ priyavatāḥ asyaḥ khaliḥ

(I, 15)

adharah kisalayarāgah komalavatānukārinou bāhu
kusumamivalobhānīyaṁ youvanamangesu samnaddham

(I, Sl. 21 : 18)

[Agreeable though, there is truth in what Priyamvada says to Śakuntala. Her lower lip glistens like a tender leaf newly sprout; her arms are like the tender stalks. And youth bewitching like a beautiful blossom, shines in all her lineaments]

While the king is fascinated by her beauty and form, Śakuntala is attracted by the stateliness of Duṣyanta as man. The difference in their attitudes, however, is that Śakuntala develops moral fears in falling for
Dusyanta, while the king falls for her beauty and youth without having the qualms of social conscience. The attraction is mutual; love is spontaneous. Their love is granted parental permission of the sage and they marry in the gandharva tradition. Their love is consummated by union. Sakuntala is elevated to the status of a queen. Love transforms nature’s loved-one into a royal-spouse and endows her with motherhood. The fruits of love, sweet motherhood, make Sakuntala a complete woman. But Sakuntala is not allowed to enjoy the bliss of love, motherhood, elevation of status and position. The King leaves for the palace promising to take her soon, giving her the royal ring for identification. But he does not send for his “wife”, Sakuntala, after reaching the palace. Before the preparations for sending her to her husband begin at the āśram, disaster falls right into her lap; which however, she never realises. One day while Sakuntala was lost in her dreamy eyed world of love and sweet expectations of conjugal bliss and motherhood, sage Durvāsa called on the āśram. Immersed in her unbroken mystical reverie, Sakuntala could neither see nor hear the sage. The temperamental sage cursed her in his fury:

ah, atithiparibhāvinī
viṃśintayanti yamananyamānasā
tapodhanaṃ vesmi na māmupasthitam
dsmaṛisyati tvāṃ na sa bodhitopi
saṅkathām pramattaḥ pradhamaṃ kr̥tāmiva

(IV, Sū. 1, 94)
[Ah, thou that art disrespectful to a guest, He, in whose thoughts you are lost, oblivious of everything else and perceive me not, one who is rich in penance, will not remember thee, though reminded — like a drunken man, forgetting all that he spoke before].

This curse of sage Dūrvāsa makes a sudden turning point in the fate of Saṅkuntalā. Unaware of the curse, Saṅkuntalā sets upon her journey to fulfil her social destiny. Saṅkuntalā, till this moment did not have any social identity. She never knew of social life. The discipline of the āśrama was the only society for her. She was born in nature and grew up in nature’s lap. Her marriage too was according to the laws of nature — gandharva — which was not socially valid. And now, just at the moment of her entering into the social frame, the curse of Dūrvāsa falls aborting her dreams. Kālidāś makes the curse symbolic. Even before the curse of the sage Durvasa, Saṅkuntalā’s age-mates worry whether the king would remember her, once he goes back to his palace and gets surrounded by his other ladies. Expressing her concern for Saṅkuntalā and doubts in the king, Anasuya says:

adya sa rājarsiristim parisamāpya ṛṣbhirvisajita ātmamo nagaram |
pravīṣyantah purasamāgata itogatam vrṭṭaṇitam smarati va na veti ||

(IV, 92)

[Whether the pious king, who is dismissed by the hermits today at the completion of the sacrifice, will remember things that occurred here, after
entering his capital and surrounded by his ladies in the recesses of his
castle.]

These doubts of the friends of Sakuntala are confirmed by the sage's curse.
The ring given by her man, the royal signet, is her only life boat, if a storm
were to engulf her.

Sakuntala's final journey from nature to society is the most exquisite
moment of love in the play. Nature decorates, adorns and prepares her darling
child for conjugal bliss. Mother nature bestows her bridal gifts on her.
Sakuntala, nature's epitome of beauty, becomes the embodiment of love;
nature's bloom of love. The trees that had grown under the loving care of
Sakuntala provide her bridal attire. Some trees present matching pair of (silk)
sarees and some others provide the ornaments of natural beauty:

ksoumarin kenaçidindupandu taraça mangalavishkrta
niṣṭhayuṭaṣṭaraṇopabhogasulboh lākṣāraṣaḥ kenaçit
aṇyebhyo vanadevatākaraṭaleirāparvabhāgothitei-
rādattānyabharanāni tatkisalayodbhedapratidvandibhi

(IV, Sl. 4, 108)

[A certain tree yielded an auspicious silken garment white as the moon;
another distilled the lac-dye so excellent to stain her feet; and from others
were presented ornaments by fairies of the woods that rivalled the tender
leaves sprouting afresh]
This is the triumphant moment of love in the play. Sakuntala’s beauty with its unearthly qualities invites the love of her father, friends, and teachers. This is also the moment of the fulfilment of love. She is now taken to her husband Duṣyanta with the love token in her womb (and the love ring, her identification mark on her finger). Kālidās portrays Sakuntala as the essence of innocence with a human face. She is the moving spirit of the universe. Her power is love which nature bestows on her by beauty, symmetry, colour and order. The journey of Sakuntala starts on a ritualistic note embracing the good, great and the beautiful. The trees gift the attire, the bushes and the forest fairies (Vana devatas) the ornaments. The teacher-father blesses her. The holy fire of the yajña provides vigour and glory:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{amī vedim paritāḥ kluptathisnayāḥ} \\
\text{samiddhāntah prānta samstīnadarbhāḥ} \\
appanarito duritaṁ havyagandhei- \\
rveitānestvāṁ vahnayaḥ pāvayantu \\
\end{align*}
\]

(IV, Sl. 7, 110)

[Let these sacrificial fires, whose places are fixed around the altar, fed with holy wood, strewn with Darbha grass around their margins, removing sin by the perfume of oblations, purify thee.]

The age-fellows, teacher-mother Goutami, and friends give their soulful good wishes and tearful farewell. The forest path provides smooth passage,
the trees the shade, and the spirit of nature give her the majesty of love. The following words are heard in the air:

ramyāntaraḥ kamalinīhanteiḥ sarobhi-
ścāyādrumeirniyamīrkaṃmayūkhatāpaḥ ā
bhūyāṭkūsāyaraṃdureṇurasyāḥ
śaṅtānukūlapavanasca śivasca panthāḥ ā ā

(IV, Sl. 10, 112)

[May her path, pleasant at intervals with lakes that are green with lotus-beds, where the heat of the sun’s rays is mitigated by shady-trees, where the dust is soft as the pollen from the lotuses, be cheered by gentle and pleasant breezes and be prosperous.]

Śakuntala is at once deified and identified as the power of nature’s beauty, grace and love. She can transform the social world and make it worth the love and protection of the greatest king on earth. She loves no ordinary mortal. Duṣyanta, the protector of the world and earth, is the crest jewel of the Puru dynasty who were committed to the services of the world. He is mighty, famous and good. Śakuntala’s love unites the beauty and innocence of the world with their lover and protector. The uniting force is love. Śakuntala is love and the lover. Love elevates her to the height of a Queen. But, when she reaches the palace and her dream world, a total (peripeteia) reversal awaits
her. She suffers utmost humiliation when Duśyanta refuses to accept her as his wife. He does not even recognize her and does not remember having loved and married her at the Kaṇva āśram. The curse effects amnesia in king Duśyanta:

\[
\text{Rāja - bhostapodhanāḥ, cintayannapi na khalu svikaraṇamatrabhavatyāḥ} \\
\text{smarāmi ī tatkathamimāmabhivyaktasatvalakṣaṇam pratyātmānāṁ} \\
\text{kṣetriṇamāsankamāṇaḥ pratipatsāye ī} \\
\]  

(V, 146)

[Ye holy men! I do not remember, much as I think of it, to have taken this lady in marriage. How then shall I receive her, bearing evident signs of pregnancy, when I have doubts about being her husband?]

Sakuntala is not only betrayed as a wife but shrinks and falls from the height of the Queen-Lover state to that of a dirty woman. Love that had elevated her state now denounces her. Sakuntala the lover and the beloved is now the spurned and humiliated woman. She is despised and insulted. She finally fails to prove her true integrity when she does not find the king's ring, given to her while parting from her. The curse of Durvāsa comes true and acts like Nemesis. While offering prayers to Ganga, the sacred river-goddess, in Sakrābatar Pradesh, near the shrine of Sači (the consort of Indra) perhaps, the ring fell down into the water. Sakuntala could not produce the ring that
would have cleared all doubts. The king taunts at the clever tricks of the āśramites and despises Sakuntala’s love. Even her beauty which had charmed him in the forest, had no appeal for him now. All her efforts to remind him of their love, marriage — (the wooing, the love oaths, the sighs and smiles, the joys of love desired and reciprocated) fail to revive his clogged memory. Even her fury becomes impotent. Sakuntala leaves the palace and presence of Dusyanta, loveless and unwanted. The beloved is treated by the lover as a scheming slut; a dirty flirt. Love, instead of rising to the heights of heavenly bliss, falls into the abyss of ignominy and misery. Rejected by her man, she is also denied parental protection. Left alone to herself, unable to make her gandharva marriage socially acceptable Sakuntala is left in a wilderness. Her first encounter with society turns her life and being into nought. Even the royal priest’s offer to keep her at his home till her delivery, is not out of any compassion or love for the ill fated, star crossed girl. He would keep her to test the veracity of the truth she was speaking, for the sages had predicted that the king would beget a son bearing the marks of an emperor on his body. If Sakuntala deliver’d a son like that she might be accepted, otherwise she could be abandoned:

Purohitāḥ : atrabhavatī tāvadaprasavādasmadgrīhe tiṣṭhatu | kṛta
itamucyata iti čet | tvam sādhubhiruddhiṣṭhaḥ prathamameva
çakravartinam putraṁ janayiṣya sīti | sa çenmunidouhitrastalla-
ksanopapanno bhaviṣyati, abhinandya suddhāntamanāṁ praveṣāyaśyasi

viparyaye tu piturasya samipānayanamavasthitameva

(V, 156)

[Let the lady dwell till her delivery in my house. If you ask why I say this, (my answer is) you have been told by the sages that at the very first you will beget a son who will bear the mark of a discus (in his hand). If then the son of the hermit's daughter bears that mark, then greet her and introduce her to the female apartments. But if the reverse happens, it is, evident enough, that she must be taken to her father].

Even these words spoken by the royal priest fail to convince the childless king, of the truth of Sakuntala's statements about their love and marriage. He could not even consider to keep her till her delivery. Sakuntala could not be accepted as she was. She is an alien in this society. She can exist only as nature's child and it is nature alone that intervenes and lifts her up above her ignominy. The supernatural machinery again restores the imbalance caused by Dūrvāsa's curse. The moment she leaves the palace she is taken away by a fiery feminine figure. The wailing Sakuntala is rescued by a fairy from a world where love, truth and vows could be manipulated by supernatural powers. Sakuntala is taken to a realm higher than the mundane by the spiritual agency of her mother Menaka:
The royal priest reports that, while the young girl, throwing up her arms, wailed for her misfortune, a fiery object in feminine form came down from a distance and carried her away towards apsarastirtha (the shrine of the apsaras).

This divine intervention could only surprise the king but not activate his memory nor awaken his curse-infected conscience. This supernatural act counterbalances the curse of Durvāsa, and releases the play to its earthly course. The curse that impeded the fulfilment of Śakuntala’s love and brought utter ignominy to the lovers, finally runs its course. Heaven interferes to save Śakuntala’s honour. The king becomes thoughtful at this wonder and almost admits that he had, perhaps married the Sage’s daughter, although he does not remember to have married her:

Rāja: kāmaṁ pratyādiśtaṁ smarāmi na parigrahaṁ munestanayāṁ

balavantu dūyamānaṁ prtyāyayatiṁva māṁ hṛdayaṁ

(V, Sl. 31, 158)
[True I do not recollect this daughter of the Sage repudiated to be my wife; nevertheless my heart being powerfully agitated almost persuades me to believe (her story).]

King Duṣyanta almost immediately gets the missing evidence, the 'royal ring' when officers produce before him the fisherman who had found it in the belly of a rohu fish. The sight of the royal ring immediately releases the king's memory from the curse of amnesia. Duṣyanta remembers that he had married Śakuntala at the forest āśram of sage Kaṇva. The released memory induces deep remorse and self-loathing in the king. Addressing the ring the king says:

Rāja - kathaṁ nu taṁ bāndhurakomalāṅguliṁ
karam vihāyasi nimagnāṁambhāsi āthaṁ
āçetanani nāma guṇam na lakṣyenmayeiva
kasmādavadhirita priya ā

(Act. VI, Sl. 13, 184)

[How couldst thou leave that hand with its slender delicate fingers and fall into the water? Or a lifeless thing may well not appreciate excellence. But how could I scorn my beloved?]

Love returns to the king and his pining grows:

Rāja - akāraṇaparityakte anusayataptahṛdayastāvadananukampyatāmayāṁ
janaḥ punardarsanena ā

(VII, 186)
[Abandoned without reason, let me, whose heart is stung with remorse, be once more blessed with a sight of thee.]

The ring that had sealed the Duṣyanta—Śakuntala marriage and union bridges the memory-gap caused by the curse of Dūrvāsa. With the rush of memory released from the curse, the king finds himself filled with self-hatred. The pangs of remorse, the return of love and the public suffering of the King make the love theme public. But the unconscious irony of the dramatic situation is that Śakuntala, whose love and truth were betrayed at the public court of the king, does not get an inkling of the king's released memory and consequent repentence. She remains at the Māriça āśram, at an empyrean level beyond the plains of reality. But she remains unrestored to love and wifehood. Her only pride is motherhood: Her love child, born at the āśram, compensates her loneliness. But the woman in her continues to suffer the memory of insult and humiliation without mitigation by any agency. While Duṣyanta languishes in the wake of revived memory, in regret and self-flagellation, Śakuntala stays immersed in her memory of arrested pain. Nothing moves for her except Bharat, her son. She 'hates' her love and wiping off her past by a futureless present, shows greater intensity and grace in her conduct of life. Her son fulfils her being and the mother in Śakuntala transfers her personal future to her son. Contrastively Duṣyanta does not have a son and is not aware of
Sakuntala's (their) son, Bharat. This irony hits at the basics of this world — the world of the King of Puru Dynasty. The world as the will of supernatural directors and the experiences of the human folk have two different parameters of values. The divine order expects purity of social purpose in the real world, but the real world conflicts with the Ideal and reduces the individuals to suffering entities. Duṣyanta suffers a futureless state as he has no son by any of his queens: Šakuntala mothers that future of the King by sacrificing her individual womanhood.

It may be worthwhile to probe the cause of this ironical situation in Kālidās's play. Any enquiry of this nature must lead up to an analysis and interpretation of Duṣvāsa's curse. The curse at one level is justified as the wrathful personal punishment given by a sage for negligence of duty at the āśram, a moral violation Šakuntala is guilty of. On another level it is the moral machinery of the world operating through a man of great discipline and knowledge like Duṣvāsa. Both Šakuntala and Duṣyanta have transgressed the orders to which they belong. Šakuntala did not wait for father Kaṇva, her Guru-father, to take his blessing and permission before falling for and responding to Duṣyanta's love. On the other hand Duṣyanta being the King of the "world" acted as a wilful individual ignoring the palace and kingdom, court and family. This individual projection of love in violation of the āšram
and palace values, arrest their individual lives by the curse. The text bears the
evidence of Duṣyanta’s palace and family commitments. After his memory
comes back when he sinks into misery, a portrait of Śakuntala is drawn by
him. The King is relieved by the portrait to a greater pain; of remembered
love and present need intensifying his guilt and longing for Śakuntala. But
when it is announced that the queen is coming to meet him, he immediately
asks his Viduṣaka (the royal clown) to hide the portrait of Śakuntala and save
him:

Rāja - vayasya, upasthitā devī bahumānagarvitā ca bhavānimāṁ
pratikṛtāṁ rākṣatu ।

[Friend, the queen is come and she is made arrogant by my great
attentions to her. So, take care of this picture.]

Viduṣaka - āttanamiti bhaṇa । (citraphalakasmādāyothāya ça) । yadi
bhavaṁ antahpurakālakūṭānmokṣyate tadāmāṁ meghapratichande prāsāde
sabdāpayā ।

[Say yourself. If your honour is freed from the bane of the inner
apartments then call me at the meghapratichanda palace.]

(VI, 196)

Sānumati - anyasankṛtahrdhayopi prathamāsambhāvanāmapekṣyate

sithilasouhārda idānmeṣa ।
[Though his heart is transferred to another, yet he cares for his first love. His love has very much lost its ardour now.]

(VI, 196)

This suggests that the king is afraid of the Sakuntala affair spreading among his queens, particularly his first queen. Sānumati the invisible nymph comments that although his mind now is set on Sakuntala he always loved his first queen, his chief consort. How could he then profess love to Sakuntala and marry her without informing his queens? This, in the moral universe is betrayal and violation of palace and family values. Dūrvāsa’s curse does not allow Dushyanta to enjoy conjugal love in his new happiness. Sakuntala is taken away from him by his own orders. Sakuntala too loses love, womanhood and wifehood. The curse stifles their love on the socio-human level as it violates the orders (āśram-palace) in which they operate. Dushyanta fails to socialize and legalise the gāndharva marriage he entered into with Sakuntala. The palace does not integrate the forest values of love. But love is not spurned or hated at the spiritual level. Love is an essence of the spirit and they are united finally at such a level in the play, while the prime of their life wastes in separation. The curse is lifted only after the signet of the King is discovered from the rohu fish; that is, the royal ring effects the restoration of love in the heart of Dushyanta as it had caused the separation earlier by going
underground. The ring is not a private possession of the King, it is a symbol of public trust and authority which the King uses for private and personal love. The ring therefore goes under water arresting the consummation of love at the public level. Duṣyanta’s loss of memory, caused by the curse, is the universe’s corrective measure to remind the King that all his actions are public: he can not take private decisions without taking advice from the court and family. The price of Duṣyanta’s abuse of the royal ring is the humiliation of an innocent woman in love, in the royal court. The curse peters out only after extracting the price. The King who in the opening act is portrayed as the saviour of the world, the protector of women and enforcer of values, himself becomes the instrument of torture for Śakuntala. The royal court of Duṣyanta which always dispensed justice to the world becomes the abode of injustice itself by the King’s actions.

But is love a transgression of the world order, deserving punishment? Are Śakuntala and Duṣyanta guilty of such transgression? These questions arise because of the curse which acts like the authority of the larger order, to subject the most delicate of human passions, love, to stand trial in public. The mysterious and the magical snatching away of Śakuntala to the empyrean level is an act of the divine to keep her away in safe purity till the King realises his error. Duṣyanta after his anagnorisis loves Śakuntala more and his love
becomes both individual and royal. He elevates himself to divine love. Hence
his restoration too is divine. Dūrvāsa’s curse causes pain to Śakuntala and
Dusyanta but purges their love of mundanity. It takes away the social dross
and unites the lovers at a higher plane than the social one.

But before he goes to a higher plane another aspect of his total being is
exposed. His attraction and love for Śakuntala and his rejection of her in the
presence of his people make him unsure of his faculties. He is no more the
protector of his kingdom although he is a great warrior. When reports come
about some ghost attacks (the mock attacks of Mātali, the charioteer of Indra,
the Lord of heaven) on the palace, Duṣyanta admits:

Rāja - (uthaya) mā tāvaṭ I mamāpi satveirabhībhyante grhaḥ I

athava

ahanyahanyātmana yeva tāva jñaṭunī pramādaskhalitāṁ na sākyāṁ I

prajāsū kāḥ kena pathā prayaṭṭīyasōṣato veditumasti saktīḥ I I

(VI, Sl. 26, 202)

[This must not be. How, even my house is infested by evil spirits ! Or,
Even when the mischiefs occassioned by one’s own negligence from day
to day are scarcely known, how then can one have the power to know
fully what path each of my subjects is treading ?]

Duṣyanta realizes that he has lost his grip over his duties and
responsibilities as the King-protector. He commits errors daily and his sense of
justice falters. Even here he alludes to the rejection of Sakuntala. His suffering is all the more maddening because Sakuntala had the future of his Puru dynasty in her womb. She carried his seeds away forsaken by him: His childless state is apparently futureless. This mutual agony and physical separation for both Sakuntala and Duṣyanta is presented in the play as an atonement for their transgression. After atonement they meet but not on the surface of the earth, not in the social world.

Mātali, the charioteer of Indra, comes to Duṣyanta with missives and invitation to fight the demons (the tribe of Kālanemi) who have been invading heaven. On board Indra’s chariot, the skiey journey of Duṣyanta reveals to him another setting far different from the forest āśram and the palace. Mātali describes in the superb poetry of Kālidās the angel-path and the divine landscape that reflects the new and now character of Duṣyanta — the lover, father, king, husband warrior in love’s bliss:

Mātali - sadṛṣameveitaḥ (stokamantaramatīṭya) āyuṣmaṇ, itah paśya
nākapṛṣṭapratīṣṭitasya soubhāgyamātmayaśasāḥ
vichittisokṣaḥ surasundarīṇaṁ
varnouraṁ kalpalatāṁsūkeṣu
vičintya gītakṣamarthajātaṁ
divoukasastvasṭarita likhati

(VII, Sl. 5, 212)
[That is quite worthy (of you). (Going a little distance). Long-lived one, see the full exaltation of your glory, which (now) rides on the back of heaven! With the residue of colours used by nymphs of heaven to adorn their persons, these dwellers of heaven are writing your exploits on vestments of the heavenly trees, thinking out verses suitable for singing.]

The King chances upon the āśram of Māriça, where Šakuntala lives in spiritual motherhood under the protection of the great couple Prajāpati kasyap and Aditi. The āśram gives the feeling of heaven to the king:

Rājā - swargādadhikataram nivṛtisthānam | amritangadamivavānāgosmi |

(VII, 218)

[It is a place more delightful than heaven; I seem plunged in a pool of nectar.]

This level-elevation in the structure of the play (from earth to heaven) is synchronized with the purification of the King’s heart of the social dirt; and the transcendence of his love from the mundane to the empyrean. The King is united with his son, Bharata, from whom Bharat varṣa, the ancient name of India, derives. Later, he is united with Šakuntala. Duṣyanta apologizes for his fault and submits himself to her:

sutanu hṛdayātpratyādesavyalīkamapetu te

kimapi manasaḥ saṁmoho me tada balavānbhūt
prabalatasamāmevaṁprāyāḥ subheṣu pravṛttayah:
srajamapi śirasyaṇḍhah kṣiptām dhunotyahi sānkayā 11

(VII, 24, 234)

[O' fair one let the unpleasantness caused by my desertion of thee depart from thy heart; for at that time a violent frenzy somehow overpowered my soul. Such, for the most part, is the attitude towards good of those in whose mind the darkness of illusion prevails. A blind man shakes off even a wreath of flowers thrown over his head mistaking it for a snake.]

This is true repentence and true knowledge. The King restores the moment of love to Śakuntala. She gets what she deserves after the fire test of insult, humiliation and separation. She finally is restored to her love. Her love triumphs and transcends the mundane. This transcendent love makes Śakuntala full and complete. She is wife, mother, queen and beloved. Such fulfilment is a rare fate for a woman. But in spite of such an exceptional fulfilment, we do not see her socially fulfilled. What could have happened after her restoration to honour is left to the reader's sweet imagination and wild conjecture. But the truth remains that her love does not get the earth or society to grow upon. Śakuntala is more for nature than society and her love is more spiritually redeemed than socially fulfilled.
No discussion on the two faces of Eve would be complete without reference to Rādha, the divine consort of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Since Kṛṣṇa consciousness has gained near universal credibility (thanks to the efforts of the ISCON) as an explanation of the perfect symmetry of the universe, Rādha the lover-"wife" of Kṛṣṇa can hardly be ignored. But Rādha as the consort of Kṛṣṇa Gopala (the cowherd) is a late realization in Indian theological evolution.

Kṛṣṇa as the manifestation of Viṣṇu dates back to B.C. 400-200 when the Bhagavata cult emerged in North India but there is no Rādha as a formal consort. In the Mahabharat there is no reference to Rādha although Kṛṣṇa dominates the entire epical scene of the ancient Aryavarta (the northern half of epic India). Even the Srimad Bhagavatam which the Cultural Heritage of India places in the eighth century A.D. does not mention Rādha. Yet Rādha in the Hindu religio-theological discourses is a divine presence as the consort of Kṛṣṇa (The word consort, however, does not convey any other meaning than "sitting by the side". The French paredre is closer to the Indian meaning).

Rādha is the sakti or energy of Kṛṣṇa and symbolically the energy of the cosmos. She is the power of joy, the ahlādini sakti of Kṛṣṇa and she is often identified both with Durga and Kāli, the bright and the dark forms of the cosmic energy. In the Hindu calender Rādha-aṣṭami is observed in the month of bhadra which suggests that Rādha is very much an aspect of the cultural-

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religious faith system governing social life. Rādha in popular belief is the united power of Kāli and Durga. Charlotte Vaudeville in her paper presented at the June 1978 World conference, "Rādha and the Divine consort" at Harvard University writes:

It was in Brndāvan (Sanskrit Vṛndavana) in the heart of the Braj country, that the gopi Rādha, Kṛṣṇa's sweetheart in popular tradition and the very embodiment of pure love (mahabhava) for Kṛṣṇa, came to be established as the caller's ṣakti and consort in the theological and cultic sphere. The treatises of the Gandiya sect, written by the gosvamis (cow masters) of Brndāvan, disciples of Caitanya, conceived her as the supreme lord's hladini ṣakti, his "energy of bliss", and elevated her to the rank of the Adyasakti, the cosmic energy, the primeval mother of the world. Such a metamorphosis took place away from Puri, where the cult of the Jagannatha trio or the Jagannatha-Ekanamsa pair (Jagannatha and Subhadra) was still dominant. Yet it could only take place in a tradition deeply imbued with tantric thought and practice, as was that of the gosvamis who had come from Bengal to Brndāvan.

(The Divine Consort 11)

Although Vaudeville credits Caitanya and his disciples for having elevated Rādha to the "rank of the Adyasakti", she has deviated from the authentic tradition which obtained before Caitanya. Jayadev of village
Kendubilva or Kenduli near Puri in Orissa, in his *Gitagovinda*, a lyrical kāvya (a lyric drama too!), has done it earlier. In fact the Rādha of legend and popular myths appears for the first time as a flesh and blood figure in the *Gitagovinda*. In the plays of Rupa Gosvami like *Vidagdhamadha*, *Lalitamādhava* and *Ujjvalanilamani* too Rādha appears in human form. But more than a human figure Rādha is conceived as the greatest bhakta or lover. In the cultist Vaiṣṇava tradition to which Rupa Gosvami belongs, Rādha is the divine lover and the divine recipient of love.

After the sixteenth century, however, Rādha enters the Indian Bhaṣa literatures like, Oriya, Bengali, Maithili and Bhojapuri in a big way. Rādha goes beyond the Vindhyas to the south too and the entire country and its native culture elevates her to the state of a great lover, divine and full like *prakṛti*. But in popular puranic literature stemming from Rupa Gosvami's plays, Rādha is portrayed as a married woman, wife to Candrasena, a cowherd. In the fifteenth century Oriya epic, the *Mahabharat* of Sarala Das, there is just an episodic reference to Candrasena and Rādha. Sarala Das does not focus on the Rādha-Kṛṣṇa love theme but in his epic Kṛṣṇa asks a tunnel maker to dig a tunnel to Rādha's bedroom in the Candrasena house. The relationship between Kṛṣṇa and Rādha in the post-*Gitagovinda* Rādha literature places it at the *parakīya* level. For the Vaiṣṇavas Rādha is a "medium", an identity which makes the unattainable Kṛṣṇa-essence attainable. Rādha
spreads over the universe as the sakti or divine energy of Kṛṣṇa. She absorbs the full manifestation of the divine, the mundane and the human in the universe and is also absorbed by it. Donna Marie Wulff perceptively comments:

Through her great love, made manifest in songs, in poems, in vernacular plays, and in Drama's such as Rupa's, Rādha renders Kṛṣṇa accessible to Vaiṣṇava bhaktas. She is necessary not because the lord is conceived as unapproachable (as is often the case in religious traditions in which a mediator plays a prominent role), for it is not Kṛṣṇa's majestic otherness (aisvarya) that is paramount for Gaudiya Vaiṣṇavas but rather his exquisite sweetness (mādhurya). Something quite different is clearly at work here. Rādha is necessary because love requires two, because sweetness needs "another" to taste it.

(The Divine Consort 40-41)

Moreover Rādha literally means a constellation far larger than man's imagined universe identified with the totality of Kṛṣṇa. The union between the complimentary duality of Rādha and Kṛṣṇa is man's ultimate mokṣa, salvation. This union is the absolute and central energy of creation, a creation that enjoys and effects enjoyment in man. In the final scene of Vidagdhamādhava Rupa Goswami writes:
What supreme enjoyment arises

When Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā are united!

Who could cease to tell of that
quintessence of erotic mood

Save one speechless utterly
with ecstasy?

(RV, ii)

Rādhā is the ultimate giver of rasa, the intensest physical, psychical and
spiritual enjoyment that man can imaginatively experience. Kṛṣṇa is the
receiver and the giver of the rasa that Rādhā churns out through love and its
consummation is at the physical and spiritual levels. Rādhā thus is more
important than Kṛṣṇa as she attains him through love. She could make Viṣṇu,
the greatest puruṣa, and his highest manifestation Kṛṣṇa accept that love as the
ultimate in earthly experience rendering heavenly bliss. Rādhā therefore is a
metaphor of conjugal bliss where love is larger than life and is the essence of
reality. The lord of the universe is the lover and his sakti or energy is Rādhā's
love. Rādhā's love envelops the entire diversity of the universe, its bio-
diversity, to embrace the aśvārya (splendour) as well as the mādhurya
(sweetness) of Kṛṣṇa. This is the peakmost or ultimate tangible experience of
love. And naturally Rādhā is literature's ultimate lover, far greater than
Cleopatra of history. Rādha is the lover. For her, family, kingdom, war and children have no meaning. She peers into the primal centre of life, the stillpoint vibrating with the energy of love, and perpetuates the vibration with her all-uniting union.

In the Gitagovinda of Jayadeva we see this Rādha as the embodiment of the energy of love. Rupa Goswami introduces more characters and names one of Rādha’s archrivals in Krṣṇa’s love, Candrāvali. But what Gosvami gains in social realism he loses in lyrical intensity and more importantly in projecting the concept of Rādha in its disembodied essence. It is the Gitagovinda that gives Rādha both a physical and spiritual essence. She is both woman and abstract essence of love, body and dream. A close look into Jayadeva’s work is called for at this point.

Gitagovinda too has a dramatic structure. In a brief opening exposition Rādha is asked by Nanda to see off "this darkness-fearing son of mine at home". To this command Rādha and Krṣṇa wander in the forest celebrating love and life on the Yamuna banks:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{megheirmeduramambaram vanabhuvaḥ syāmāstamālādṛmeir} & \\
\text{nakta bhīrurayam tvameva tadimaṁ rādhe gṛhaṁ prāpaya} & \\
\text{ithyāṁ nandanidesātasālītayoh pratyadhvakunjādṛmaṁ} & \\
\text{rādhāmādhavayorjajyanti yamunākule rahaḥ kelayaḥ 11 (129)}
\end{align*}
\]
["Clouds thicken the sky, 
Tamāla trees darken the forest. 
The night frightens him. 
Rādha, you take him home!"

They leave at Nanda’s order, 
Passing trees in thickets on the way, 
Until secret passions of Rādha and Mādhava 
Triumph on the Jamuna river bank.] (69)

This short exposition gives freedom to the night-fearing boy and the fearless, free maiden. There is no social tension, no intricate plot; the primeval lovers are released into a universe where the social sense is harmonized into a life of love, beauty, natural ecstasy. Rādha and Krṣṇa now become the night-fearing dark wanderer and his bright guide.

The symbolism is obvious. The dark-bright binary resolves the mystery of fear and love. Krṣṇa is "afraid" of darkness as it releases blind passion. Rādha is the guide to that passion, its opposing fire. The sexual symbolism of union of polar opposites too is significant: It suggests the active and the creative principle in love-embrace, modulating creation. Krṣṇa is the universal creative dance and Rādha is the controlling energy. Jayadev, however, portrays Rādha as the lover of the cosmic form and soul of Krṣṇa. The purpose of
creation is love and love is the free and open dance of Radha and Kṛṣṇa in creative union. The poem is structured on the sensuous beauty of the universe. The cosmic duo in their physical beauty and charm fill the universe and the physical beauty of the universe fills them:

\[ \text{lalitalavaṅgalatāparisālanakomalamalayamsārīre} \]
\[ \text{madhukaranikarakarambitakokilājājatukūṭāma kutūre} \]
\[ \text{viharati haririha sarasavasante} \]
\[ \text{nṛtyati yuvatijanena samarī sakhi virahijanasya durāhte} \]

[Soft sandal mountain winds caress quivering vines of clove,
Forest huts hum with droning bees and crying cuckoos,
When spring’s mood is rich, Hari roams here
To dance with young women, friend -
A cruel time for deserted lovers.] (74)

Fullness, rotundity, fragrance, softness and luscious beauty of the night evoke love and the desire for union in both the divinities. The Gītagovinda begins with Radha’s jealousy at Kṛṣṇa’s sexciting dance with the gopis (cowherdesses) and her intense desire for union with Kṛṣṇa.

\[ \text{jaladapatalavāladinduviniṅdakachaṅdanatilakalalātām} \]
\[ \text{peenaghanastanamaṅdalamardananaṅrīdayahrdayąkapātām} \]

(136)
His sandalpaste browmark outshines the moon in a mass of clouds.

His cruel heart is a hard door bruising circles of swelling breasts. (78)

Kṛṣṇa after a while realizes the indiscretion of communal sex (Rasalīla) with the gopis and goes to self-exile in a thicket of the forest. He is stung by regret and distracts himself from worldly distraction. Rādha as the disciplinary principle of worldly passions attracts him out of the orgy to a contemplation of love. In other words, Rādha’s love cures him of sensuality.

Rādha retreats to another lonely thicket sulking at the orgiastic passion of Kṛṣṇa. The two beings do not communicate to each other but remember each other’s beauty, grace and humanity. Jayadev ingenuously introduces another female character who functions in the poem as the Greek Mnemosin, the goddess of Memory. As there is no forward action in the poem, memory of Kṛṣṇa and Rādha substitute movement and action in a subtle manner. The character introduced is an age-fellow (sakhi) of Rādha who serves as the go-between carrying "memory and desire" to the cosmic lovers. Memory of the face, breast, arms, lips super-sensitized by images of nature lead to super-fantasies of sexual union:

bhrūcāpe nihitaḥ katākṣavisīkho nirmātu marmavyathāṁ
śyāmātmā kutilaḥ karotu kabariḥbhāropi mārodyamaṇī
moham tāvadayam cha tanvi tanutām bimbādharo rāgavāṇ
sadvṛttastanamandalastava kathām prāneirmama kṛiḍati || (140)
[Glancing arrows your brow’s bow conceals
May cause pain in my soft mortal core.
Your heavy black sinuous braid
May perversely whip me to death.
Your luscious red berry lips, frail Rādha,
May spread a strange delirium.
But how do breasts in perfect circles
Play havoc with my life?] (84)

Rādha’s desire-pangs too border on the fantastic:

yamunāṭīravānirāṇīkuṇḍe maṇḍamāṣṭhitam I
prāha premabharodbhṛntam maṁḍhavaṁ rāḍhikāsakhī I I
nīndati caṇḍanamiṇḍukiraṇaṁmuṇi viridati khedamadīraṁ I
vyālānilayamilanena garalamiva kalayati malayasāṁraṁ I I
sā vīrahe tava dīna I
maṁḍhava maṇasiṇīkhabhayādiva bhāvanayā līna I I
aviralaṇipatitaṁdaṇaśaradīva bhavadavanāya visālaṁ I
svaḥṛdayamarmaṇi varma karoti sajalanaliniḍalajalālam I I
kusumaviṣṭhasaratālpaṇaḷpa-nilāśakalakamaniyaṁ I
vratamiva tava parirambhasukhāya karoti kusumasāyaṇiyeṁ I I
bahiṭa ca galitavilochanajalabharamāṇanakamalamudāraṁ I
vidhumiva vikatavidhuṁtudadaṁtadalanaqalitamṛtaṁdhaṁ I I
vilikhati rahasi kuraṅgamadena bhavaṁtamasarabhūtam

praṇamati makaramadho vinidhāya kare ca sāram navaçūtaṃ  || (141)

[In a clump of reeds on the Jamuna river bank

Where Mādhava waited helplessly,

Reeling under the burden of ardent love,

Rādhika’s friend spoke to him.

She slanders sandalbalm and moonbeams — weariness confuses her. She feels venom from nests of deadly snakes in sandal mountain winds.

Lying dejected by your desertion, fearing love’s arrows

She clings to you in fantasy, Mādhava.

Trying to protect you from the endless fall of Love’s arrows,

She shields her heart’s soft mortal core with moist lotus petals.

Lying dejected by your desertion, fearing Love’s arrows,

She clings to you in fantasy, Mādhava.

She covets a couch of Love’s arrows to practice her seductive art.

She makes her flower bed a penance to win joy in your embrace.

Lying dejected by your desertion, fearing Love’s arrows,

She clings to you in fantasy, Mādhava.

She raises her sublime lotus face, clouded and streaked with tears,

Like the moon dripping with nectar from cuts of the eclipse’s teeth
Lying dejected by your desertion, fearing love's arrows,

She clings to you in fantasy, Mādhava.

She secretly draws you with deer musk to resemble the god of love.

Riding a sea monster, aiming mango-blossom arrows — she worships you.

Lying dejected by your desertion, fearing Love's arrows,

She clings to you in fantasy, Mādhava.] (86-87)

The go-between friend brings Rādha to Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa to Rādha like a catalytic agent displaying objective concern. She alone speaks and stimulates the dramatic action raising memory to articulate communication. Intensive longing for communion is interpreted by the sakhi and thereby raises the two figures to spiritual levels. Their love enlivens the leaves, flowers, birds and the sky and prepares the universe for the consummation of love. Finally the moon rises and the cosmicity of the coming union is symbolised. Rādha's love craves for union and Kṛṣṇa realizes in her love the pure essence of his soul. But the consummation is delayed by one more day in the forest. Kṛṣṇa the hero-god must be fully immersed in Rādha's love. Rādha spurns him at first as Kṛṣṇa's desire for other women must be won over by love. She chastises him and refuses to accept his apologies. Rādha is ashamed that she had ever loved a philanderer. She accuses Kṛṣṇa of having profaned her love:
tavedāṁ pasyantyāḥ prasaradanurāgam bahiriva

priyāpādālaktaḥturitamaruṇachāyāhrdayaṁ |

mamādyā prakhyaṭapraṇayabharaḥbhāngena kitava
tvadaloḥaḥ sokaḍaṇi kimapi lajjaṁ janayati || (155)

[The red stains her lac-stained feet

Lovingly left on your heart

Look to me like fiery passion

Exposing itself on your skin.

Cheat, the image I have of you now

Flaunting our love’s break

Causes me more shame

Than sorrow.] (108)

But Rādha finally wins the great lover who rises above sensuality and surrenders to love. He protests his single-minded devotion to Rādha and honours her love:

parihara kṛtaḥke śaṅkā tvaya satataṁghanastanajaghanayaṁkrānte svānte

parānavaṅkaśini

visāti vitanoranye dhanye na kopi mamāntaraṁ

stanabhara parīrambahārambhe vidhehi vidheyaṁ || (159)
[Fretful Radha, don’t suspect me
A rival has no place
When your voluptuous breasts and hips
Always occupy my heart.
Only the ghost of Love is potent enough
To penetrate my subtle core.
When I start to press your heavy breasts,
Fulfil our destined rite!] (113)

Radha in the end triumphs as the recipient and giver of love. She sustains the dance of energy. In sexual terms Radha’s love and passion maintain the equilibrium of the universal dancer. The creative dance is the true fulfilment of life in this dark world. Kṛṣṇa’s fear of darkness finally is relieved by Radha’s love. Radha in Gitagovinda is the human lover elevating Kṛṣṇa to creativity. Jaydeva presents Radha as a "śvadhinabhātrka" (Gitagovinda) as a being overpowering her lover by her love. She is the chiselled essence of nature: She has no social identity. She is only a lover. Her love enslaves and ennobles. Kṛṣṇa himself recognizes her superior love by asking her to come on top of him placing her foot on his head (legend has it that the poet hesitated to compose the line dehi pada pallava etc... out of deference for the great Lord; the Lord wrote the lines when the poet was
away to bathe, thus according the line divine sanction). Kṛṣṇa himself submits
to Rādha's great power of love.

But Rādha is an abstraction. She has no family, no identity. She is only a lover. She is no wife to Kṛṣṇa. She is no one's wife. In puranic literature Rādha is identified as the wife of impotent Ĉandrasena but that never establishes Rādha's wifehood. Rādha is the essence of overpowering love: Love that endlessly gives without claiming an identity - social or even individual.

**Anna Karenina**

Anna in Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* is another woman, who is goaded to death by her love. If Dido moved from creativity to barrenness, Anna moves from love to hate. A beautiful woman, charming, gay, and intelligent, much embellished, greatly accomplished and more brilliant than any of the aristocratic society ladies, or housewives, Anna reaps *hate* while she sows *love*. It is indeed shocking and horrifying to see the woman in her craving every moment for love but ending up in the diametrically opposite emotion -- hate. Her unquenchable thirst for love, her search for love, her demands for love fill her world, her life, her heart and soul with a violent sense of hatred.

Anna is an exceptionally beautiful, vivacious and intense woman. Men, instantaneously are drawn to her. On the very first encounter with her,
Vronsky is stunned at not only her beauty and charm and lovely grace, but her *joi de vivre* that sparkled through her eyes:

Vronsky followed the conductor into the carriage and when they reached the door of the compartment, stood aside to make way for a lady coming out. With the insight of a man of fashion, Vronsky could see at a glance that the lady's appearance placed her in the highest ranks of society. He murmured an apology and was about to step inside when something prompted him to look at her again, not because she was very beautiful and not because of the elegance and modest grace evident in her entire figure, but because of an extraordinary tenderness and delicacy in the expression of her face as she passed closely by him. When he turned she, too, turned her head. Her grey luminous eyes, darkened by thick lashes, lingered a moment on his face in friendly attentiveness, as if she recognized him, then swept the crowd as if in search of someone. In this brief glance Vronsky had time to notice a suppressed vivacity that played over her face and fluttered between her brilliant eyes and the scarcely perceptible smile curving her red lips. It was as though her whole being were brimming over with something that showed itself against her will in her smile and in the light of her eyes. She would deliberately put out this light, but in spite of her it would shine in her scarcely perceptible smile.

(Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina* 96)
Anna thus portrayed for us by the writer-creator is an intense woman. Every experience, every moment, however small and ordinary, is lived with intensity by her:

When her brother reached her Vronsky was struck by the grace and resolution with which she threw her left arm round his neck, swiftly pulled his head down and gave him a sound kiss. Vronsky could not tear his eyes away and smiled without knowing why. (98)

Anna charms and wins the hearts of even women:

"Oh", said the countess, taking her hand, "I could travel to the ends of the earth with you and never find it dull. You are one of those delightful women with whom it is as pleasant to be silent as to talk". (98)

She is lovable, kind and loving. She radiates a charm that equally enchants the old and young. Her coming to Moscow as a peace maker between her brother Steve and his wife Dolly, shows how she sought order and beauty everywhere and in the lives of the people around her. She could freely communicate with people of her age. Kitty, the younger sister of Dolly who "was intimidated by the thought of how this fashionable Petersburg lady whom everybody praised would receive her" (109) becomes a willing and delighted fan of Anna:

But Anna liked her, she could see that at once. Apparently Anna was taken by her youth and beauty, and as for Kitty, before she knew it she
was not only completely under her influence but had fallen in love with her as young girls sometimes do fall in love with older married women. Anna did not look like a lady of fashion or the mother of an eight-year old son; she looked more like a twenty-year old girl, so fresh was she, so lithe in her movements, so full of a vivacity that broke through in her smile or in her eyes, except for moments when her eyes assumed a grave, even sorrowful look that amazed and attracted Kitty. Kitty perceived that Anna was completely without affectation and hid nothing and that she knew another, a higher world of complex and poetic interests inaccessible to Kitty. (109-110)

But Anna demands passionately an outlet, a way to express herself and to project herself over people around her. The people around her feel her presence, as though her soul communicates to them with its charm. Anna has not only a passionate being in her but an aesthetic self that elevates her far above the women both in the familial and social mould.

The social life Anna leads and the honour and respect she receives as Karenin's -- a statesman's wife, is however not seen to be so in her personal life. A void (suggested subtly) is seen clearly in her relations with her husband. Anna's passionate self perceives the hollowness in her husband. For Karenin, every little common action is a ceremony. When Anna returns from
Moscow after her peace making mission at her brother's place, he receives her at the station, cold and ceremonious:

"Well as you see, your loving husband — as loving as on his wedding day — is consumed with desire to see you", he said in his slow thin voice and in the tone he almost always used with her, a tone mocking those who say such things in earnest. (152)

His ardour could only elicit from Anna an enquiry for her son but no love. Even their dinner is not a personal affair of a cosy family sitting together with the warmth of love glowing for one another, "the Karenins always had at least three dinner guests" (159). Every personal moment in Karenin's life is a rigid routine:

Every minute in Karenin's life was assigned to some particular business.

He held to a rigid schedule so as to accomplish all the tasks each day presented to him. "Without haste and without waste", was his motto. He entered the drawing room, bowed to everyone and quickly sat down smiling at his wife.

"Well, my solitude has come to an end. You would not believe how uncomfortable it is (he stressed the word uncomfortable) to dine alone". (159)

He had his meetings, his work and he had the habit of reading in the evening. The routine moments apart, their intimate moments at night too were
ritualistic affairs. Anna never experienced any warmth or tenderness in love:

At exactly twelve 'O' clock, while Anna was still sitting at her writing-table finishing a letter to Dolly, she heard his even tread in house-slippers and the next moment he reached her side, washed and combed and with a book under his arm.

"High time, high time", he said with a special sort of smile and went into the bedroom. (162)

Karenin never explored 'Anna's passionate being. "The higher world of complex, "poetic interest" was never touched by Karenin. Anna is married to a man, as her brother Oblonsky put it, "twenty years your elder. You married him without love, without knowing what is love" (575). That was not alone a dreadful mistake as Anna would say. Anna's passionate being which made her desire to live for herself could not immerse herself in her husband, her son and her family. She found her life hollow and empty. She realized to her shock the void in her life when she came across Vronsky. Vronsky's admiration for her personality, his adoration for her charm and vivacity, his vigorous nature matching her passionate being, brings the suppressed reality of her hollow life into a glaring contrast to her experience which she could no longer refuse to admit to herself. It is the horrible realization of the fact that she has been living an empty life which she never admitted to her friends, her
relations and her society, even her husband. She played a happy woman's role. She felt she was playing a tune to a reflection in the mirror. This realization, which she could no longer avoid, makes her flee from Moscow, from Vronsky's very presence. Even then her uneasiness did not cease, as her problem was not Vronsky, but her unrequited self. Her futile efforts in preparing for the journey by train, to divert herself from the aching self that languished for relief, all ended up in further realization of the demands of herself:

As Anna read she felt a distaste for reading, that is, for contemplating the reflection of other people's lives. She wanted too urgently to live herself.

(146)

As she recollects her short stay at Moscow and her relationship with Vronsky, 'the humble adoration written on his face' (146), she feels ashamed of her realization; as if on thinking of Vronsky an inner voice said to herself: "Warm, very warm, hot" (147). However hard she tried to dismiss him from her thoughts she could not succeed. She could not avoid her self-longing for a release from the tenseness of a self suppressed:

She felt that her nerves were being screwed tighter and tighter like fiddle strings. (148)

It was not the irresistible charm of a man that drew Anna to Vronsky. It was not the adolescent passion that made her mad. Anna, at last, found a man
who accepted her as his universe, his very existence. She was the centre of this man’s life, whose body, mind, soul was completely geared up to her being. With Vronsky it was not her efforts to immerse her self, as she did with her husband, her son, her family members and her social and intimate friend circle. Trying to be involved with them, identifying her interests with theirs, losing her self in their world, with Vronsky, it was receiving and absorbing a whole world, may be new, compared to her now reality and hence risky.

Anna at last found soul satisfying love which demanded her attention, concentration and her total being. She realized that her attachment to her son was only a vague longing, a conscious diversion away from the demands of her soul to live intensely. After her return from Moscow she understands the vagueness of her life, and the emptiness of her being. Initially in her futile efforts to forget Vronsky, to shake him off her thoughts, she finds her husband a strange, funny and unpleasant distraction:

An unpleasant feeling gripped her heart when she saw those steady, tired eyes, as if she had expected him to look different. But most of all she felt dissatisfaction with herself when she met him. It was an old familiar feeling, like a consciousness of playing false; she always had it when with her husband, but formerly she disregarded it; now she was only too sharply and painfully aware of it. (151-152)
And when she sees her son after her return from Moscow the same kind of unpleasantness creeps into her:

The first sight of her son, as of her husband, disappointed Anna. She had seen him in imagination as better than in reality. (156)

Her disillusionment with her familiar circle of friends is appalling. After Countess Lydia Ivanovna came to meet her, she realizes she is not happy with her:

Anna was fond of her, but today she saw her as for the first time, with all her imperfections. (157)

As she tries to analyse her feelings, she becomes aware of a gaping disparity in her feelings for her relations with everyone around her:

All of this went on before, why did I not notice it before? Anna asked herself. Perhaps she was particularly out of sorts today. But really it is absurd: she calls herself a Christian, a doer of good, and yet she is always angry and everybody is her enemy, all enemies in Christ and in self-righteousness. (158)

Anna is progressively isolated from the family, society, affection and communicative contact with her husband and friends. Her disillusionment grows into a deep vacuum which she could fill only with Vronsky's thoughts, his love and presence. She becomes impatient to share his world and that means to sever all the links with the world to which she belonged now.
Vronsky's is a world of freedom while Karenin's is a rigid code run to precision by a clock work mechanism. Contrastively, here is Vronsky giving up his betrothed (Kitty, whom he was eager to marry, before he saw Anna), his family (defying his mother, brother and sister-in-law for Anna), his profession (giving up his promotion and resigning his job) and even his society for her -- his very goddess. Here, on the other hand is Karenin, demanding her to identify herself with his world, his life, asking her to think with his mind.

The conflict in Anna, at the beginning is that of the conflict between the self and the role. She, naturally, is inclined towards the social role. But, soon she realizes a deepening of the emptiness of the self as she had to suppress the self for the social role. The intense frustration bursts forth in her gushing tears, after her confession to her husband about her relationship with Vronsky: Karenin's decision to maintain the status quo, "I maintain that the best measure for both sides is the superficial preservation of the status quo, which I agree to preserve, but only on condition that she strictly conform to my demand that she break off all relations with her lover" (387) -- irritates and enrages Anna. The letter which he wrote asking her to return to their Moscow house emphasized the social role she was playing all these years:

He's right ! He's right ! She repeated. It goes without saying that he is always right, he is a Christian, he is generous ! Oh, base, odious man !

And no one understands it but me, and no one ever will; and I cannot
explain it. They say he is pious, upright, honourable, wise, but they do not see what I see. They do not know that for eight years he has stifled me, has stifled everything that was alive in me, not once has he looked upon me as a live woman in need of love. They do not know that at every step he has humiliated me and been highly pleased with himself. Did I not try, did I not do everything in my power to justify the life I led? Did I not try to love him, to love my son when I could no longer love my husband? But the time came when I could deceive myself no longer; I was alive and it was not my fault if God had made me a woman who had to love and love. And what has he done? If he had killed me, or killed him, I could have borne it, I would have forgiven everything, but no, he... (400)

But this reasoning, this realization of the truth about her soul being stifled all the time, her shattered dreams and expectations in her familial life, her dubious status, her contempt for her husband's decision to continue their lives as they were -- all these could not make her strong and determined enough to end her agony of living a life of duality. The roles clashed with each other -- the lover and wife, started tearing the self apart. One moment she wanted to throw the mask of her social face and run away to Vronsky, her freedom, her choice: "she felt that everything in her soul was double, split in
two, as images become double when the eyes are overtired" (395). She ends up her agony by deciding to go away with her son. "She must go away with her son" (396). That is another role between the lover and wife -- the role of the mother: she remembered the partly sincere if greatly exaggerated role she had been playing for the last few years -- the role of a mother living for her child alone.

This seemed to be her only way. She would give up her other two roles and be a mother, a dignified and sanctified position. But, when her husband asks her to go back to St. Petersberg, she is shocked into the painful realization of her helplessness to leave her position and status in the society. In her eagerness to run away from Karenin and in her urge to join Vronsky she is thinking of going away to Moscow with her son. Her son again is her status symbol; her passport to her social world, the identity of the mother of Karenin's son. She is nothing without the Karenin stamp:

She knew that her position in society, which only that morning had seemed of so little consequence, was dear to her and she was incapable of exchanging it for the shameful position of a woman who has left her husband and child to join her lover; (402)

Anna's conflict within and her dual life at home — receiving her lover at her husband's house, the hide and seek she had to play in the society —
led her to a state of delirium. She was constantly torn between hatred and repulsion for her husband who prolonged such a state of shameful relationship with him. The admixture of these contradictory emotions upset her being which always sought order and beauty in her life and in others' as well. She could not explain to herself the conflicting emotions of abhorrence for her husband and love for her man. Her troubled spirit deep at the subconscious levels, sought to strike a balance between her fear of social disgrace and moral aberration and the intensity to fulfill her self. The turmoil was too strong for her spirit. In her desire to harmonize the role and the self, she dreamt that:

...both of them were husbands to her, that both of them lavished their caresses on her. Alexei Karenin wept and kissed her hands and said, "everything is well now!" And Alexei Vronsky was there too, and he too, was her husband. And she, surprised that this had once seemed impossible, laughed and explained to them that everything was much simpler now, that both of them were satisfied and happy (214).

But, Anna could not go on with this self deception. Though she dreaded disgrace, she abhorred the deceptive semblance of a normal conjugal life as desired by Karenin. The gap between appearance and reality was so unbridgeable that it increased her inner suffering. What with the bearing of
the child of Vronsky, she borders on delirium. The so called Christian virtues
of Karenin increased her repulsion for him, for, his Christian forgiveness and
acceptance of Anna and Vronsky’s child was a constant irritant reminding her
that she is a fallen woman accepted back into the familial fold with
magnanimity:

"I have heard that women love men for their vices", she came out with
Try to understand that the very sight of him affects me physically, simply
drives me mad... I hate him for his very generosity". (573-574)

With the same revulsion for his generosity she leaves him and her son
for Vronsky. Her action, she feels, is like riding a cross of love which elevates
her above her husband. Anna could not realize that she had split herself into
two contradictory selves. She threw away her social self in her longing to
change the existing reality. But, the same social self which she discarded
became her curse. She could not go with Vronsky anywhere without being
disgraced. The same social circles she had moved in like a goddess, were now
forbidden for her. She dreaded going into them and wished that Vronsky too
should avoid all society. If the society could not accept her, why should
Vronsky go to that same society? She desired that he should all the time
hover around her, run around and into her. So long as they were abroad and
out of Russia they were together. But, in Russia and especially in St.
Petersburg their estrangement deepened. Vronsky’s desperate efforts to reinstate her in the social circles, to save her from distress and disgrace enraged her and had the same effect on her as Karenin’s generosity. While with Karenin, she defied him and chose Vronsky to escape from Karenin. Now with Vronsky, she had the same restlessness to escape but there was no way out for her. Her social life was completely closed. She must now run Vronsky’s household, tend his child and wait for him as she waited for Karenin. She left her old ugly, matter of fact, familial world for a new bright and beautiful world that lacked pith and soul. The beautiful world she desired and longed to create, was undefined for Anna. It had no shape. She felt insecure, shaky in her new world. Vronsky’s demands that she should legalise her position as his wife, increased her insecurity. But, a divorce decreed by law was not the vindication of her honour. She thought her son was her legal passport and social flag that would vindicate her honour. A divorce without her son, she could not conceive. But, the long cherished life with Vronsky was dreadful. She turned more and more upon her man, demanding his entire soul for herself. She envied him, his friends, his diversions, his pursuits, his business, his responsibilities. She pursued him like a hunted deer, sent letters and telegrams playing upon his sentiments, forcing his love to bring him back to her. Dreading that Vronsky’s fervour of love for her would cool off, she hastened the very process of it by her incessant efforts to ward it off. She
constantly tortured herself with the question: "What if he no longer loves me?" (II:140). And she deliberately chose a new role for herself: the role of a seductress; grew aggressively vivacious; dressed beautifully with elegance and taste; tried to flirt with his friends. She little realized that her very efforts drove him away from her: 'He felt that his esteem for her was decreasing at the same time that his sense of her beauty was increasing," (Anna Karenina II 146). She often wanted to be assured of his love, which he protested till he felt ashamed of them:

And his protestations of love, which he found so commonplace he was ashamed to utter them, she drank in greedily, and little by little she grew calmer. (II 153)

Vronsky, with whom Anna chose to live, was not an unimaginative machine like human being as was Karenin. Unlike Karenin or even that spoiled son of Anna, he was a creative being who had love at his heart. Though he gave up his job and his family for his love, he never regretted it. He learned art, then, he learnt architecture. When he found he could not be an artist, he settled in the country and introduced improvised farming. He built a hospital with all the modern and scientific equipment for the people in the country. It was Vronsky who ran the household, not Anna. He supervised all details of the house, the grounds, the fields, the hospital, even the food and
drinks served to their guests: 'Anna was hostess only to the extent of guiding the conversation,' (254). Instead of inspiring his creativity, encouraging his constructive ideas and helping him create a new world Anna pursued him incessantly and choked his creativity and stifled his being. It was as though the mission and ambition of her life was to captivate him:

She studied all the subjects that occupied Vronsky by reading books on them and specialized periodicals, so that he often consulted her on matters of agriculture, architecture, occasionally even horse-breeding and sport. (II 270)

But all her attempts 'to remain dear to Vronsky' her help in the hospital work, her introducing many valuable improvements, her desire 'not only to please but to serve him' -- all these efforts were not to win him with love but to possess him artfully. It spread a web of love. She worked towards imprisoning him in her self, which led to the suffocation of their lives. She drove Vronsky from love to obstinacy; from warmth to coldness. The relationship between them was warped up and began to hurt both of them. The naturalness of feelings and the spontaneity of love for each other, dried up and sundered them apart. Anna tortured herself with irrational jealousy; for every moment Vronsky spent away from her, she grew hourly suspicious. Anna's love did not breed any faith; only fear, doubt, and insecurity, which led her to frenzy. She became her own victim.
Even the tender sentiments of motherhood were dried up in her. A woman who pined for her first child had neither any concern nor any love for her baby daughter. Her love-child grew up in neglect. But Anna loved Sergei her son. Sergei, her son of wedlock, was her badge of honour. This love child was the symbol of her dishonour. Anna hated her daughter. She was no longer a mother; the 'death' of love left the mother dying.

Anna threw away her wifehood and her motherhood for Vronsky's love. But, she finally throws away her love too. She wastes her life, her being and causes a general sense of waste. She empties herself and empties others' lives. Instead of fulfilling her life with love, she makes it barren. Love without blossoming, turns into fanaticism and a weapon of persecuting the loved one. Anna with her vague fears, meaningless apprehensions and irrational self-torture, borders on hatred. She sees hatred everywhere, in every human being and in every relation. 'All false, all lies, all deceit, all evil!' (II, 428).

Unable to understand things, confusing her parameters, misunderstanding love for possession, Anna reduces herself to a pathetic wreck. She fails her husband, her son, her lover, her baby, even herself. She never realizes that they too have expectations, as she has from them, and life and love exist and bloom up only in mutuality. Mutuality in love leads to the intertwining of two persons; is the truth which Anna never learns, and hence makes her life empty while pursuing love. She fails as wife, as lover, as mother and finally as woman. The intensity of her self ultimately peters away to self-doom.