CHAPTER III

RESUSCITATION OF RELATIONSHIP

The Hindu Society has denied woman the possibility of being a ‘SHE’, a person capable of achieving individualization. Man’s relationship with woman is most often the bond that exists between a master and a slave. Woman is an object and she is essential to man because “it is in seeking to be made whole through her, that man hopes to attain self-realization.” It is in such a culture, in recent times, that voices of dissent are heard.

Women novelists have played a crucial and momentous role in enhancing the quality and quantity of the Indian English fiction. Their rich contribution has widened the spectrum of issues deliberated in the novel.

Many Indian women novelists have explored female subjectivity in order to establish an identity that is not imposed by a patriarchal society. Thus, the theme of growing up from childhood to womanhood, that is, the Bildungsroman, is a recurrent strategy. Santha Rama Rao’s Remember the House (1956), Ruth Prawer Jhabvala’s first novel To Whom She Will (1955) and her later Heat and Dust (1975) which was awarded the Booker Prize, and Kamala Markandaya’s Two Virgins (1973) are good examples. Sex is implied in these novels, but depicted more explicitly in Socialite Evenings (1989) by Shobha De, in which she describes the exotic sex lives of the high society in Mumbai.

As in poetry, the image of the New Woman and her struggle for an identity of her own also emerges in the Indian English novel. Such a struggle needs support structures outside the family to enable women to survive. Nayantara Sahgal uses this theme as the nucleus of Rich Like Us (1986). Other novels, such as Rama Mehta’s Inside the Haveli
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(1977), look more towards issues of traditional Indian culture, particularly the debate on female education. Another example of the western educated female protagonist’s quest for her cultural roots is Githa Hariharan’s *The Thousand Faces of Night* (1992).

A number of Indian women novelists made their debut in the 1990s, producing novels which revealed the true state of Indian society and its treatment of women. These writers were born after Indian independence, and English language did not have colonial associations for them. Their work was marked by an impressive feel for the language, and an authentic presentation of contemporary India, with all its regional variations. They generally wrote about the urban middle class, the stratum of society they knew best.

Novelists - Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni in her novel *The Mistress of Spices* (1997), has used magic realism. Suniti Namjoshi stands out for her use of fantasy and surrealism, and Anuradha Marwah-Roy’s *Idol Love* (1999) presents a chilling picture of an Indian dystopia in the twenty-first century. Other novels deal with various aspects of college life, such as Meena Alexander’s *Nampally House* (1991), and Rani Dharker’s *The Virgin Syndrome* (1997). Another theme to emerge is that of the lives of women during India’s struggle for independence, as seen for example in Manju Kapur’s *Difficult Daughters* (1998).

In the field of regional fiction, four women writers, Arundhati Roy, Anita Nair, Kamala Das, and Susan Viswanathan, have put the southern state of Kerala on the fictional map, while the culture of other regions has been represented by other women writers.

Anita Desai, in her psychological novels, presents the image of a suffering woman preoccupied with her inner world, her sulking frustration and the storm within: the existential predicament of a woman in a male dominated society. Through such characters, she makes a plea for a better way of life for women. Her novels have Indians as central characters, and she
alternates between female-centered and male-centered narrative. Her later novels, written since she moved to the US, reveal all the characteristics of diasporic fiction, that is, a concern with the fate of immigrants, and a growing distance from the reality of India, which is viewed from the outside.

As early as 1894 in *Kamala*, Krupabai Satthianadhan explored the cultural clash suffered by a Hindu woman who is given a western education in India, and the experience of being caught between two cultures has remained a prominent theme in writing by Indian woman. There are many Indian women writers based in USA, Canada, Britain, and other parts of the world. Some are recent immigrants, while others, such as Jhumpa Lahiri, are second generation immigrants. These authors write about their situation in cross-cultural contexts - states of being 'in-between'. Expatriate representation has been questioned on several counts. Most expatriate writers have a weak grasp of actual conditions in contemporary India, and tend to recreate it through the lens of nostalgia, writing about ‘imaginary homelands’. Distancing lends objectivity, but it can also lead to the ossification of cultural constructs, and even if memory is sharp and clear, the expatriate is not directly in contact with the reality of India.

The East-West confrontation, or the clash between tradition and modernity, is the impulse behind the works of acclaimed migrant writers, such as Meera Syal, Anita Rau Badami, Shauna Singh Baldwin, Uma Parameswaran, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Anjana Appachana, and Kiran Desai. The theme of migration that leads to self-discovery, with a negation of the traditions of the country of origin, is a recurrent one among migrant authors, Bharti Kirchner’s *Shiva Dancing* (1998), Ameena Meer’s *Bombay Talkie* (1994), and Bharati Mukherjee’s *Jasmine* (1989) being good examples.
Relationship plays a vital role in human encounter. It is the music of life. Without it no physical or mental aspect can be given a name. It moves around the world to keep the lives enriched with feelings. Anita Nair has presented in her novels, modern Indian women’s search for revival of relationships that are central to women. Her own struggle as a writer is equally symptomatic of the resistance to feminist expression that prevails in India in the middle of the twentieth century. As a women writer her dilemma was either to give voice to women’s concern and be branded as a ‘women writer: removed from the mainstream of literary scene: or, to deny her feminist and write like a man either with male name or male narrative voice. Anita Nair reveals that her concern is with the exploration of human psyche. She explores the emotional ecology of her protagonists.

As regards the scope of this study it confines to a meticulous and careful analysis of the novels with no stress given to analyzing it in the light of any ‘isms’. No exhaustive study of Anita Nair’s works has been undertaken by critics and this has enabled the researcher to have the freedom to read the primary sources and draw conclusions without being influenced by the opinions of earlier other writers. The observations are put forth with relevant situations that support the claim, quoted from the primary source.

The study has enabled the researcher to trace some similarity in her works. The three novels have one central concern – inability to realize the ‘status of self’ in the intricate web of human relationships.

The problem of identity lies either at the conscious level or the subconscious level that is experienced by individuals at various levels and situations. At one level a postcolonial reading of Ladies Coupe is possible, and at another, the novel may be considered an attack on the patriarchal society there by a book with feminist outlook. Compromise has become the order of the day and this has made man lose his individuality and art lose its sanctity. The
threat to life and art has been very well portrayed by Anita Nair in *Mistress* lead her life the way she desires. But the norms of society stop her from establishing the kind of life that she wants to lead. Society everywhere conspires against women eating away all the vitals. The influence of an incident in her life forces to retrace her steps and she withdraws herself from experiencing life. One can find that women as presented in the novels of Anita Nair present a different picture of their inner life. Nair looks at the predicament of women and visualizes life for a woman as a series of obligations and commitments. In addition to existentialists reality of life she evokes the sentiments and sensibility of women for their role and respect in society. She sets herself to voice the mute miseries and helplessness of millions of married women tormented by existentialist problems and predicaments. She focuses how her heroines, in the contemporary urban milieu are bravely struggling against or helplessly submitting to the relentless forces of absurd life.

No human stands alone. People are always in relationship with others and the world around them. Love means supporting ourselves and others in our highest good, which never means giving ourselves up to care-take others who are capable of taking care of them. The objective of this chapter is to bring out the human relationships in the novels of Anita Nair. All the three novels has a galaxy of fictional characters whose earnest endeavour is to establish, with varying degrees of success, happy and healthy relationship with the people around them. Accepting this as its main theme the novels may justly be called a study of the ways and means by which satisfy human relationship. Human relationships can be established and sustained by the expressive power of words, by uttering out a few kind and affectionate words.
The novelist has assured of a fresh lease of time. Things will work out somehow.

Nothing is over … we leave our marks on the world. Although life is all mixed up, nothing is over, things keep coming back over again, and they’re all connected. This is possible only because of human relationships.

Family plays a vital task in our Indian society. Habitually nuptial and family are measured to be its most sanctified institutions. They are the main source of console and raise the members living inside it. As a wonderful bridge between nature and civilization, biology and culture, sex and virtue or righteousness, private rivalry and public order, the society of marriage marks a unique development in the evolutionary history of humanity. Social roles and social constructs influence family relationships in multiple ways.

From the very ancient times, marriage is rooted in the basic need of the family and at the same time it is an essential element for maintaining it. According to the Hindu tradition, marriage is regarded as a ‘Sanskara’ which initially transformed every man into a ‘husband’ and every woman a ‘wife’; thus giving each a social role and finally uniting them into an eternal bond of love, procreation and self realization. Marriage seems to be a bridge for husband and wife. No doubt, love and marriage are complementary to each other and without love married life is not supposed to be happy. Thus marriage is a social recognition of love between two persons.

Marriage is something more serious than the pleasure of two people in each other’s company. Love leads one to many directions, to nobler deeds and occasionally heinous crimes also. There are so many problems created in marriage and married life. Generally love-marriages are not accepted by the Indian Society. They are taken as crime. This is the reason that dangerous steps like- suicide, divorce are taken by man and woman or they are forced to do so. Sometimes disappointment in love makes some men and women to remain
unmarried throughout their life. Some have taken an ascetic life through failure in love. Even
the great painters and philosophers, great conquerors, great writers, great actors may be
disappointed in their love before and after the marriage.

Love before marriage is totally different from love after marriage because before
marriage, there is only love but after marriage, duties, responsibilities, ego-all become the
parts of human life and love is changed into anger, irritation, hatred, etc. Even loving friends,
when they fall out hate each other. Hence, reconciliation between husband and wife is more
difficult than a treaty alliance between two warring nations. Perhaps the best way to be happy
in married life lies in following the advice, don’t be too exacting, don’t expect too much and
take life as it comes.

Love is an itching of the heart that cannot be scratched; there is a great deal of truth in
this definition because love is an experience with various reactions on those who are in love.
It plays a role of mediator between mother and son, lover and beloved and husband and wife.
It should be without any complexities. Love has two aspects- subjective and objective.
Subjective is conscious and imaginative and depends on individual point of view, but the
objective love is the essence of love, it is unconscious, spontaneous and not connected with
the thoughts and feelings. In Indian civilization we find love, purified of its dross, in schools
of philosophy, poetics and the fine arts and a close inter-dependence of man’s and woman’s
love. It is the supreme confirmation of the universality, immorality and infinitude of the self.

Every society has its own problem of love and marriage. Love is natural. It is the most
powerful and unifying force in man. It is love that has made our existence possible. Once it is
replaced by hatred and enmity, there will be violent action leading to internecine wars.
Though primary and universal love has always eluded man, writers from ancient times
dealing with its nature and effect and yet they find that they have not said the last word. However, they have all agreed that without love human existence is not possible.

Marriage is a social institution. It is a partnership between husband and wife, the smallest unit in society. The necessity of marriage is for the building of the structure of society. It is the social recognition of the relation between man and woman. Economic relationship, mutual understanding and love are the foundation of the institution of marriage, love having the sustaining power.

In a given society the greatest problem is the problem of love in married life. Before marriage, as the couple is young, love and sex are often combined. But after marriage love must take the primary place so that the partnership shall remain intact.

Love is the greatest gift of God. It is the love on which human existence rests. Almost all the great writers have dealt with the theme of love and its harmonizing power. Love is the basic need of human life and without it human existence becomes dry and mechanical. The world of Anita Nair’s novel is “a world where the central harmony is aspired to but not arrived at and the desire to love and live clashes at times violently with the desire to withdraw and achieve harmony.” In her novels there is a striving, there is a need to be loved. In her novels there are problems of involvement versus detachment, surrender versus freedom and it is interpreted. On the whole, it becomes obvious that love, intimacy and marriage are the basic problems of human life.

Marriage, the oldest institution in the world has been one of the major expressions of human career. “It is based on biological instinct in man and nature’s urge for production. It begins with earlier man and woman.” (G.K. Pillai 1). “Basicallly everything about marriage and above all romantic marriage will continue to fascinate every mind for times to come.”
In Hindu marriage nearness and contact are the guiding principles. In India, the components in marriage are Dharma (duty), Praja (procreation) and Rati (enjoyment).

Marriage is often controlled by customs. It is universally acknowledged fact that marriages in every country are ceremonized through religious authority, sometimes by social reformers. But India remains disunited in marriages customs and rites. This aspect of the Indian life helps one to study marriage and marriage customs through the ages. Nobody can deny the fact that most vital factors in marriages are love and beauty, nearness and contact, and mutual admiration and contact.

A union of two souls, marriage is an honest recognition of the native equality between man and woman. As an agreement to share between themselves the joys and the responsibilities of the joint venture, marriage is an equal necessity for both partners. No other human relationship is as intensely bilateral and mutually enjoyable as the partnership between a man and a woman. The key to marriage is the ability to endure and go on. But there are many marriages where women are dominated by their husbands and do not find freedom and ‘space’ in their marital life.

Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* states:

‘Marriage is the destiny traditionally offered to women by society. It is still true that most women are married, or have been or plan to be suffering from not being. They celebrate woman is to be explained and defined with reference to marriage, whether she is frustrated, rebellious or even indifferent in regard to the institution’.
Human emotions and love provided by a wife to a husband brings sensual pleasures and maddening luxuries of life. In *Mistress*, Radha wants to attain the love of legendary figures. But her pregnancy which is revealed in the third part of the novel totally shatters her. She develops differences with her husband and decides neither to give birth nor to undergo an abortive surgery but to keep it undelivered. She does not seek separation from Shyam inspite of being much frustrated in love. But finally, she recovers from her relationship dilemma. She feels that the gap of communication between Shyam and herself is after all not unbridgeable. She does not take any drastic steps as suicide but prepares to face life and find a solution. The suspicion in the mind of a husband regarding the presence and role of other man in a woman's life is authentically depicted.

A Mistress is man’s long term female sexual partner and companion who is not married to him. The relationship is generally stable and at least semi-permanent; however, the couple does not live together openly. Also, the relationship is usual but not always secret. Unlike a concubine, a Mistress has no legal relationship to the man. There were many men in the past who had kept Mistress along with their wives.

Historically, the term has denoted a kept woman, who was maintained in a comfortable (or even lavish) lifestyle by a wealthy man so that she will be available for his sexual pleasure. Such a woman could move between the roles of a Mistress and a courtesan depending on her situation and environment. Today, however, the word Mistress is used primarily to refer to the female companion of a man who is married to another woman; in the case of an unmarried man it is usual to speak of a girlfriend or partner.
Historically a man can maintain a Mistress. As the term implies, he was responsible for her debts and provided for her in much the same way as he did his wife, although not legally bound to do so. In more recent and emancipated times, it is more likely that the Mistress has a job of her own, and is less, if at all, financially dependent on the man.

A Mistress is not a prostitute. Both professions exchange sex for money, but the principal difference is that a Mistress keeps herself exclusively for one man, in much the same way as a wife. There is also usually an emotional and possibly social relationship between a man and his Mistress, whereas the relationship to a prostitute is predominantly sexual.

From time immemorial, Indian women, the personification of love and affection, hope and patience, have been showing their worth in each and every discipline of knowledge. Indian women novelists in English and in other vernaculars try their best to deal with, apart from many other things, the pathetic plight of forsaken women, who are fated to suffer from birth to death.

Women face many problems personally and socially. Women do not enjoy their freedom. Women are suppressed by men. Women are ready to face any kind of problems. But men are always keeping her under their status. They (men) are like an obstacle in the path of women. Women are never free to think on their own. (In the Indian society patriarchal system prevails which means father owns a family).

Sex is nothing but pleasure, longing, and lust. It is being called by so many names. It is human to do so. To give a name to everything and everybody is to classify and segregate. Radha is in bed with Shyam. Both are asleep. His arm pins her to the bed, his bed. She thinks that for Shyam, she was a possession. A much cherished possession. That is her role in his
life. He doesn’t want an equal; what he wants is a Mistress - Someone to pamper and someone to indulge him with feminine wiles.

He thinks exaggerated compliments will make her happy and ensure marital bliss. He tries so hard to impress her which at times tired her. One morning, though, she felt nervous, she felt sad for him for them and for their marriage. He deserved better. Radha shivered whenever Chris spoke her name. His voice was like a finger searching the secret places.

Talking out about all the rasas, “Mistress” can give a vivid picture on how the relationship trailed between the three characters that is Radha, Shyam and Chris. Uncle Koman hailed to be the main character talking over the past that had a separate plot, which in no way relieves the knot until the end (i.e.) present.

Men want his woman to be perfect and they are bound to obey the culture he was supposed to have seen in his family. If that notion went wrong then arises the misunderstanding and the breakage. Indian women in particular are anemic in front of their man. A man older than her age had seduced Radha. At that point of time, Shyam rendered his co-operation to marry Radha. There seemed a mere tolerance within them than as a pair. They showed off as a best couple to the society. In true they did not have self-satisfaction. May be the tolerance level was overthrown by the arrival of Chris. Leaving the rest of the world, Radha and Chris entered a new life, which loved, by both and in silence blessed by Koman who lingered in his own treasured pleasure.

This is definitely not the true, harmonious relationship between husband and wife. The novel clearly indicates the vast spiritual chasm yawning between them. Their relationship may be carnal or physical, but not spiritual at all.
If the main plot of the novel rotates round Shyam, the parallel plot highlights the condition of Radha—a young married woman now living with her husband who is clearly negligent of her emotional demands. She, therefore, turns to Chris and develops close relations with him about which her husband is not altogether ignorant. She shows deep sympathy for her Uncle Koman and the natives, and in this she resembles womanhood.

Chris is drawn towards Radha, simply because he discovers an affinity of soul with her and a similarity of circumstances. Both of them have some gaiety of spirit, and both have a desire to understand each other. In the words of Uma Parameswaran, “They are twin souls, and this experience only brings about a mutual acknowledgement that their abstract relationship had come to a stage which calls for physical consummation.” (77-78).

Perhaps Anita Nair's most achieved and characteristic work is *Mistress*. It is a delicate, precise study of husband and wife, although the wife has less actuality than the husband, Shyam. The husband is by no means a westernized person, but he is to some degree secular and modern, and the situation enables the author to reflect on the tensions, the strength and the inadequacies and aspirations of middle-class Indian life. The book is gentle in tone but sharp in perception, and the mixture of moods, the friction of faith and reason, the quarrel of old and young, are beautifully pointed. There are conventional, perfunctory patches in the novel, but Anita Nair shows a very high skill in unraveling sympathetically but unflinchingly the structure of the protagonist's motives and the bumbling and stumbling progress of her anxieties.

Psychologists suggest that a healthy emotional and sexual life would have given Radha a sense of security and stopped her psyche from decaying. Freud attributes neurosis of women to sexual dissatisfaction resulting from the rigors of civilized sexual morality. Various incidents representing her longing for outduel life in which she bears frustration
mainly by Shyam also affect her psyche. The neurotic defense mechanisms such as sleep rituals, hallucinatory visions and nightmares, adverse somatic symptoms and religious avoidance of violence woefully fail to blunt the edge of her unconscious wish. She appears to be under pressure in most of the places and break to pieces as a result of the struggle within. The second section of the novel reveals the gradual stages by which Radha indulges into serious relationship with Chris. She has a severe love for Chris. She does not want to be detached from Chris in the name of a married woman. Aware of her position and status, she just neglects Shyam and feels very happy of being a *Mistress* to Shyam. The final section which acts as the epilogue provides a powerful picture of the effect of the calamity on the important characters. Radha’s heart craves for love, understanding, solace and support from her love but she cannot be very sure of who is her love. Because of Chris’s departure and cold attitude, Radha remains a much disappointed woman.

The gap of communication between husband and wife is felt throughout the novel. Both Radha and Shyam disagree over trifles and are stiff with each other. Radha considers her marriage to be a 'hopeless regret' and a 'broken affair’. She feels a torture, guilt, dread and imprisonment within the four walls of her private hell. Radha also complains that Shyam is unconcerned about her misery, her physical and psychological demands. When Radha desires a close contact with him to ease her anguish, he involves in physical mating but that does not create love or lust deep into her. Shyam detaches himself from the sense of objects so much, that if he involves in any physical contact with his wife, it arises out of deep anguish and arrogance. Rather from Shyam’s point of view, it can also be called as a sense of belonging or aching for a definite relationship.
The complex human relationship and the complexities of the art form Kathakali are extensively and exhaustively employed by Anita Nair to bring out the subtle realities of life and living. The other types of man-woman relationship are also discussed through various minor characters.

Anita Nair makes each work of hers an accelerating exploration of the psychic self. The psychological turmoil creates psychic imbalances, which in turn, handicap them in establishing harmonious and gratifying inter-personal relationships. She is much interested in life with its hopes, frustrations, negations, rejections and chaotic flow of events as she is concerned with the art of giving shape, purpose and wholeness to life.

After analyzing all the novels of Anita Nair one can analyse that she is least interested in pre-marital relationship between man and woman but deals with the problem of marital relationship in all its dimensions and manifestations. Marriage, which is a means of self-fulfilment and self-knowledge, eludes most women and fails to meet their anticipations and aspirations.

Taking Anita Nair’s Ladies Coupe, in the life of Marikolanthu, her poor economic status takes its toll. All the confidence she had is drained off. Raped and helpless she seeks the help of Chettiar’s wife. But Chettiar’s wife is also equally helpless. Women, rich or poor, educated or uneducated, young or old are at the mercy of men in the patriarchal society. Chettiar's wife advises Marikolanthu to find a job as that would replace a husband's protection, and also give her at least economic independence.

Anita Nair makes use of certain literary devices such as metaphor and imagery to find the objective correlative in an effective manner. Akila is restless and she makes a comparison: Stirred out of sleep by a tiny housefly, hopelessly lost, vagrant, and restless,
humming and hovering above her face, Akila felt within her a queer in errant sensation.

The fly settled on her brow for fleeting second and rubbed its legs briskly. Flies did it all the time; unloading disease and despair. But this one, new adult, had nothing to unburden but germs of disquiet. (LC 3) This sense of “disquiet” immensely helps to know her. It helps her live her life the way she desires to. Before she experienced this “disquiet” she was ignorant of any suffocation or displeasure. But the realization brings in her a feeling for a new beginning. Initially “all of Akila's wondrous explorations and magical discoveries were locked within the fragile shell of an egg” (LC 90).

Marikolanthu was repeatedly warned by her mother because she was easily impressed by people: “...you give your heart too easily, child. They will break it into thousand pieces and leave it on the ground for others to trample into dust” (LC 216). On such occasions she had always teased her mother asking her if the “heart was a glass bangle” (LC 216). Further experience results in her realization of the value of her mother's words. She says,

“but you know what, the heart is a glass bangle. One careless moment and it is shattered. We know that, yet we continue to wear glass bangles. Each time they break, we buy new one shopping that these will last longer than the others did. How silly we women are. We should wear bangles made of granite and turn our hearts into the same” (LC216).

Often we find that acceptance of what exists and resilience is regarded as solutions to the problems faced by women. It is difficult to go against the tide and often women prefer moving along the tide. Akila does not deviate from what is expected to do for many years; Margaret employs a treacherous method to take revenge as she knows that an open battle to establish herself would only be a futile attempt; Marikolanthu accepts sufferings in life as fate; Janaki prefers remaining secure and safe in the hands of the family members, and
Prabha Devi fears the society and norms of behaviour and decides to acquiesce rather than invite criticism and insult. Ironic situations add to the complexity of the character's status and situational details.

The name of the protagonist itself is ironic. To quote, “Akilandeswari, Mistress of all worlds. Master of none” (LC 2). She questions the worth of her name when she finds herself controlled by others at every stage. She, as a girl, was groomed for the day she was to be married and sent to her husband's home to play the role of woman, wife, and mother. The day her father died changed the course of her life. She suddenly finds herself burdened with the responsibility of managing a widowed mother and three siblings. Her anger towards her father enables her to handle the grief of her father's death. Her reply to her brother's question is something astonishing: Akka, Narayan asked, “What are we going to do?” “Cremate him and then...and then we'll find some way to keep ourselves afloat and alive” (LC 57). With her father's death she fits herself into the role of her father and this result in her finding herself caught in the web of responsibility from which she finds no escape. After having headed the family as “someone who would chart and steer the course of the family's destiny to safe shores,” she ironically finds herself considered a woman incapable of looking after herself at the age of forty five. The taunting remark made by Akila's sister and brother reflect the attitude of the society towards a single woman. She has repeated reminders in the words of her siblings, “Can a woman live alone?” “What will society say?” etc. She decides to buy a single bedroom flat for herself. But this is not accepted by her sister. She says: “Do you think the brothers will consent to this? Do you think they will let you live alone?” Padma asked. “I will do exactly as I please and I don't give a damn about what you or anyone else thinks.” “That's what you think. They are the men of the family.” (LC 204) They are the men of the family, groomed, trained, fed, clothed, and provided for by Akila and now she is expected to take their consent before actually taking a decision in her life -about herself.
Narsi, her brother, with an authentic male voice says thus. It's improper for a woman to live alone. Besides there will be a whole lot of questions that will pop up about your reputation. You know how people put two and two together and come up with six. Nalini's family will be scandalised if they hear about this. Have you thought of how embarrassing my position will be? (LC205)

In spite of being the breadwinner and occupying the centrist position for twenty six years, she still continues to remain on the periphery because her needs are never considered important enough to take precedence over the needs of the other members of the family. The advice of her friend Karpagam changes the course of her life. Karpagam who was her schoolmate is now a widow. Although Karpagam is a widow, she faces the society as an individual, bold, and confident, and she ignites in Akila the desire to experience freedom. Karpagam tells her, “I am who I am. And I have as much right as anyone else to live as I choose” (LC 202). Akila decides to break from the hold of the family and society which have long been tormenting with a tantalizing sheer force. The family and the society could no more ploy with her, forcing her to adhere to the traditional values. Their lives were sacrificed at the altar of conventions and traditions. In a conglomerate of extreme despair and desire, she wants to be “Nobody’s daughter, Nobody's sister, Nobody's wife, Nobody's mother” (LC207).

The life of Margaret is intriguing. An achiever all through her student life, confident and hardworking, desirous of achieving great heights in life, she is confronted with a disappointing future after marriage. Her choice of a magnificent looking man as her life partner was highly appreciated by her parents and relatives. Love, she believed would make her a complete person, it would motivate her to perform better in life but, ironically this same love makes living equivalent to death. She realizes, she need not have the company of a man to be complete. She is complete only when she trusts herself and makes decisions for
herself. She leaves the Coupé advising Akila, “Just remember that you have to look for yourself. No one else will” (LC 40).

All are Indian women in the Indian scenario seeking to understand themselves. The roles into which they ultimately fit themselves are stereotypes. The characters attempt to make sense of their lives and find a pattern in the past and a direction in the future. As is observed in most of the fictions written by women, even in Ladies Coupé we find the problem of identity, the conflict of being both oneself and fitting into a traditional role as ‘good daughter,’ ‘a good wife,’ or ‘a good mother’ confusing these individuals.

Although Akila has a partial solution to her problem of identity, she realizes that there can be no pat answers, that no one can teach her how to live her life, that she cannot model her life on the lives of others: “The other people's lives cannot be used by her as 'how-to' books that would help her find clear cut answers to what she needed to do next” (LC 40). All the women characters in the novel, in the process of revealing their experiences to the protagonist, are in fact reassuring themselves that they are not helpless but yet are doubly marginalised. The novel is well structured and well-knit with a perfect connection between the beginning and the end. The novel begins with a yearning to escape and the novel closes with her experiencing freedom. Having made it to Kanyakumari, she finds herself in a hotel named Sea Breeze, fully aware of everyone's surprise at a woman on a beach alone. She decides to make her own private rebellion. Much like Margaret who decides to rebel by feeding her husband into a state of benign fatness, Akila takes desire by the horns. She releases herself from the hold of convention and family expectations, at least mentally. She feels that she can go back to her life with the knowledge that she is free from some of the constraints. This gives a circular structure to the novel. She goes back with renewed energy and aspirations in life. This story of a woman's search for strength and independence focuses
on the inner strength in every human being. Anita Nair has used a partial imitation of one of the oldest ploys. Chaucer's heterogeneous crowd of pilgrims in *The Canterbury Tales* are singularly life affirming and they tell tales to each other as they travel. Here Nair's characters too are singularly life affirming. Though they do not confess anything about their life stories publicly to each other, the manner in which she has treated them sharing their experiences with the protagonist invites this comparison.

Next in the line is Marikolundhu in *Ladies Coupe*. She is a plain, simple, uneducated, spinster daughter from a close unit of orthodox Indian family. She is trapped at home, smothered by the overbearing parents and their traditions, raped violently by the upper class man. Sujatha akka is depressed because of her loneliness and lack of privacy and solitude, Marikolundhu of her alienation from her own people accept the reality and cope up with the new way of life. She cannot bind with any relationship of her choice. The marital bliss was not offered to her. She is also not in a position to accept the convict, who spoiled her. The hateful moment of the rape denied her in bringing up the child. She posed as a care taker than being a mother. She is a loving soul for whom fate has apportioned loneliness. She is the younger daughter and she has to stay away from school after the birth of her brother. At a very early age, she supported her mother in Aranmanai kitchen. At the death of the rapist, she decided to bring up her child as her own. As a country girl, this is her rebirth of getting into the life along with her son.

Akila and her friends are on the threshold of self discovery. The narration is revelatory and redeeming which relieves the tedium of a long journey and yet is filled with the magical power to burn up the tracks to seek a new destination. Anita Nair in one of her interviews has revealed that the inspiration for this novel is purely based on her personal expectations. She found a special ladies line clubbed with the handicapped and senior citizens
at the Railway reservation counter. She was totally disturbed by the blatant inequality and the novel came into existence as a result of this bitter experience. The words of the sixth passenger could be quoted as an apt conclusion to the motif of the novel. Women are strong. Women can do everything as well as men. Women can do much more. But a woman has to seek the vein of strength in herself. It does not shoe itself naturally. (LC 210) Anita Nair evokes experiences that are drawn from everyday life and across the social strata but suddenly they seem to have attained epic dimensions. Each of the women is finely and picturesquely drawn each caught in a web of relationships partly of her own making and partly one that is made for her. The life story of the women characters of the novel is neatly woven and structured by Anita Nair to establish a truth - that there is a lot of strength in women that doesn't come out naturally, it has to be forced out of them and the cause for the change could be a circumstance or a change in life style. There is a strong and valid message of hope through change and even the ending is revealed as another beginning.

Freud has designed relationship with genres. His theories are perfect to the people of twenty first century. Before a decade, relationship meant to be chastity and had been supported by family that was accepted by the society.

The novel, *Lessons in Forgetting* is an odyssey of emancipation and rejuvenation. The story puts forth a strong statement that the act of recovering and recreation is not an act of betrayal. In fact, Nair crafts life not as a cage of inevitable burden but as an act of resurrection and metamorphosis. One has to sever the ties of the past and acquire a new sensitivity towards life. Life, like cyclone, triggers despair and uncertainty and all human beings have one thing in common, nothing but troubled souls. The bulwark strength of human beings lies not in accepting the devastation of life but in renewing themselves from the shackles of burden and bars. The novelist teaches a lesson to expect joy as the birthright and a
power of denial towards despair. The murky canopy of life may gift dismay and demolish, all of a sudden, the hopes which are carried. Again the same life teaches to refashion the decree of redemption and renewal with forgiveness. Life is not an encumbrance of affliction and anxiety but it educates to look at the twists and turns of life with courage and strength.

Nair’s *Lessons in Forgetting* offers an intimate perspective into the lives of two individuals, who are trapped in sullen situations. Both the characters are captured in familial ties, cultural expectations, marital betrayals and sexual discovery. The plot moves on with men and women abandoning their marital relationships. Narrated in the backdrop of the greek mythology of Hera and Zeus adds colour to the novel.

Anita Nair has discussed two different images in the novel, which raises a question about the relationship of a husband and wife. She compares the husband and wife to a pair of bullocks yoked together which means the two have to go together in the same direction, violation of which would result into pain. Then, the two bullock’s inspite of sharing the burden do not know whether one loves the other or not. The pair of bullock’s goes together under compulsion whereas the marital relationship should be based on love and affection. This is the type of comparison pictured about a husband-wife relationship. Too much of importance of a man’s existence in a woman’s life makes it vulnerable to their whims and compliance which makes them a total dependence on man. In this novel the husband, Giri expects everything from the wife and never bothers about to think of his wife’s feelings. Many such pairs co-exist in the societies today, who are emotionally aloof from each other.

The characters in the novel, in one way or other, become the inheritors of loss. Loss becomes an inevitable fate in their lives. Giri, Meera’s husband, relishes becoming a fashionable man in his corporate society. His efforts to attain vogue is obstructed by the members of the Lilac House. Kala Chithi spends the rest of her life with JAK only after
disowning her husband just for a tuft of hair. The cultural matrix in which she lives provokes the end to her marital knot. The good old granny Lily is also in search of renewal. Lily is stabbed by the sorrow of Saro’s death. Lily, a national award winning actress takes a brave decision by leaving the Lilac House to act in a television serial. Nikhil and Nayantara, the children of Meera and Giri, also long for an alteration. Their childhood is robbed because of Giri’s irresponsible fatherhood. These children have to suffer the sins of their parents. The vortex of fear grips everyone and it seems no escaping for a moment. Vinnie, a friend of Meera, breaks the norms of the civilized society by becoming a secret Mistress to live a sophisticated life. The tale of loss, for every individual in this novel, is wrought by social and cultural matrix.

Meera, a post-graduate in English Literature is happily submerged in the role of a corporate wife. She is also a well to do writer of cook books and guide manuals to corporate wives. Giri, her husband, a corporate materialistic man, finds fault with his stagnant life and ageing wife. After the marriage, Giri lives with Meera in her home, the Lilac House. The Lilac, a traditional house of Meera’s family, plays a vital role in her life. The house which united the hearts of Giri and Meera fractures their marital life too. On a fine September day, Giri departs from Meera’s life without any intimation. Trajectory surrounds Meera and she has to play the role of a protectress and masquerader. She is trapped in a watertight position where she has to take care of three women of three generations and a young boy.

JAK or J.A.Krishnamurthy, a cyclone study expert, returns to India after a freak accident to his daughter Smriti. He comes to stay in Bangalore only because of his distorted daughter. Smriti, the nineteen year old meets her disaster when she was on a trip to discover the reasons of foeticide in Tamilnadu. She becomes an ugly twisted doll, the handiwork of
society’s evilness. With a scientist’s instinct, Jak wants to discover the knowledge of his daughter’s deformed stance.

Relationships are born when a vision is shared. The seeds of redemption and renewal are sown when Jak and Meera confront one another. The lives of these two individuals find solace when they meet. Meera and Jak find a sense of redemption and renewal when they begin to share a space. Jak appoints Meera as his assistant and a comforting zone begins to grow between these two souls. Both begin to accept each other.

To quote Kate Millet from *Sexual Politics*, “However muted its present appearance may be sexual dominion obtains nevertheless as perhaps the most pervasive ideology of our culture and provides its most fundamental concept of power.” The concept of male ideological power changes the life of a woman. Culture has set up an irresistible ideology that a woman cannot survive without the base of a man. The question of what being a woman in society arises. It has become a general condition that a woman is a subordination of man. She has neither the freedom nor the identity of herself. The concept of patriarchy plays havoc in Meera’s career. Once, Meera was celebrated as the mentor of corporate wives, author of cook books, woman of her job, friend to the rich and the celebrities. Even, Charlie Fernandez, “the high priest of culture” (LF 7) praises her as his favourite cook book writer. But everything goes topsy-turvy when Giri left her. Over the next few months, Meera has lost her colossal status and becomes a mere diminutive woman. Authorship is rejected to her. Randhir, a famous publisher once waited for her books rejects the proposal of Meera’s writing by saying that the book does not fit into the publishing programme for the year. Her writings are curtailed only on the reason that she is separated from Giri. The whole angle of her career and life becomes tilted. Gradually, she realizes that once she was a known icon not because of her ability to mentor but because of being a corporate wife. Even at this stage, Meera neither
begged nor pleaded for her bid to be taken. She bears the humiliation and says herself “What am I to do now?” (LF 89). Meera is taken aback because Giri, her husband, a man who does not even know how to change a flat tyre, has become the magnet of her life source. The great mass of women throughout the history has been confined to the cultural level of animal life in providing the male with sexual outlet and exercising the animal functions of reproduction and care of the young. Meera’s life with Giri was meaningless. She becomes an object of gratifying sexual outlet to Giri. Heaviness surrounds Meera’s life when Giri disappears. The felicity of her marriage life is over shadowed by the taint of Giri’s lavishness. She strives to procure meaning for a series of meaningless syllables in her life.

*Lessons in Forgetting* is a world of divorcees. The concept of marriage is questioned and it has become a perverted institution. Marriage leads to dishonesty, conflict and meanness between married couples instead of goodwill on the part of individuals. Fulfilling relationships inside marriage become impossible only because of individual autonomy and freedom. The subject of ideal happiness in marriage is changed and it provides a biting bitterness. Marriage is done only for the purpose of reproducing species and ultimate happiness remains a question throughout the journey.

The novel turns marriage into a farce. Marriage is no longer considered as sacred rather it is an agreement for “being joint owners of a home and a business” (LF 184). It is just woven as “the circle of security” (LF 185). Meera, Kala Chithi, Vinnie and Jak are entangled in the circle. On the case of women characters it is worse. The only solace for these women is none other than women.
Women are more beautiful than anything in the world, kinetic sculptures, and perfect form of adoration. The hair episode of Kala becomes a scintillating part in the novel. Kala is left over as an enigma by her in-laws. Her father and husband are very much proud of her beautiful hair. Her father did not give her the permission to cut short the valuable asset. On the wedding night, Kala hopes that at least her husband would give her the clean chit to reduce the burden. Her husband hefted the hair in his arm and mandated not to touch a hair without his permission. It becomes inescapable for her to be free from the burden. Kitcha, the childhood name for Jak, becomes weighed down by his Chithi’s sorrow. He labours to reduce the sorrow of Kala by taking her to watch skies and beach. Sea and Kitcha become a metaphor for freedom in Kala’s life. But on a dark afternoon, Kala cuts a meager part of her hair without her husband’s consent. Her husband feels that she has flouted his authority, betrayed his trust and asks the question “How can I trust you ever again?” (LF 204). The reply for this is a courageous decision from the part of Kala, “I left him. Before I went, I cut my hair at the nape of neck. I gave it to Ambi. A long braid woven with jasmine and kanakambaran. This is all you ever wanted of me. Keep it. And let me go, I said, walking out.” (LF 206)

The collapse of love, prolonged or sudden, sends couples into emotional turmoil. Hurt, angry and frustrated, one partner recoils and says the words that supposedly end a relationship. I don’t love you anymore.” But contrary to popular belief and poets’ immortal words, this sentence can signal the beginning of a solid bond, one in which intimacy is found. Romantic love—often unrequited and bittersweet—can confuse the real meaning of caring. ‘Love’ is unrealistic. Finding real love means abandoning the mystique of romantics love. Love takes on know realities, and liking, caring and sharing become part of intimate concerns.
Love expect too much in return. ‘Love’ seduces couple into making serious demands. Partners in marriage must allow space between themselves so that their relationship can breathe. Caring is letting go, not holding on. There is an undeniable balance in living together and, like the motion of a see-saw; one person alone can’t make it work. The giving-and-receiving movement keeps it going. To feel special or important to a companion is the wish of most humans.

Love wants unconditional acceptance. All human beings feel that we’ll find a partner who will give us everything we’ve missed in life. Love seduces us believing that this fantasy will come true, but the most we can expect is a companion who is compassionate and understanding. One of the important signs of maturity is the realization and acceptance of the fact no one will ever fully understand. As a pair, you must enjoy and accept what you have, however imperfect, without always demanding more.

Love expects you to be a mind reader. Married couples are fond of reading thoughts in one another’s mind and expect their partners to sense their moods. Deep down; this offends our integrity, love or no love. Yet, it is practiced daily.

Unless married couple learns to be direct about their feelings and desires, communication remains complicated and garbled. Partners stumble and fall over unspoken message. Love must not tempt us into believing that mind reading is part of living together. Openness brings the cool relief of intimacy.

Love fosters subservience. Traditionally, males were indoctrinated to protect females. This created havoc in marriage by setting up an imbalance: the strong male and the docile female. Neither partner really felt like playing these roles, but both were nagged by the feeling that they had to.
Today male and female are starting to accept the fact that they are human, with similar intellects, needs and emotions. Partners may not be equal in talents or tasks but they are equal in their human needs. If this is once realized and fairness has been established, a pair will enjoy a sense of unity.

When either mate consistently presents himself or herself to the other as frail and helpless, both are heading for trouble. The only kind of love that works or allows both partners to feel esteemed and important is when a mate cares, the strongest support is provided by few words and a willingness to listen, not by always doing something for the other.

A couple married for quiet some years, both busy with responsibilities and the challenges of unexplored careers, suddenly realized that their relationship had changed. Panic set in. Quick attempts were made to recapture the lost glow, but the feelings simply were not there. They grieved over the good times experienced in the past and the demise of their love seemed like a death.

Many of the couple was caught in this bind, never realizing that transitions are not ending and the new beginnings can follow. Close relationships mount, just as snakes shed skins. Once the husband and wife let go off the past, they learn to enjoy each other again through a variety of new experiences. Enjoying the present, permits a comfortable nostalgia for the world.

Many couple expects one to judge whether they are right or wrong in certain specific contexts. Many of the issues presented were matters of personal preference, rather than those that are intrinsically right or wrong. Both partners are right in the way they feel. Feelings cannot be argued; they can only be accepted or rejected.
Partners get in trouble when they fail to separate thinking from feeling. There can be no arguing about the way they feel, while ideas can be argued. Emotions are tied to self-esteem and expressing understanding of another’s emotions is the beginning of psychological equality. A mate is allowed to show angry feelings, differing opinions, other friends or occasional thoughtlessness. Trust each other’s overall behaviour – all the gestures, thoughtfulness, words and deeds – to convey the caring that leads to intimacy. Real caring can be expressed without the need for the constant repetition of I love you and reassurance.

Anita Nair’s purpose as a writer is to see her women characters as humans with their weaknesses and potentialities who are indeed trapped in the maze of their own obligation. Her novels are researched as the policy of female predicament women need man's moving company and wish for the bliss and excitement of life which are always deprived of them. She looks at the predicament of women and visualizes life for a woman as a series of obligations and commitments. In addition to existentialistic reality of life she evokes the sentiment and sensibility of women for their role and respect in society. She closely examines the emotional world of womankind. She sets herself to voice the voiceless miseries and helplessness of millions of married women, tormented by existentialist problems and predicaments. She focuses on how her heroines are bravely struggling against or helplessly submitting to the relentless forces of absurd life. Although she is pre-occupied with the theme of incompatible marital couples still, one come across different kinds of women characters in her novels.

These reasons why love creates problems in a close relationship indicate that it is unnecessary to intimacy. Human closeness comes naturally when it is not confused with or sabotaged by the abstractions of romantic love. When two people come together through kindness, tenderness, liking and caring, they can discover an intimacy that endures.
Respect is not included in the marriage vows. No illustrated books, advice by elders show how to achieve it and yet it is central to a lasting, satisfying marriage. For the marriage to last and grow, it’s better to agree to disagree, to learn to let each other be. Only by taking this path can you begin to develop real respect towards each other.

One has seen marriages in which one or both partners attack the other quite savagely. In good marriages partners nurture each other’s self-esteem. They may express humorous incomprehension of one another’s preferences, but they never make the other person feel like an idiot. The root meaning of the word respect is ‘to look at’. Respect is a clear yet loving eye. It sees what is really there, but it also sees what is potentially there and helps bring it to fruition. Respect is the art of love by which married couple honour what is unique and best in each other.

There are two kinds of love. The first, crazy love sends you into the clouds. The second comes of knowing someone very closely, of trusting and always feeling at ease with her. It is a relaxed and comfortable feeling, not as exciting and heady as the first kind but far more rewarding and secure.

In every known human society, the male’s need for achievement can be recognized. When men may cook and do appropriate occupations, the whole society consider that to be important, the same occupation when it is done by women, they are regarded as less important.

A happy marriage requires total trust. Most good marriages tend to be based on a tinge of insecurity. To be absolutely certain of a spouse’s fidelity or devotion is to take the other person too much for granted. It is more realistic to believe that one’s partner can
succumb to temptation. If you regard your spouse as too homely to attract another person, your trust will not generate respect, excitement or satisfaction.

On the other hand, if one consider his/her spouse quite capable of attracting members of the opposite sex if neglected or mistreated inside the marriage, one will increase their own displays of caring and affection that make marriage worth preserving. There was deep emotion attached to every decision one makes.

Children can bring great joy to a marriage, and they deserve our love and attention. But there is great harm in boxing ourselves into a role of sexless servants of children. One mistakenly thinks that the children of course can’t take care of themselves, but that the marriage can. When time together as a couple is at the bottom of the priority list, not only do we suffer, but our children suffer too.

One can have passion in the love life again if one strike a happy balances between his/her needs and those of the children. Begin by acknowledging that there are lovers as well as parents. Staying as lovers with their spouse is, in fact, essential to maintain in the family.

Love and romance, on the scale of human needs, may not rank quite as high as food or shelter, but it does not fall much further down- it’s one of the things one lives for. It’s easy to forget this. When one becomes a parent, many of them suddenly feel, they must be serious, no- nonsense people.

Like many other parents today, one carries around a realistic sense of parental duty that can put a damper on a potentially enjoyable evening. For some couple, it prevents them from going out together, except to attend weddings, funerals or school meetings. But maintaining romance and intimacy in such relationship, it is crucial that one set aside time to have fun together and not sabotage the occasion with guilt.
Not long after honeymoon is over, and even more so after the kids are born, one fall into a rut of unrealistic expectations, assuming their spouses can read their minds to discover what they really want and need. When they don’t, they’re disappointed and assume the zest has gone out of our marriage.

Real life is not a romantic fairy tale. Everybody has faults. So it is better to stop blaming the spouse for what they are or is not, what they do or do not do. A happy marriage and sex life are possible. But it takes some courage to admit when they’re wrong, to break down walls that separate them, to tell their spouse what they really want and need.

Looking good for each other makes couple wants to be closer emotionally and physically. This is how each caught their spouse’s eye in the first place, and it’s a good way to keep other interested. Gestures of love also add a feeling of courtship. They can be serious or silly or sexy, as long as they let their spouse know how much they care. Everyone likes to be put on a pedestal sometimes and told how wonderful they are.

Parents need to allow themselves time to have fun-to laugh and enjoy themselves. When couple makes the effort to generate enthusiasm in their relationship, they build a powerfully intimate connection, one that invigorates a mature love with a young romantic love.

Fathers play an essential role in their daughter's lives. Many things are learnt and many things are taught. Some of the most meaningful moments in a daughter's life are spent with their father.
A daughter's relationship with her father is usually her first male-female relationship. From Dad, little girls gain their first reflection of themselves as a female. They develop a sense of acceptance or non-acceptance; they feel valued or discounted. Self-respect is initially based upon respect received from others. Their self-concept as a female person is largely shaped by this early relationship. In short, children regard themselves as they think others regard them... and Dad is an important person in their life.

Daughters need to be able to relax, be affectionate, and know that they are safe with certain males. They need to be regarded as people, not sexual objects. When little girls develop modesty and learn that they have a right to privacy, they develop a healthy sense of boundaries. They learn how to say ‘no’, which will be an essential interpersonal skill as they become more social. Dads can respect their daughters’ boundaries by ‘shoulder hugs’ and not making comments about physical characteristics.

Father-daughter relationships are an important place to learn how to negotiate fairly and compromise appropriately. When fathers exercise absolute authority, and rigidly set rules, daughters quickly learn to rebel. If a father is critical and all-powerful, men become the enemy. If a father is fair and listens to his daughter's thoughts, she will gain self-confidence and pride in her own opinion.

When daughters learn to communicate with their fathers, and trust that their opinion will count, they can develop self-assuredness which will allow them to be assertive and stand up for themselves. This is very different from aggressive reactions which stem from a sense of powerlessness and combativeness. It is important for dads to listen to their daughters and appreciate their views, even if they don’t agree. When one listens to their children, they are more apt to listen to them and trust them when they impose restrictions.
Usually, mothers serve as role models for their daughters. They provide examples of how to be an individual, a mother and a wife. Fathers, however, teach their daughters how to regard themselves, what kind of relationships are healthy, what to look for in a partner, and what to expect of men in co-parenting relationships.

In this novel there is no proper communication between the character Kala chithi and her father. She actually, returns being unable to bear the sexual sadism of her husband. But, she couldn’t express her feelings or pains to her father. The family is a training ground for all future relationships.

The father is indifferent and not supporting enough, like an unwilling host entertaining an unwelcome guest. Like a traditional Indian father, he enjoys the privilege of being the master and head of the family. In the Indian society, married women are not supposed to return to her parental house without her husband or having any quarrels or divorce. They are supposed to stay in the house of her husband till death. So, when Kala chithi’s father finds her standing alone with the suitcase, he frowns and knits his eyebrows like any other typical Indian father. Also, when Kala chithi, tells her father about her husband, who tortures her sexually which is a painful process of her being at in-laws house but it is something beyond the understanding of her father, who always maintained distance. Thus, the root of these problems also seems to lie in the social attitude.

In the words of Gloria Steinem, “most women are one man away from welfare”. Jak is the man, who prompts welfare for both Meera and Kala. The abandoned corporate wife, Meera searches for a source of sustain. At this juncture, Jak arrives and both acquire gravity towards one another. Certain reconciliation is born for their subdued spirits. Jak takes care of Saro’s crematorium. Nayantara, Nikhil and Lily accept the possibility of the arrival of a new man in Meera’s life. Lily says abruptly, “If there is a chance for you to make a new life, you
must. (LF 274) “I can see he likes you and you him. It isn’t about cutting your hair or acquiring a new wardrobe. That’s good in the movies. A new look that turns you into a new woman. Get real Meera. Get real before your life slips away from you.” (LF 274)

Nayantara and Nikhil have acquired a new sensitivity. They remember the past acts of unkindness and Giri’s irresponsible fatherhood. Nikhil says that “He is a nice man. He doesn’t put down Mom. Like Dad used to, he doesn’t say”. (LF 276). Meera is redeemed from her shackles by Jak.

Begin afresh, afresh, afresh because tomorrow brings another chance, to try once more is the solo voice of Nair’s Lessons in Forgetting. Life brings new beginnings in the disguise of closures to human beings. It gives a second chance to mend the relations and to find the rhythms of renewal and redemption. The novel is a beautiful story of redemption, forgiveness and second chance.

When a girl is born in a household, it is considered that she is a debt, a liability; while a boy is born, he is believed to be an asset, who would earn and take care of his parents later on. Thus, any expenditure for a boy does not seem much, but when it comes to girls, there is always the thought at the back of their mind that they have to pay a huge sum of money as dowry for the girl. They are considered as a burden, to be married off at great expense—even now many parents start saving money for their daughter’s marriage from the time she is born. This novel basically discusses the blatant gender discrimination shown by parents towards their daughters and their desire to have a male child. The Hindu tradition plays a major role in Akila’s unhappiness. It is a well known fact, that a Hindu values a son over a daughter.
At large, mothers share a very strange and complex relationship with their daughters. Normally, mothers want their daughters to follow the traditions and codes. Because, they think it’s a traditional bound life, which would keep her daughter safe. But, sometimes, the mother can also be found cruel and hostile towards her own daughter, and treats her with a sense of rivalry. The hostile chauvinistic societal environment, has moulded the psyche of a mother as a woman, and also made the young uninitiated girl child a special object of the mother’s persecution.

Mothers and daughters have a special bond with all its complex emotions – anger, resentment, competition and of course, love. But every son will also hear echoes of his own life with mother. Mothers and daughters – sometimes they’re enemies, sometimes best friends. You love her, sometimes you hate her. Sometimes she’s the last person you want to see. But she’s the first one you call for advice. That is the seesaw of feelings between mothers and daughters.

There is a difference between trying to understand a mother or daughter's behavior and trying to sanction it. Mothers and daughters cannot solve each other’s problems. They can support, guide, and assist. However, each party owns her own problems. Intimacy is achieved through self-disclosure, love, and mutual dependency; it is not determined by dependency. Not all mothers or daughters have the capacity to change. In this instance, someone is going to have to do more than her share of accepting. Mothers and daughters are human beings who are fallible and make mistakes.

Egocentric individuals focus on themselves, their own interests, and how everything relates specifically to them. Their focal point is so preoccupied with self that it may exclude anyone else's interests, points of view, or feelings. All mothers and daughters want the same things: love, understanding, respect. And they want them from each other. Mom wants love,
respect, and understanding from the child she brought into the world. And daughter wants the same from the woman who gave her life. Many moms seek professional guidance because their daughter is acting out in some way, such as getting a tattoo, dressing inappropriately, or dating someone the rest of the family deems undesirable. The specific behaviors may be age related, but they are simply the manifestation of the underlying desire to be understood, respected, and loved. The only real way that the mother-daughter relationship can evolve in a healthy, loving, and sustainable way is to satisfy these needs. And it boils down to communication, which is something that mothers and daughters are doing constantly, just not as effectively as they could.

The fact that mothers and daughters often struggle is certainly not a novel premise; a vast number of books and periodicals have been written on the topic, all in an effort to comprehend this potentially volatile dynamic. No relationship is quite as primal as the one between a mother and her daughter. "It's the original relationship, and it's also a relationship that has been sentimentalized but not honored," says Lee Sharkey, Ph.D., who directs the Women's Studies program at the University of Maine at Farmington, where she teaches a popular course in mother-daughter relationships. "Women grow up and our energy is largely turned toward men, but the original love relationship is with a mother. If we as daughters don't acknowledge that, we're closing ourselves off from a great source of power and fulfillment and understanding of ourselves."

For instance, one can find, a mother who expressed her anguish and the gender-bias through the natural element, sunlight which she feels as a barrier for women’s beauty or for their fair complexion. In Ladies Coupe right from the beginning Akila is made to understand that she is a girl and she is inferior to her brother, in every way. The sole purpose of a woman’s existence is to please her man. She has just remained a ‘thing’ to be passed on from
parents to husband. As for her behaviour she always kept two different measuring yards, one for the son and other for the daughter.

In this way a traditional woman thinks that it is their duty to remind their daughter that she is a girl and she should behave accordingly. The socio-cultural conditioning of a girl is still a part of Indian culture.

The mother and daughter relationship in this novel is based on gender-bias and lovelessness. Usually, mothers serve as a role model for their daughters. They provide examples of how to be an individual, a mother and a wife. Akila the main character and caretaking daughter in this novel, is often portrayed as cold, silent, a woman despite of her age and so on. One can also see, Akila does not talk much even to her mother, as the children of her age do.

This also shows the city life, where most of the parents take things for granted with their children. But it is a well known fact, that nobody can replace the place of a mother in the family. There are many instances which clearly show their longings for motherly love and care. Apart from Akila, Marikolundhu She is always ignored and neglected. She is not given much importance.

Sheela, in this novel, is often portrayed as cold, silent, a woman despite of her age and so on. Sheela’s mother fails to understand her daughter’s odd behaviour sometimes. One can see Sheela does not talk much even to her mother, as the children of her age do.

But it is a well-known fact, that nobody can replace the place of mother in the family. There are many instances which clearly show their longings for motherly love and care.
Anita Nair highlights the household conflict between wife and husband operating at the emotional, intellectual and sexual levels. The novelist being fully aware of the patriarchal set-up of Indian society does not plead for any kind of confrontation or militancy between man and woman, between husband and wife. As it is often said and practiced that “Silence, tolerance, sufferance is golden” and though the novel is in the feminist framework, the novelist does not cross the limits of Indian, socio-cultural reality.

“The metaphor of silence under which the three novels are organized helps to impose a quietude and discipline; the inner dynamics of a self cut off from human communication. Ladies Coupe is not an intrusion into the world of silence but a silent communion with the oppressed self-straining for articulation, for a voice.

The concept of new women is a mere attitudinal transformation stifling and oppressive system of sex roles giving her way to undistorted gender equality. Actually, a new woman is a feminist who is in search for the means to overcome oppression, develop her powers and abilities for personal fulfillment and self-actualization.

The novels have multiple misunderstandings among women characters, particularly between mothers and daughters, sisters, man and woman causing misery and unhappiness to several intimately related women in their families. By the time, the misunderstandings are clarified; they eventually either overcome their own misunderstandings or move beyond it, and establish a kind of solidarity among themselves. Thus, relationship gives a deep insight in analyzing what to do and what not to do. To conclude, it has to be made easy in the thought of every woman to come out and share their every feeling which they feel at their best. The woman protagonist of Nair’s novels attempt to do this really which can frustrate the readers on new view. Still, the scenario has started changing to the new techno world and it is apt that this is the need of the hour.