

## **Meticulous Love of a Ruthless Mother: A Paradigm of Misinterpreted Woman in Kavita Kané's *Sita's Sister***

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### **Abstract**

Wisdom and wickedness are the two truly undeniable qualities of human life. Indian mythology stands as a pillar of the culture and tradition of India. The retelling of the epic spread fast as a wildfire in the mind of contemporary readers. Most of the new generation writers are keen on writing about the most overlooking and misunderstood characters in the epics. Kavita Kané visualizes the heart-wrenching story of Kaikeyi, one of the wives of King Dashrath and the mother of Bharat. An evil always brings sorrow and good always showers happiness. It is true in the case of the royal clan. The unwavering love of a mother for her son here is unique. This article tries to scrutinize the cruel decision of a lovable mother for the sake of her step-son's life and the royal clan. The stubborn stance of a woman, for the welfare of her family, makes misrepresentation of her for years. Love of a mother is like a flowers bloom, as fresh and attractive every time.

**Keywords:** Curse, Emotion, Evil, Love, Misinterpretation, Mother, Stubborn

Human deeds are inconceivable. It concerns the circumstance, in which the person is raised that can have a great impact on the future. In the case of Kaikeyi, her upbringing has played a major part in her later life. By analyzing her actions, one can understand her strident and unblemished quality, especially her erratic love for her stepson, Ram. His exile from the palace to the Dandaka Forest for fourteen years diminished the illumination of Ayodhya and a deserved rage on Kaikeyi started to grow inside and outside the palace. Exile is an adventurous trip that teaches new dimensions and laws of one's life. Dr. J. Abiraami, in one of her articles rightly says "Exile is a part of human experience" (86). Ram's exile gets him glorious victory and leads his non-biological mother in endless misery.

Kavita Kané lime lighted the world's black-hearted woman Kaikeyi, as a compassionate mother and interpreted her as a woman, who is more protective of herself. She never wants a subordinate position because she is always a cautious wife and mother, and she does not give up any glory that she deserves. The same stance is taken during the time of exile, Kaikeyi neither neglects the curse as a

scheming wife nor the blame of a self-interested mother. She showers an emotionless state by urging Ram, Lakshman, and Sita to be out of the palace before King Dashrath changes his mind. Kaikeyi is a headstrong, stubborn, willful, courageous woman not like Kaushalya or Sumitra, being behind the walls of the palace. Her bravery is identified from her attempt to save King Dashrath, in one of the wars. Her feeling of insecurity about her husband and sons occupies her thoughts and is diverted as vitiated by Manthara.

Kaikeyi's feeling of insecurity should be taken into consideration because she developed a hatred or disbelief of men in general. Her father, King Aswapati banished her mother when she was only six years old. She grew up with her seven brothers and Manthara served as her wet nurse. This is the main reason to treat Manthara as her mother. Kane makes a confession through the mouth of Kaikeyi that, "my stubborn ego and my intense insecurity of being abandoned, courtesy my mother who left me when I was six". But, the exile of Ram is not because of her insecurity to become a Queen mother but to preserve the Ikshvaku clan and the heir of Ayodhya.

As a devoted woman, she deserves the position of Queen Mother of Ayodhya. Though she is dangerously stubborn and plays a chicanery act, she bears silent suffering destined for her. This is because of her unconditional love for Ram. She sacrificed all her honor and praise and willingly grabbed the fury by her devious play on two boons. Love is an abstract concept which cannot be evaluated in relation to a degree however it is the love of non-biological mother is the best as it is more sacrificing (75).

Motherhood is celebrated in every place as a general saying, that God created mother as he cannot live with all in the mortal world. Here, the emotion of a stepmother to her stepson and biological son is revealed. Ram is destined to go into exile but it hurts the entire kingdom including Bharat, for whom Kaikeyi used the two boons of King Dashrath to make Bharat sit on the throne, meanwhile Ram's way to the forest. This created a dumbstruck scenario in the palace. Kaikeyi fervidly asks for these two boons. A mother's ruthless act also leads only to glorify her son. This statement is true in Ram's life as he defeated demons in the forest and ignited the light in the life of common people and rishis. The victory in the battle against Ravan is preordained nevertheless Kaikeyi and Guru Vasishtha know beforehand.

Kaikeyi, as a mother of Bharat and wife of King Dashrath wounded with tears of loss and disconsolateness, in the eyes of Sumitra and Kaushalya, she feels embarrassment, and to Urmila, she is spellbound by Manthara. But in the vision of Ram, she reserves the same smile for his mother. Love of mother is unconditional but sometimes that seems to be evil and wickedness. Maternal love is not the same in all cases. Kaikeyi's love for Ram is irrevocable and her demand to go him to exile is also true. A mother wants her son to achieve fame in a meritorious mission and save the world from evil hands. To make it happen, she uses the idea of Manthara for executing her preplanned plot. On the other hand, Manthara is treated by Kaikeyi as her own mother and sees her doing everything like a wet nurse. But

a mother provoked her daughter against her family and wreck her family life. There lies a hidden motive and sacred deeds within exile.

The mother banished her lovable son who does not utter any harmful words against her. Ram knows that she punished him though he is not a victim or offender. The son understands the emotions and evil decisions of his mother and has some good intentions. Kavita Kané voiced the quality of Kaikeyi through Urmila:

his exile was preordained and yet you willed it to happen and orchestrated it to look like you had banished him for your greed and for preserving your son's rights. But it was just the opposite. You were actually protecting Ram. And in this masquerade, all you earned was not the goodwill but the wrath and hatred of everyone- even your husband and son! (251)

Here, a non-biological son perceived her more than her own son. So far, a misinterpreted myth is found in The Ramayana, as Kaikeyi's selfish motive to be a Queen Mother by getting the throne for her son, resembled her, a treacherous woman. In a research article, Swarnananda and Wickramaarachchi rightly exemplify the view of the world on biological and non-biological mothers:

this role of non-biological mother is constructed in various literary contexts and more specifically how these non-biological subservient mothers are not recognized and their love regarded as to the love of the biological mother. A textual analysis of texts is used to interpret these characters in their specific literary settings. (75)

Behind that big plan, there is concealed truth and selfless emotion to protect the fall of the Raghu clan is unknown to the world. These are the pain full of mystery and history of a mother, who suffered from untold misery all alone. The credible spectacle is put on up to this point is the self-centered motive of Kaikeyi. Now, it is removed by the attire of pride and lovable mother of Ram by Kavita Kané.

The world understands the struggle sooner or later but the struggle of a mother to protect her son is undeniable. The people who subordinated Kaikeyi betrayed her in her hard times. Even her wet nurse poisoned her mind, her husband gives up on her, and her own son never wants to see her face. But her Ram retained the same smile after knowing about his exile. She knows that her Ram is ready for a nobler mission. The denial of motherhood and the aspired love of a son is evident in Bharat and Ram.

Kaikeyi is portrayed in a feministic view, with her bold and beauty, courage and valour that reflects her prowess in the war field and her instigation to become Chief Queen. Her love for Ram is measureless than her love for her own son. A mother's claim of the throne to Bharat shows a good intention on him that he would rather die than sit on the throne which is meant only for Ram. But destiny and ordinance spoiled the peace of the royal family for fourteen years.

Radha's love for Karna, Kunti's love for Sahdev, Kausalya's equivalent love for Bharat, Lakshman and Shatrughan, Sumitra's love for Ram, and Bharat

recorded in history as doting love, where these mothers are generous in their lifetime to their sons. In Kaikeyi's case, her extreme anger sets a paradigm of her true love for Ram. It is nothing but destined and pre-ordained. The world accepts only the good deeds of a mother and evil intentions are highly regarded for the denial of motherhood.

A deviant heart is necessary to protect the heir for fourteen years. It is destined from a generous mother to shower animosity against her pleasing and courageous son. In general, there is a talk that Surpanakha, the sister of Ravan is the reason for the great epic but literally without Kaikeyi, there is no epic called The Ramayana that gets its root, without her, an unbiased love of step-mother would have remained in darkness. Such an embracing mother is holding the brunt for ages. She is distorted and crushed during her lifetime and ever after, with no evidence of people in her name.

The retellings of the epic by contemporary writers bring a new scope for the study of underrated and unnoticed characters. One among them is Kavita Kané. Kaikeyi, being the quintessential stepmother, should not be a fabricated character by the authors like other stepmothers in fiction. All the events are pre-ordained many years back and they are irrevocable. The emotion of a mother is incomparable to anything in the world. Such emotion and instinct are drenched in the heart of the stepmother than Ram's biological mother. This paper elucidated the sacrifice of a compassionate mother in her ruthless attire to prevent the impending danger of the Ikshvaku clan.

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