

Successful Women Sacrifice Anything for the sake of their families as depicted in ‘*The Thousand Faces of Night*’ By Gita Hariharan

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Abstract

This paper is an attempt to study about women whose education does not help them in their family lives. Women though highly educated if not ready to sacrifice certain things of theirs find great difficult to survive with their husbands and to lead a successful lives. Some women lead their family successfully but some do not. Women do not use their knowledge what they get through their education successfully to lead their family lives. Women though have education she needs to sacrifice certain things to have successful and happy family life. Some women give important to their own identity than to their families. Some women sacrifice their identity and give important to their families. In the novel ‘The Thousand Faces of Night’ Gita Hariharan brought women characters to show how women lead successful and unsuccessful family lives. She brought three main characters namely Sita, Devi and Mayammal. Sita though not educated ready to sacrifice her identity and so led a successful life. Devi who had a foreign degree hoped to have better life than her mother failed to lead successful life. Mayamma who was a maid struggled a lot with her husband and with her son but successfully played her role as wife and mother. Women must be bold to face her life alone by herself. Both Sita and Mayyama faced boldly but Devi did not have that boldness though had foreign degree and returned back to her mother. It is clear that she failed in her life. Women need to sacrifice certain things of her to have successful lives.

Keywords: Education, Family, Identity, Knowledge, Life, Men, Sacrifice, Women

INTRODUCTION

Gita Hariharan brings three characters in her novel “The Thousand Faces of Night”. They are Sita, Devi and Mayamma. She relates epic stories for the current events happening in their lives. Women from the beginning are suffering and sacrificing their things for the sake of their families.

AN EVENT IN SITA’S LIFE

Let us see the character ‘Sita’. Sita was the mother of Devi. She was a widow right now. At her childhood Sita was good at playing veena. Everyone appreciated her and loved to hear her playing veena. When she got married and went to her husband house she played her veena everyday after finishing her household works. Now her role to her husband was a wife and to the house was a daughter-in-law.

When Sita was very young bride she brought that veena as a part of dowry. She had been trained as a daughter-in-law and played veena everyday after she had finished her household duties.

Then one day, her husband sat in front of the gods and was ready for his morning prayers. There he could not find a thing which was necessary for his prayers. He could not find flowers and the floor was not swept. So immediately he called “Sita” with his voice trembling with anger. But poor Sita did not hear his voice. But from her room everyone heard the sound of the veena in rapturous flight. So her mother-in-law left her knife in the kitchen and went to see her. But before she could reach her room there came her husband first. He

shouted at sita “put that veena away” and asked her whether she was a wife and a daughter-in-law.

Sita hung her head over the veena for a minute and pulled its strings out of the wooden base. Then she looked up at her husband and said that she was a wife and a daughter-in-law.

The family members never saw her touch the veena again. The neighbours praised that she became a dutiful daughter-in-law. They did not hera again that herat-rending music again.

Devi’s grandmother often would relate epic stories with their own life events. She often would say stories of heroes and heroines. So immediately she could relate the story of Gandhari to Sita’s life event. This way of fusing epic stories to life events is a vital one Gita Hariharan brought in her novel.

Her grandmother started to narrate the story of Ghandhari. Ghandhari came to her husband’s house dressed in her bridal finery. They took her into the bridegroom prince’s chamber. The palace Gandhari was now to rule as queen was twice as big as her parents’ palace.

The huge wooden doors were opened and Gandhari’s eager eyes lost their shyness. She walked to her husband quickly. But he stood by window and his head looked up at the sky. When he turned around she saw the white eyes , the pupils glazed and useless. He was a blind.

In her pride and anger Gandhari said nothing. She tore off a piece of her thick red skirt and tied it tightly over her own eyes.

Here we can see Gandhari though she is pride and anger, she embraces her destiny. She accepted her blind husband. She accepted her fate. This shows her self sacrifice. She is here ready to sacrifice her sight for the sake of her husband and his family. She doesn't like to see the worlds which her husband not able to see. She wanted to be his wife both in happiness and misery. She decided to be a perfect wife to him. So she sacrificed the sight of her eyes. Women should meet her fate alone. So she should face it boldly.

How Gandhari sacrifices her eyes Sita sacrifices her talent of playing veena. Both the women sacrifice because of their husbands and their families.

THE LIFE OF DEVI

Devi went to America and studied there and got degree from there. When she returned back to madras her mother arranged her marriage with Magesh who was a manager in a multi national company. She got married and went to her husband house. She had father-in-law , Baba there. She di not see her mother-in-law. But saw her in her photos. Mayamma a maid was also there. Her father-in-law often would read Sanskrit stories aloud. One day a letter came from lalitha who lived in America. So her father-in-law went there. She found herself put in to isolation. She asked her husband whether she could apply for the post of assistant lecturer. He told that she should get one more degree to apply for that post. He did not encourage her. He wanted her to a good house wife and a daughter –in-law. He also insisted her to have a baby. He openly asked her to give birth to a baby.

The other day Magesh came and told Devi that he checked himself in the hospital and so he wanted her to check in the hospital. This shows that he wants Devi to be his wife and to become mother. He wants her to take the role of wife and mother. He does not want her to

go to job. He wanted her to give important to baby than to going out. She did not like this and decided to do something as a heroine in her life. This type of thought came to her mind because she heard lot of stories from her grandmother who would say her stories of heroes and heroines. At one point she decided to elope with Gopal who was a neighbour and a musician.

Here what we can see is her Educational knowledge does not help her or does not give right knowledge to her. She is not able to face her fate boldly. She wants to come out of it. Her decision seems to be wrong one. She is not able to handle her marriage life. She is able to go to foreign country and able to study there but not able to manage her own family. It seems that she is not efficient in taking up her wife role. She does not sacrifice anything. She wants to have her own identity. She went out of her husband's house with Gopal. Her foreign degree did not bring any good change to her and that foreign experience did not teach her and did not give her enough knowledge to lead her own life. Devi's life has become an unsuccessful one.

CONCLUSION

From the characters Sita and Devi we can understand that Sita is a successful woman by her self-sacrifice and ready to face anything in her life Whereas Devi is an unsuccessful woman not ready to sacrifice anything and not able to face her fate boldly. Sita, not educated got success in her life journey whereas Devi who got foreign degree not able to get success in her life journey. Women whether educated or not must be ready to sacrifice anything for the sake of their families. Women from the beginning suffer and struggle a lot for their families. The journey of women from Gita Hariharan's novel is also seen in the volume 20 – issue 3 of iosrjournals.

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