

Conjugal Strife in Anita Desai's "*Cry, The Peacock*"

Mallavarapu Jhansi

Research Scholar

Acharya Nagarjuna University

Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, India

Dr Madupalli Sureshkumar

Professor & Head, Dept. of English

Acharya Nagarjuna University

Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, India

jhansy1972@gmail.com

Abstract:

Marriage is a supposedly sacrosanct establishment in each community. It is the perceived social organization for building up and keeping up the family as well as for making and supporting the ties of connection. Conjugal disharmony is characterized as a battle between individuals with contradicting needs, thoughts, convictions, qualities, or goals. The disharmonized character's quest for satisfaction is a typical theme in contemporary fiction. Anita Desai is considered an authority on uncovering the issue of present-day women in India. She is increasingly worried about the inward situation of her estranged protagonist in the modern,

<https://doi.org/10.24113/ijellh.v7i11.10094>

patriarchal society. In her novels, she has depicted the man-lady relationship and the untold sufferings of ladies out of the connubial disharmony. Desai's novel *Cry, the Peacock* is considered as the initial phase toward mental fiction in Indian writing in English. This paper talks about the connubial disharmony between Maya and Gautama and its outcomes in Anita Desai's *Cry, the Peacock*.

Keywords: Conjugal disharmony, patriarchal society, connubial strife

"*Cry, the Peacock*" by Anita Desai is a brilliant novel about connubial disharmony. The wedded existence of Maya and Gautama is generally contradictory. Maya is brimming with life and needs to appreciate life to the most extreme. To her, sexual fulfilment is a need and its all-out refusal may lead to a mentally unsettling influence. She is keen on all the beneficial things of life – nature, winged creatures and animals, dance and poetry. She loses herself in the satisfaction in excellent sights and sounds. The calls of winged creatures bring out thoughtful harmony in her. She is displayed in the novel as a lady who yearns for the genuine joys of life.

"The hazards and complexities of man-woman relationships, the founding of individuality and the establishing of her characters" (Raji Narasimhan, 23).

Gautama, who wedded her, is a companion of Maya's father, a prosperous, moderately aged attorney, particularly more seasoned than Maya. While Maya is yearning for adoration and warmth, her significant other Gautama is unequipped for understanding her real sentiments and feelings and generally discounts his better half. She isn't looking for the satisfaction of the unremarkable love, but for a prototype love. The Albino crystal gazer had once disclosed to her that it is possible that she or her spouse would die inside four years of her marriage. The nervousness brought about by this prescience had lessened her satisfaction.

<https://doi.org/10.24113/ijellh.v7i11.10094>

After marriage, Maya needs to leave her dad. He spoiled her as well as reinforced her cerebrum with fantasies in light of the fact that the doctor had exhorted him not to make her on edge or dismal. That was most likely when Maya initially started to uncover indications of her anxiety, and her dad's familiarity with it made him considerably progressively joined to her. This spoiling ruins Maya and causes her to long for consideration constantly. She needs illustrative love and she needs a boisterous display of adoration.

Subsequent to her marriage, she anticipates that her significant other would play as a father with her. Maya does not grow up rationally which results in affliction. Gautama anticipates that Maya would carry on like a mature individual. In any case, this expands Maya's feeling of uncertainty further, causing mental lop-sidedness and intense psychic strain. Maya's dad wished to stay discreet from Gautama as well as from others, on the grounds that such a disclosure may have decreased his little girl's odds of marriage, for who might eagerly wed a psychic case. In this manner, she views him as an enemy and her mental issue turns into an existential one. The issue with Maya is that she doesn't understand that everyone is a unique individual – who essentially thinks, and acts in a different way from others.

Without any uncertainty, Maya's dad is halfway to fault for raising his girl the manner in which he did. He affirmed whatever she did or stated, never contrasted from her, notwithstanding when she wasn't right. At each progression, she contrasts Gautama and her dad to the drawback of the previous in light of the fact that she doesn't understand that a daddy-daughter relationship is not quite the same as a spouse-wife relationship.

She is yearning for the brotherhood like that of Radha and Krishna. It is a correspondence that she looks for – the genuine marriage where body, psyche and soul join together – the sort which the peacock searches when it screeches out its inside in its high pitched serious mating calls." The calls of peacocks in the novel stand for her cries of adoration, which all the while welcoming their passing. Like her, they are animals of fascinating wild and

<https://doi.org/10.24113/ijellh.v7i11.10094>

won't rest till they have stirred the dance of death. She portrays how they stirred and delivered a noteworthy effect at the forefront of her thoughts:

In the shadows I saw peacocks moving, a thousand eyes upon their gleaming plumes looking enduringly, unwinkingly upon the last truth – Death. I heard their thirst and they looked at the downpour mists, their energy as they chased for their mates. With them, I trembled and gasped and paced the consuming rocks. Desolation, misery, the ethical anguish of their cry darling and for death."

(*"Cry, the Peacock"*, 96)

Being seriously infatuated with life, she turns hysteric over the crawling apprehension of death:

"Am I going crazy? Father; Brother; Husband. Who is my guardian angel? I am in need of one. I am passing on. God, let me rest, overlook, rest. In any case, no, I'll never rest again. There is no rest any longer ... (*"Cry, the Peacock"*, 98)

The apathetic conduct of the spouse's family likewise builds her feeling of dejection which steadily forms into a real feeling of estrangement. The isolation and quietness of the house go after Maya. Likewise, the demise of her pet pooch begins a chain of memory and dream. The epic depicts the internal, passionate universe of Maya, who is the casualty of city life. She feels irritated from her significant other's reality and feels rejected and completely forlorn in the house. Thinking about her miserable marriage, Maya reflects with profound concern:

"It was disheartening to consider how much in our marriage depended on respectability constrained upon us from outside, and in this manner neither genuine nor enduring. It was broken over and again, and more than once the pieces were grabbed and set up together once more, starting at a consecrated symbol with which, out of the pettiest superstition, we couldn't stand to part."

(*"Cry, the Peacock"*, 40)

<https://doi.org/10.24113/ijellh.v7i11.10094>

She demonstrates a love for the death of her pooch Toto, however, it is just her canine that kicked the bucket. To him, the demise of Toto is a normal happening, yet to her, it is some more noteworthy disaster. Maya's dejection is because of her a lot of association. It isn't for the absence of adoration for her significant other that she endures, yet for a lot of affection for him. Maya feels defenceless and she needs somebody to extend her assurance and relief.

As Anita Desai puts it: "Childless women do develop a fanatical attachment to their pets, they say. It is no less a relationship than that of a woman and her child; no less worthy of reverence, and agonized remembrance". Gautama fails to understand this attachment and promises to bring another dog.

In spite of the fact that Gautama and Maya are hitched, they don't generally speak with one another. What is genuine to her is a shadow to him, what are actualities and hard substances to him have no enthusiasm for her. R.S. Sharma says "the novel becomes a fascinating psychological study of neurotic fears and anxieties caused by marital incompatibility and disharmony and compounded by age-old superstition"

She is fixated by her prescience of calamity that keeps her from having a typical existence with her better half Gautama oddly the pale-skinned soothsayer may overlook her yet she can't overlook the celestial prophet and his prediction. It demonstrates her affectability.

Shockingly, Maya's plight is likewise her own creation. This is the quality that oversees the heroes of Anita Desai. Dancing and dining cause her cerebral pain. The sentiment of getting a charge out of life turns into a risk. Her own home is introduced as a jail in a mask. The bright world has been introduced to uncover a clouded side of shrewdness and offensiveness.

The city assumes an essential job in broadening the connubial chasm between Gautama and Maya. She feels isolated from the universe of Gautama who does not have any desire to be "hindered in his speculation" by insignificant issues, for example, the passing of a pet pooch. She feels the nonappearance of her significant other in the house for extended periods. At

<https://doi.org/10.24113/ijellh.v7i11.10094>

whatever point he comes he gets occupied with his customers or examines governmental issues which don't intrigue her. She feels disheartened and desolate in the house:

"His briskness and perpetual cups of tea and reasoning so as to not to hear me talk, and talking uncovers myself. It is that – my forlornness in this house." (*"Cry, the Peacock"*, 14)

In a condition of absolute dejection, she comments, "Torment, blame, fear, detainment – these were the four dividers of my private hell, one that nobody could get by in long. Passing was sure." (*"Cry, the Peacock"*, 88.)

Desai's female protagonists are for the most part gotten in a trap of difficult conditions, their battle and the result of which is typically the premise of the novel. The battle, one can promptly observe isn't without reason and the point is to accomplish the kind of agreement. The significant worries of the author are perfection, discouragement and isolation.

An amazing story is by all accounts, one of three occasions that can be summed up as hardship, estrangement and disposal separately. K. R. S. Iyengar says:

"Cry, the Peacock scores because Maya is at once the centre and circumference in this world. Her insanity, sane or insane fills the whole book and gives it form as well as life."

In any case, Maya has been denied of the love of the mother, sibling, and later her dad. Also, she is distanced from her significant other and at last she realizes his end of life and her very own self from her family and society. Maya is an intuitive lady of interests and feelings. Gautama, then again, is philosophical and scholarly. She expects some passionate and physical fulfilment in wedded life. However, these two are denied to her, one by Gautama's cool learnedness and the other by his age.

In spite of all the opulence, the home still comes up short on the essential family soul. She says that she adores Gautama, once in a while demonstrates her affection in deeds. Gautama, in actuality, is delicate and persistent with her, aside from those occasions when she

<https://doi.org/10.24113/ijellh.v7i11.10094>

is excessively outlandish. And still, at the end of the day, he accuses her dad and not Maya herself.

Little by little, by the concealment and the seclusion, she earned the dangerous goal. She felt that she is being ignored by Gautama. Life to him would mean Thanatos to her. She slaughters Gautama, yet his passing doesn't leave any feeling of disaster or emotion. Indeed, even the writer appears to play down Gautama's passing which is referenced metaphorically and slyly. For Maya, it is just a push; for Gautama, it is death. While others have been expelled from her life in an unobtrusive manner, her homicide of Gautama is her bravest act. Gautama is a loyal spouse who cherishes and cares for her in his own particular manner yet Maya is perpetually discontented.

Conjugal connections are built up with the unequivocal motivation behind giving companionship to one another. Be that as it may, the component of fellowship is tragically absent in the association between Maya and Gautama. In spite of the fact that she is partial to having books by Tagore, Keats, Shelley, she scarcely ever understands them. This propensity proceeds after marriage and Gautama indicates that to her, that she never peruses the paper or a book, neither does she include herself in any extra-curricular activities.

Maya fails both in making a character for herself and in having a steady existence. The call of the peacock is the call of the characteristic intuition of a lady who is unfulfilled. In any case, such satisfaction is denied to Maya. She understands that she needs Gautama's physical nearness, his affection and typical life. She is fit for sympathy which empowers her to encounter what the peacock and peahen are encountering. However, this makes her vibrate even more seriously that though there is a passionate excitement, there is no physical satisfaction which is the reason for her misery. Maya pushes Gautama off the parapet of their home. In this way, she kills her better half in an attack of crazy rage and ends it all.

<https://doi.org/10.24113/ijellh.v7i11.10094>

Through Maya, the writer has attempted to emphasize the extraordinary longing of the lady to be comprehended by her male partner. Along these lines, "*Cry, the Peacock*" is a spearheading exertion towards portraying the mental issues of a distanced individual. Anita Desai investigates the purposes behind conjugal strife and delineates how such conflict influences the family. The marital bonds that catch the two were delicate and dubious. Absence of fellowship was the central reason for complexities in the life of Maya and Gautama. Maya smarted because of the distance and the wide chasm between Maya's dad and Gautama.

Maya identifies herself with the peacocks in the misery of the rapture of their deadly love-understanding. This epic exhibits an impression of the connubial ambiguity and experiential marital life. Maya is by all accounts honest and very touchy. This tale "*Cry, the Peacock*" uncovers an impression of connubial confusion and troubled matrimonial life. No other author is troubled about the life of youngsters and ladies in India urban areas in such a great amount of as Anita Desai.

<https://doi.org/10.24113/ijellh.v7i11.10094>

References:

Desai, Anita. *Cry, The Peacock*. Delhi: Orient Paperbacks, 1980.

Desai, Anita. "Interview by Yashodhara Dalima", *The Times of India*, April 29, 1979.

Narasimhan, Raji. "Sensibility Under Stress". New Delhi: Prakashan, 1976.

Sharma. R.S. *Anita Desai*. New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann, 1981.

Iyengar, K.R.S. *Indian Writing in English*. 4th ed. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd.