

## **CHAPTER - V**

# **SEXUAL ASSAULTS INSIDE AND OUTSIDE MARRIAGE: *THE BINDING VINE***

The novel *The Binding Vine* can be said to be Shashi Deshpande's intervention into women's experience of sexual violence. Sexual violence is an intrinsic part of women's lives irrespective of class, caste, community or race. The patriarchal power structures existing in the society which are supposed to protect women's honour are but perpetrators of this violence. Rape is a crime of violence on women and it is often used by men as power of domination. As rape is exercised as power of domination, it becomes the root cause of women's subordination. Men use rape as one of the ways to dominate to which women are made to submit due to anatomical structure. Man violets woman's body and soul with the heinous act of rape. Rape which is a form of sexual violence is carried by force imposing a power relation between men and women.

Literally, rape is the forcible penetration of the female body by the male sexual organ in the expression of male sexual domination and hence of patriarchy itself (Rajan 1980: 77).

Rape in which one is forced to have sexual intercourse is the very serious crime among the sexual assaults. It is serious violation of women's freedom and their state. Feminist interventions in the position of women have taken up this subject of assault on women. Popular discourses have also ventured to show how this traumatic experience can change the lives of women. This is therefore the subject of many a novelist who want to make society aware of this crime. Shashi Deshpande is just one of them to foreground this assault through her novel. But her uniqueness lies in the fact that she catches attention how one can become the victim of rape even within the sanctity of marriage. How people take it for granted that after marriage couple have only consensual sex. Seldom people think that a man just takes a licence of marriage for raping a woman. For in so called social marriages women are raped by their husbands. As they have no say on their lives they stay with their rapist husbands and gradually give in thinking of the family's welfare and social custom. Women are shaped and moulded in such a way that they are bound to accept such sexual violence. The nightmarish assault of women's body and soul becomes

women's lived experience and they silently bear the scratches due to their utter helplessness. Economic dependence, lack of education, social customs force women to accept everything and anything. Sexual assault whether within marriage or outside marriage leaves deep scar in the victim's body, mind and soul. The experience is almost like annihilation of the being- the aftermath only leaves the person in skeleton. The victim may lead the life but that life becomes 'life in death'. When such is the consequence if the body is ravaged the law should be stricter and society should be more cautious to protect the persona of women. Instead the law and society remain callous in the face of such crisis. Rape and sexual violence against women have been strongly articulated in novel *Binding Vine* by Deshpande. Deshpande also brings out the inhuman treatment of the rape victim by the protectors of law and order.

In *Binding Vine* Deshpande presents two stories of rape victims-one that of Kalpana and the other of Mira through the protagonist Urmil's reflection on them. The two stories are interwoven in order to help Urmil to come out of mental trauma after losing her girl child who was just a year old. Urmil who is trying to come to terms with life after her dear daughter's death suddenly finds herself listening to Shakuntal whose daughter Kalpana is raped and reading Mira's poetry who was sexually assaulted by her husband.

- what has happened to Kalpana happened to Mira too (63)

Both the stories question the notion of patriarchal authority which subjugates women due to her sexuality. The stories also show how society induces them to retreat into silence snipping off their demands of freedom and to think of their own emotional and intellectual needs. Women are exposed to hostile environment both within and outside the home where they may be sexually abused at anytime. Urmil's sensibility is hurt when she finds that Kalpana is on the verge<sup>of</sup> death and Mira too died at a young age both due to their sexuality. Urmil who wanted a blessed life for her own daughter cannot accept that daughters face such fate at the primes of their lives. She knows the pain of a mother losing her daughter untimely. She herself had wanted for her daughter a long, graceful life as every mother wants. She could not thank God for she had her baby for a whole year. It wasn't enough for her. She wanted her for her whole lifetime and she wanted a full life for her daughter.

Urmila had found Shakutai, Kalpana's mother to go into pieces at Kalpana's plight. Shakutai too had wanted a generous life for Kalpana. She wanted her to have all she never had-education, a good life, a good marriage, respect from others.

Mira's mother too had perhaps thought of a blessed life for her through marriage. But Mira was rather unhappy for being sexually abused by her husband. In Mira's diary entry she had written of an incident when astrologer had visited their home to read their horoscopes. Only her mother's horoscope was not read. When Mira had enquired if she did not want to know her future, she had said:

What's there in my life apart from all of you? If I know all of you are well and happy, I'm happy too. (101)

Urmila finds herself in solidarity with these women when she thinks of why she had to face her unfortunate destiny of losing her daughter. She had read Mira's diary where Mira asks the same question and finds Shakutai repeating the same.

How clear it comes to me across the years, her cry of rage and anguish. 'why does this have to happen to me?' why did it have to happen to my daughter? Shakutai asked me. Why? My own question comes back to me – Why? (67)

Perhaps this solidarity made Urmila to stand by Shakutai in her difficult times and to be determined to publish Mira's poetry. These two steps were perhaps the best tribute to her daughter. The realisation had dawned on her where she was conversing with Akka. Akka told her:

You can't hold on to your grief that way, you have to let it go. Only then our dead stay with us. (155)

Urmila had the same feeling of serenity after immersing her father's ashes – the feeling as if her father was there with them even after death. She thought Akka was right that our dead are always with us.

Death cannot blot our life. Anu will always be with me. The link between us stays vibrant, alive. A kind of comforting warmth suffuses me at the thought, thawing the chill that has been with me since Anu died. (155)

It was at that point that Urmila decides to publish Mira's poetry to resurrect Mira, her husband Kishore's dead mother.

Suddenly I decide. I will tell Akka about Mira, about my dream, no, it is no longer just a dream, it is a plan, to resurrect Mira, to let her voice be heard. (155)

Mira was a promising poet who was forced into a marriage at the age of 18 against her will. She was more than an average woman who did not seek to be a subdued woman like her mother.

*To make myself in your image  
was never the goal I sought* (124)

Elsewhere she is seen asking her mother:

Why do you want me to repeat your history when you so despise of your own?  
(126)

Perhaps for this she wrote poetry but she never showed them to anyone fearing others would laugh. The poems lay in her trunk until Urmila and Akka read them. Her husband married her with single-minded obsession for her. He was aggressive and desired to possess and control her life and in the process subdued her.

- a man who tried to possess another human being against her will. (83)

Mira's intense dislike for her husband's sexual advances runs all through her writing:

It runs through all her writing – a strong, clear thread of an intense dislike of the sexual act with her husband, a physical repulsion from the man she married. (63)

She feared the coming of the first night which is reflected in her poetry.

*But tell me, friend, did laxmi too  
twist brocade tassels round her fingers  
and tremble, fearing the coming  
of the dark – clouded, engulfing night?* (66)

Her diary entry shows her displeasure more accurately. Her husband could never reach to her soul. She wrote that she gave him the facts, nothing more, never her feelings. He came to know what she was doing and he used to get angry with her. She didn't mind his

anger, it made him leave her to herself, and it was bliss for her when he did that. But he used to come back after being remorseful, repentant. He used to hold her close. he used to babble. And so again it used to begin. He used to request her in the name of love.

*'please,' he says, 'Please, I love you.' And over and over again until he has done, 'I love you.' Love! How I hate the word. If this is love it is a terrible thing. I have learnt to say 'no' at last, but it makes no difference, no difference at all. What is it he wants from me? I look at myself in the mirror and wonder, what is there in me? Why does it have to be me? Why can't he leave me alone? (67)*

Thus Mira and her husband stood on the two poles-miles apart. They were two straight lines who would never meet.

*Fixed forever in our places,  
face to face the two of us,  
like Siva and his nodding Bull. (82)*

Urmi assumes from her poetry and diary entry that it was perhaps her mother who told her 'never to say no'.

*Don't tread paths barred to you  
obey, never utter a 'no';  
submit and your life will be  
a paradise, she said and blessed me. (83)*

At marriage she was given a different identity altogether. This shift of her identity which was meant to demolish her earlier self saddened her only to resolve that they cannot change her.

*A glittering ring gliding on the rice  
carefully traced a name 'Nirmala'.  
Who is this? None but I,  
My name hence, bestowed upon me.*

*Nirmala, they call, I stand statue-still.  
Do you build the new without razing the old?*

*A tablet of rice, a pencil of gold*

*can they make me Nirmala? I am Mira. (101)*

With marriage Mira found herself cloistered in a home, living with a man she could not love and surrounded by people she had nothing in common with.

Perhaps it was her writing that made her life worth living. It was at night she wrote poetry stealthily only after the man had slept for certainly she did not have a study room of her own. Whatever she wrote, she did it, late at night, after the man had gone to bed. So her husband had no knowledge of her poetic excellence.

Her path of writing had not been smooth enough. Once she had met the prominent poet Venu who discriminated her for being a poetess. She was hurt but that could not stop her indomitable spirit to write.

It is enough for a young woman like you to give birth to children. That is your poetry. Leave the other poetry to us men. (127)

Benu reminds one of Robert Southey who commented rudely on Charlotte Bronte that literature cannot be the business of a women's life, and it ought not to be.

In spite of her mother's advice she found her will rising up against him:

*no, growing painfully within*

*Like a monster child was born. (83)*

Despite of her unwillingness he forced himself on her and it was out of this wedlock that Urmi's husband Kishore was born. Mira survives the fear and humiliation of her rape by her husband and emerged happy when she felt the life within her. It was a period of peace and contentment to live each day and to feel the child growing within her.

*Tiny fish swimming in the ocean of my womb*

*my body thrills to you;*

*churning the ocean, shaking distant shores*

*you will emerge one day.*

*Lightning flashed through the front door  
and I was who was stone quivered.  
Bridging the two worlds, you awaken in me  
A desire for life.*

*Desire, says the Buddha, is the cause of grief;  
But how escape this cord  
this binding vine of love? Fear lies coiled within  
this womb-piercing joy.*

*Smiling and joyful, Karna tore off his armour,  
his body trailed blood,  
Will that courage be mine when, demided,  
I stand naked and bare? (136-137)*

Mira was enthralled by the movement in her womb. But she never wanted the child to be a daughter to repeat the story.

*I feel the quickening in my womb,  
he moves – why do I call the child he? (149)*

Urmila reflects why Mira did not want to bear a daughter. It is because Mira was frightened of bearing the constant burden of fear for her daughter as well?

The happiness of bearing the child filled Mira with the desire to live. As every living cell desires to multiply as written in the *Upanisads* :

*Sokamayata bahusyam prajayeya iti.(134)*

So perhaps Mira at last found the spring of life which she was seeking so long.

*Standing still I searched,  
Stretching out my arms,*

*Sinking deep into the earth,  
Like the banyan roots,  
Seeking the spring of life. (151)*

Mira's story thus is the story of so many women in India who at last find peace when they enter motherhood. But before that their lives are one of domination of sexual power.

The position of Mira who represents most of the Indian wives can be aptly understood through the words of V. Geetha as focused in the book '*Gender*.'

... the experience of marriage becomes central to female sexual discovery, and after this proves to be traumatic. This is not only because many young brides are unformed about sexual love, but because it binds them to a relationship they can not easily refute. For, intimacies, especially sexual and erotic ones, can be imagined, experienced and rendered legitimate only within marriage. This, in turn, means that no bride can afford to desert her marriage, even if it proves to be abusive, because in her sense of it such a desertion connotes a betrayal of her own body, its sexual trust and intimacy.

Such knowledge of her sexuality allows the young bride very few options: she dare not desire in ways that may subvert the sanctity of her marriage bed. Further, she cannot, must not, voice but her displeasure or hurt over her husband's sexual behaviour. Above all, she has to live with the burden of a bound sexuality. This knowledge of herself and the multiple material burdens that wifedom thrusts on her together make the young bride's life harsh, painful and sad. Of course, no woman accepts her position as such-there are bound to be negotiations, subtle threats, refusals on her part as well. But the point is the logic of the male gaze works such that destined to marry, she cannot escape her sexual fate (Geetha 2002: 121).

Thus a submissive role is assigned to the wife through the violation of her body. Worst of all is that this act of violation remains hushed up in most of the cases. Mira spoke of it in her privacy through her poetry. What her daughter-in-law wants is to publish them for her. It would help others to voice forth their domination. The revelation would be appalling but would render universal appeal for women who suffer in marriage-bed and remain silent.



Deshpande takes into account another case of rape victim in her narrative. Kalpana, a young girl of eighteen living in a Bombay Chawl had been mercilessly raped and left to struggle between life and death. Urmila meets her mother on her visit to her sister-in-law Vanna in the hospital. The mother had become almost hysterical with shock when she listens that her daughter had been raped. Urmila extended emotional support to Shakutai in her crisis and came to know the whole story of Kalpana. Being a mother of a daughter Urmila knew what it meant for a mother to see her daughter in death bed. Urmila becomes very close to Shakutai and at last fights for Kalpana's cause.

Shakutai, a deserted wife had wanted her children a better life than her own. She had dreamt for Kalpana a happy life. She wanted her to have all that she never had- education, a good life, a good marriage, and respect from others.

But Shakutai was aware of the hard, unscrupulous world outside though she remained unaware of the insecurity inside the family ties. Ever since Kalpana grew up, she had to live with that fear. But Kalpana did not pay heed to her mother's worries.

Kalpana was young at heart; she had her dreams about her life. She had been earning also to be independent enough. Urmila had tried to read Kalpana's dreams as she heard about her.

Kalpana was – is – young, at an age when her existence is still a miracle to her. And therefore she walked out of that ramshackle building with gaily painted nails and lips, brightly coloured clothes and sleek, shining hair, loudly proclaiming the miracle of that existence. (149)

Though all young people do like this her uneducated mother thought that it was unwise for her to be so. Shakutai like many other women believe that women should not flaunt themselves. They think that would arouse male desire. Therefore it is women who should restrict their movements. They never think that it is never healthy for society that its men should be protected even when they are at fault. Sometimes even after the abuse women are scolded or rebuffed for arousing male desire by flaunting and beautifying themselves.

Women who do disclose abuses are often advised to restrict their movements or adapt their clothes so as to avoid tempting men to attack them. This puts the blame entirely on women, projecting them as sexual objects who arouse male

desire. It also ignores the fact that many rapes take place by people they trust and are often an assertion of male authority ( Bagchi 2005: 121).

She had even warned Kalpana about the worst consequence but Kalpana snubbed her.

I warned Kalpana, but she would never listen to me. "I'm not afraid of anyone," she used to say. That's why this happened to her.... women must know fear? (148)

Kalpana had no fear in heart and loudly proclaimed her desire to be different from her mother.

I'll never live like you,... (178)

But destiny had something else in store for her. She was brutally raped and left to die on the road side at the prime of her life. The doctor examining her gives the details of the brutality of her rape.

You could see the marks of his fingers on her arms where he had held her down. And there were huge contusions on her thighs – he must have pinned her down with his knees. And her lips – bitten and chewed. (88)

Urmila too is intensely shocked at the sight of the gory picture of the rape victim. It was a pain which a woman could not bear. There was a very ugly sense of being a voyeur. It was hard to stare at the girl. She was so slight that her body scarcely raised the coarse hospital blanket that covered her. Her face was discoloured in patches, the lips, dark and swollen, parted as she breathed. Her arms, symmetrically arranged outside the covers, one strapped down for the IV tube, were pathetically thin. The wrists were as small as a child's. There were little nicks on her forearms – healing scars of the cuts her glass bangles must have made. After the traumatic experience of rape Kalpana slipped into coma. She lost her consciousness and was fighting death. She was *'Not dead, not alive.'* (61) Shakutai, her mother thinks of her marriage in the hope that she would recover. She earnestly asks the doctor not to make police report. The question of family honour surely disturbs her. She thinks she would never be able to hold up her head again. No one marry the girl after such an incident. She turns to the Doctor requesting him not to tell the police.

Though the doctor tries to make her understand why it should be reported, she still thinks of the girl's honour. The question of girl's chastity at the time of marriage is what plays a vital role in Indian marriages. So Shakutai is concerned and trying to hide the fact of her girl being raped. In countries like India where a women's virginity plays a great role in marriage, unmarried raped girls' family do not want it to be public. The family thinks that if a girl's honour is lost, nothing is left. The girl wouldn't have to do anything wrong, people will always point a finger at her. Shakutai is just voicing forth the society at large. The society always points the finger at the girls even though she is raped and is in no way at fault. While the girl is stigmatised the man lives with impunity. It seems utterly callous to know that even the sympathy of people does not go with the girl when she is so horribly wronged. Obviously in this situation the parents suffer beyond imagination. Like many cases of rape, Kalpana was raped by the person whom her mother had trusted. Kalpana was raped by none other than her uncle (husband of mother's sister). It was finally disclosed to Shakutai by her sister when due to fear of police enquiry her husband had sought her help and asked her to lie to the police. It was obviously traumatic for Kalpana's aunt to accept that her dear cousin was raped by her husband. She could not bear the pain and revealed everything to her sister before committing suicide. Shakutai who could never imagine his name as the rapist even in her wildest dream reveals to Urmila the shocking news.

Her husband...Prabhakar, he... he did it to my Kalpana, my Sulu's husband.... it was he ... (188)

Gradually Shakutai reveals everything to Urmila and expresses her shock for remaining a naive about Kalpana's abuse by her brother-in-law. The picture of child abuse comes forward as Kalpana had been eyed as a sexual object by that man since her childhood. Sulu, Shakutai's sister says he was always mad about Kalpana. When Kalpana had gone to live with them he tried to abuse her. She was only a child then, she was fourteen when he tried his hand on her. He was such a rogue that he thought he could do what he wanted with a mere a child. That's why she ran away from there and refused to go back. But she didn't tell anything to Shakutai. She wondered why she did not understand then. She had trusted them beyond doubt. She should have known, at least she should have guessed. Shakutai could not sense the intentions of Prabhakar for she took him for a loving uncle who called her "My beauty". She thought him to be affectionate in whose care she even had sent her daughter. Kalpana's case reminds one of Taslima Nasreen who too was

raped by her own uncle of which she talks in 'Lajja'. Girls become vulnerable at the very hands of their protectors. This is the shoddy truth. Indian sentiments are such that the oppressor often goes scot free. Shakutai rues the fact to have destroyed her own daughter because of her sheer ignorance. She is in a fix if she should disclose the name to the police.

Should I tell the police? What should I do? (194)

For she thinks it is useless for her to know if the culprit is punished or not for she has already destroyed her daughter's future.

What's the use now? Kalpana's destroyed, we destroyed her, Sulu and I. (194)

Shakutai loses her dear sister too. Sulu commits suicide after she comes to know who Kalpana's offender is. Sulu must have been remorseful for she had earlier silenced Kalpana not to tell of the abuse that her husband had tried on her. Kalpana, a mere child was perhaps scared and didn't refer to it to her own mother even. Sulu revealed everything to Shakutai the day before the day she committed suicide. She told her that so long she kept everything to herself. She never told her sister about her troubles even about Kalpana. She hushed up the fact that he'd tried to put his hands on Kalpana. She had warned Kalpana not to tell anything about it either to Shakutai or anyone else. Sulu asked Kalpana to keep silence in the fear of harming her married life. Sulu might have been deserted by her husband if his notoriety was disclosed. Kalpana, a young girl kept silent in fear. Kalpana also kept silence because both Sulu and her mother wanted to marry her to Prabhakar, Sulu's husband. Sulu had wanted that to appease her husband, she must silence both Kalpana and herself.

Get me Kalpana, he kept telling her, and you can stay on here, I don't mind. She came to me and I thought it was her idea, that's what she told me. I have no children, she said. If Kalpu marries him, she can be mistress of the house, she doesn't have to do anything, I'll do all the work, everything. I thought, what's wrong? At least he's not a drunkard, or a wife-beater or a waster like my husband. I thought, maybe this is the best thing for her... (193)

It may be that Kalpana feared she might be forced to marry her attacker if she opened her mouth against him. This fear might have existed in Kalpana's mind even after she was raped by her uncle. She slipped into coma as a result of the traumatic sexual assault. It

was perhaps better for her to slip into coma than to marry the attacker. Who knows if everything remained fine she would have to marry Prabhakar whom she hated and was in love with a young boy. So rape annihilated Kalpana's both mental and physical persona and forced her to move into the vegetative state.

Women who are the victims of sexual violence are often reluctant to report the crime to members of the family, police or other authorities due to personal trauma attached to the incidents. In countries like India honour, unmarried women who report a rape may be forced to marry their attacker. (Bagchi 2005: 121)

Shakutai is at a loss at what her destiny has brought to her. She asks Urmil frantically:

Why does God give us daughters? (150)

This question has shaken Urmil's cord of sympathy. She has lost her own daughter but now she wants to help Shakutai in her fight against destiny. She cries out to Vanna when she gets the news of Kalpana's transfer to a suburban hospital for lack of bed.

Not a terrible thing for the girl to die? You think the mother can do it that way?  
You know nothing about it, you shouldn't talk. (167)

By saying '*you know nothing about it.*' Urmil implies the pain of losing one's daughter. This is one pocket of suffering that she and Shakutai share while Vanna does not. Urmil is now frantic to keep Kalpana in that hospital so that her mother can visit her easily. And by chance she meets her college friend Malcolm, the journalist in the hospital premises who too was looking for some eye-catching media news. Urmil exploits that chance. Kalpana becomes the breaking news of every news paper. Women organisations upheld her cause. Kalpana became an issue and her case stormed Assembly. The Govt ordered an investigation into Kalpana's case. Finally it was assured that Kalpana won't be transferred.

Urmil's interaction with Shakutai and Mira's poetry help her to come out of her personal trauma caused by her daughter's death. Life changes for her too. She comes to realise the vitals of life which keep people go on even after disaster. The onward process of life would go on even after destruction and disaster which might hinder the process for the time being. Both the stories of Kalpana and Mira made Urmil enlightened. After Sulu's

death Urmila had gone to Shakutai. Shakutai had confided in Urmila all her secrets. She had cried and babbled frantically almost all through the night. In the morning Urmila wakes up to find herself on the chair. At night Shakutai had covered her with a soft, soap-smelling cotton sari. Urmila finds that Shakutai had already started her daily chores.

She is sitting by the stove, her face gaunt and shadowed under the unshaded bulb. (196)

Urmila finally heads for home but a realisation dawns her.

It seems surprising, when I come out of that room of grief and suffering, to find the world outside unchanged. (196)

The world is unchanged and even Shakutai who had been so disturbed throughout the night is sitting by the stove to come back to normalcy. In the morning Urmi found her getting on with her chores. One can neither opt out, nor lay it down - the burden of belonging to the human race. She thinks that there's only one way out of that *Chakravayuha*. Abhimanyu had to die. There was no other way he could have got out.

When Urmila reaches home she is also entangled in the daily chores.

I race through my chores in the next one hour – cooking, getting ready for college, looking through my timetable, my notes, preparing Kartik's lunchbox. This is how life is for most of us, most of the time: we are absorbed in the daily routine of living. The main urge is always to survive. (203)

Urmila thinks of Mira's life. Mira who could never accept her husband went on living and found meaning in life when she discovered the spring of life in her womb. Mira too had realised that life is for living and she should live it in spite of the adversity. Mira had said:

Just as the utter futility of living overwhelms me, I am terrified by the thought of dying, of ceasing to be. (203)

Urmila realises that we cannot escape the miseries of life. Life may become hard and painful but we have to overcome every hurdle. She cannot undo the events that have already happened. There is no way back in life we always have to walk straightway

forward. Neither can we leap into future. We have to bear the torments of life and emerge out of it winning the adversaries. She thinks:

There can be no vaulting over time. We have to walk every step of the way, however difficult or painful it is; we can avoid nothing. (9)

Urmila emerges out of the pain when she listens to the call of her conscience. She has met Kalpana and read Mira's poetry. She wants to bring out justice for Kalpana and wants to make public Mira's poetry. Mira's voice had so long been silenced similarly Kalpana's case would be hushed if Urmila does not intervene.

Both Mira's and Kalpana's story ignites in Urmila's consciousness - the need of resistance for gendered oppression.

After Anu died, the voice stopped. Then I saw Kalpana. I met Shakutai. I read Mira's diary, her poems. And I've begun to think yes, I've managed, but I've been lucky, that's all. While these women.... You understand what I'm saying. Vanna? They never had a chance. It's not fair, it's not fair at all. And we can't go on pushing it - what happened to them - under the carpet forever because we're afraid of disgrace. (174)

She feels for both of them and ventures to publish Mira's poetry and catch the attention of the media to secure a bed in the hospital for Kalpana. The entire narrative thus revolves round the two rape victims and becomes a discourse of resistance towards sexual violence on women. Both Mira and Kalpana are symbolic. Mira is symbolic of thousands of women who are victims of sexual assault within the sanctity of marriage. And Kalpana is symbolic of all those young underprivileged girls who remain insecure and vulnerable at the hands of oppressive patriarchy. For men rape is the weapon of fulfilling both desire and domination while it drastically changes the life and soul of the victim. A raped woman's self is totally annihilated because of 'physically subjugation, concretion of will and psychological humiliation.' Textual strategies of representation of this sexual violence make the culpable society at large to think of this very enigma. A discourse of rape is a suitable platform for expressing women's vulnerability. The experiences of sexual violence expressed in these discourses show the personal trauma attached with the incident of rape. The intervention of Shashi Deshpande obviously would help to create awareness in the society. The most important point that Deshpande brings forward is that

most of the cases of rape go unreported. Married women raped by their husbands do not report it and bear the brunt of it throughout their lives. Unmarried girls fear to report as they are scared of being stigmatised and they also fear to be thrown out of society with changed situation women might have become a bit courageous to report it at present. But certainly this type of intervention is the need of the day to make women aware of their rights and thus empower them.