

# Dual Image of Two Divergent Women Towards Life as Projected by Mahesh Dattani's *Thirty Days In September*

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## Abstract

This article spots light on the image of women through Mahesh Dattani's play *THIRTY DAYS IN SEPTEMBER*. Here, the playwright projects two different women's reaction to the same issue. The protagonist Mala and her mother Shanta are molested in their childhood which is consider as an incest relationship. The former voice out against the ill deed and the latter one muted herself. Thus, this paper exposes how this play shows the psychological suffering of the molested women.

**Keywords:** child abuse, mental conflict, incest relationship, psychological suffering, taboo, suppression.

United Nations Organisation announced that October 11<sup>th</sup> to be celebrated as an international day of the girl which creates the awareness of gender inequality, education, nutrition, legal rights etc. And India, our country, celebrates January 24 as the girl child day started by the Ministry of Children and Women Empowerment. In recent centuries, women have proved their challenging obstacle and succeeded in various fields were the women is considered as weaker by physical and mental ability. In making of history in our country, a young girl of 26 years old Miss. Dhaniya leads the Indian Army Corps of Signals and Miss S. Deviga leads the Coast Guard Contingent on January 26<sup>th</sup> 2020. Not only in defence but also in various challenging fields like politics with High-In-Command as a former defence minister Mrs. Nirmala Sitharaman, who was the second woman and especially from Tamil Nadu.

There is a famous saying throughout the world about the children is "Child is a gift to a family from the Heaven, if the people are suppressed and they don't know how to move the life the smile of the child gives them a great hope with that energy they begin to live their life hopefully and happily. Child is one of the wealth that man can possess like richness, good health etc... Girl child is a symbol of wealth, the Indian Hindu family call the girl child as Lakshmi, the Goddess of prosperity. But there are a few humans living in this society without humane to destroy them especially sexually, a few verbally. Mala Khatri, the protagonist of the play working as a advertising model who is unwilling to marry any one. Mala is undergoing a psychiatric treatment for past three years. The protagonist is treated by herself as a nymphomaniac person as she was molested by her uncle in the age of seven for the first time and it continues till her age of thirteen, when she considered herself as a whore. Mala can't bare the injustice happened to her as soon as she searches her mother Shanta, but she never lends her ears to the daughter's voice.

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*...you would remember that I always like alu parathas because that's what I got whenever I came to you, hurt and crying. Instead of listening to what I had to say, you stuffed me with food. I couldn't speak because I was being fed all the time, and you know what? I began to like them. I thought that was the cure for my pain. That if I ate till I was stuffed, the pain would go away.*

Whenever Mala tries to share about it, she runs to her father to cry out about the taboo happens to her, but he is helpless. Shanta diverts into the other matters, as a mother she wants Mala to marry Deepak, a gentle man who loves Mala. Deepak proposes Mala from the bottom of his heart, but she refuses it. Mala blames Shanta and about her silence, she brings out the reason why her father has gone away from the family. In the party hall, Mala behaves abnormally, and she projects herself bad to Deepak, she voices out about the hell within her and at the last, Mala accepts herself to marry Deepak and she considers Vinay, a maternal uncle died.

*...I remember daddy's last words to me. You know what he said. He said to me 'I married a frozen woman'. A frozen woman.*

On the other hand, Dattani projects the other character, Mala's mother who also molested by Vinay, an elder brother of her in the childhood which makes herself to be silent throughout her life. Shanta has a faith in Lord Krishna who would be safeguard her from the deed. When, Mala becomes grownup to the marriage age, Shanta is busy with the alliance and she sinks herself in praying. Wherever and whenever she was blamed by Mala, she muted herself except Deepak no one understands her. As a pious woman, she submits her whole life to Lord. Shanta adjusts and bares the ill deed only for sake of Mala. The muted Shanta's outburst is unbelievable that she punishes herself by hurting her tongue.

*Shanta: I remained silent not because I wanted to, but I didn't know how to speak. I—I cannot speak. I cannot say anything. My tongue was cut off... My tongue was cut off years ago..*

*Shanta jumps to where the pieces of glass from the portrait are and picks up a sharp piece and jabs it in her mouth.*

The doll symbolizes the character, Mala in each act with the first act the limbs of the dolls depicts the introduction of Mala. In the second act, the doll shown up to the level of neck, which projects the inner feeling of Mala and in the third act, the doll can be shown fully as Mala comes out with the whole emotions and she changes her life into the better one by choosing Deepak as a groom to her. The portrait of Lord Krishna is the imagery expresses the only solace to Shanta and she has a great faith in Sudharsana Chakra of Krishna, and she believes that this save her and Mala from the sufferings. The usage of tape record is a great technique used by the playwright and the unknown counsellor can be referred as a time which can heal everything.

Kamaraj says "today's children are tomorrow's leaders". We have to save children with humanity the role of children is essential in a family to be complete. This play plays a

vital role to teach the society about the child abuse and how the relatives has to safeguard their children and it says about the psychological conflict of victim.

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**Work Cited**

1. Dattani, Mahesh. *Thirty days in September*, 2010. Surjeet Publication.