

## MARRIAGE IN CRISIS: A STUDY OF ANITA NAIR'S LESSONS IN FORGETTING

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### ABSTRACT

In the contemporary society one of the latest burning issues is, various crisis in the family. Today both men and women adhere to free modern life style and so they hate to live under marital roof. Both are also conscious of their personal salvation and individuality, so to attain an independent status they shatter the marital norms and run to seek their roots. In this way, the main intention of this conceptual paper is to bring out how Anita Nair, an outstanding Indian literary writer has brought out the issue of today's marriage, with particular reference to her novel **Lessons in Forgetting**.

**KEYWORDS:** Modernity, Marriage, Family, Crisis, Individuality

### INTRODUCTION

Today there is rapid changes in various social institution, because of modernity. In this way, one amongst the important institution that has created number of changes is, in the family. It has changed the roles and lives of both men and women, individually, economically, psychologically and in short socially. The modernity has drastically increased the nuclear family system and it has created an incompatibility amongst most of the couples. Generally people believe that marriage is a shelter where men and women are interdependent and complementary to one another. But today, marriage has made complicated to both men and women and very soon they realize that marriage life is merely an illusion.

Whether it is a man or woman, when they loses their partner, psychologically gets affected and break the marital norms which finally pushes them to think of their individuality alone. In this way one such exemplary example that can be literally witnessed here is, Anita Nair's Lessons in Forgetting. Literally writers of literature are the product of their age and so is the author Anita Nair. She writes what she has experienced and witnessed today's society and recorded the subject in an article way. She is one amongst the most popular contemporary Indian novelist in India, was born in Palakkad, District of Kerala. She obtained her college education B.A.Degree in English Language and Literature, at Chennai and later got married to Mr.Harish and now lives with her caring husband and lovable son at Bangalore. Till date she keeps herself busy, active and charming as a caring mother to her son and loving wife to her husband and also is working as a creative director in an advertising agency at Bangalore.

Anita Nair's career as a creative director gave her more experience and thereby she initiated her writing career with a short story under the title Satyr of the subway in 1997. As a result, she turned as a multi-talented writer as a novelist, poet, essayist, short story writer, Editor, reviewer, travel writer and writer of stories for children. To her credit she has written more than dozens of novels that has gained her various awards like kerala Sahitya Academy award in May 2012, Arch of Excellence Award, FLO FICCI women achievers award in 2008 and was also short listed for various awards for her contribution towards literature.

The novelist, though is widely acclaimed as an Indian writer, through her simple language brings out the universal subject. This can be proved through her few novels like Ladies Coupe, The Better Man that have been translated into more than 30 languages. Her novel Lessons in Forgetting taken for the analysis here is also one among the concept that is notable universally. It is a novel that expose the universal critical problems like love, sex, marriage, family, individuality etc. The New Indian Express has commented about this novel as,

### **Lessons in Forgetting**

Makes for a memorable read...Nair writes with exacting precision about the disintegration of marriages among the middle class with carefully orchestrated shifts in points of view, Nair describes how every woman has had to make painful choices in order to assert and retain their sense of self.

Meera, the female protagonist lived in her old and traditional Lilac house in Bangalore with her mother, grandmother, two children Nayantara, Nikhil and her husband Giri. If Meera was a simple woman who keeps herself happy by doing all household activities, Giri was a fantasy man who always planned to lead a sophisticated and sound life. So he insisted Meera to become a socialite by writing a cook book for corporate wives and very soon she became a notable cookbook writer amongst various rich people. This gave her a desire to attend various parties along with her husband. Giri, who have seen the success of his wife as a cook book writer, plans to run a business to earn more money in the corporate world. Apart, he also wished to occupy a great place in the corporate field. As he needed money to run business asks Meera to sell the Lilac house. But when Meera was helpless, Giri was not aware regarding the Lilac house that was in lease for 99 years cannot be sold , so leaves the family silently and secretly and never turned to his family. Sudden disappearance of Giri, makes Meera in stress and laid various responsibilities upon her. Even her cook book copies were also not sold, so Meera started to suffer economically. Finally with a great spirit and a rebellion mood, started to run like a busy Bee to earn for her family by joining as an assistant to JAK.

Kitcha who is also known as JAK@ Jayam Kondan Anantharaman Krishnamurthy is the male protagonist of the story. After the death of his mother he goes to US for his study and later get settled in USA even after marrying Nina who belongs to Madras. They had a blessed life with two daughters Smriti and Shruti. JAK who was more interested in cyclone, spent most of his time in studying about cyclone and so he was summoned as the Master of 'Simulated cyclone'. As he was often busy with his research work of cyclone was not able to spend much time with his wife and daughters. This creates the lack of communication between the couple that made JAK and Nina to divorce and the two daughters were also separated where Smriti was taken care by JAK and Shruti by Nina.

Smriti who was also fascinated by India through her father's story, comes to India for her studies. Smriti's boldness and education helps her to volunteer in various social activities and ultimately she is been raped by three social men. This creates a great anger within JAK, who fails to protect his daughter as a father and so he works hard to trace out the truth behind the incident of his daughter. Though he does work, finally fails to get details of it and aswell as was not able to recover his daughter from coma. As he fails his responsibility as a father gets shattered, yet consoles himself that it's a fate where life has to go on.

In short, one can say that marriage is the root cause that has made both the protagonist in suffering. Not only Meera and JAK even other male and female like Ambi, Nina in the novel break up their marital bond and few gets remarry

whereas few remains single. Generally marriage is a complimentary relationship between men and women where both have equally balanced role as a life partner, parents, grandparents etc. when any individual fails to follow the assigned role properly in the marital life, finally the entire family gets shatter and suffer.

## CONCLUSIONS

To wind up, Anita Nair has clearly explored how two stories that inter link in a situation and thereby reveals out how the female protagonist Meera suffer with various emotional burdens when her husband desperate her into loneliness. Unfortunately she meets another male protagonist JAK who was also deluded by his wife. Though both meets the same nature of fate in marital life, both has various burdens upon them to full fill their role and thus through Meera and Jak the novelist has very clearly depicted the crisis and insecure feeling of marriage in today's society.

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