



Redefining Motherhood in Mahasweta Devi's *Mother of 1084*

- Ms. Divya Muraleedharan & Dr. Anne Angeline Abraham

Abstract

The article attempts to analyze Mahasweta Devi's novel Mother of 1084 in the light of understanding how 'motherhood' has been redefined by highlighting and empowering the 'mother's selfhood'. This novel has been translated from Bengali into English by Samik Bandyopadhyay and published in 2010. The article tries to understand in detail, how motherhood and mothering often equated with being somber as a shadow to every other person of the house, breaks open those shackles and triumphs in her empowered soul. Rather than limiting herself to the docile homemaker and child rearer, a mother raises her voice and marches towards being an independent, empowered person. Thus, the article is an attempt in closely witnessing the growth of an apolitical mother to a political one, her transition from being judged as a weak person to a strong woman and moreover for inspiring fellow women caught up in the same situation. Through her plays and short fictions, Mahasweta Devi tries to destroy the homogenization that surrounds the entire concept of motherhood especially in India and my paper attempts to study this 'redefining' through her novel Mother of 1084.

Keywords: Motherhood, Mahasweta Devi's narratives, Historical and theoretical underpinnings, empowerment, selfhood, respect, bold character sketches

Introduction

In her article Contextualizing South Asian Motherhood Jasjit K . Sangha quotes the famous Indian feminist Jasodhara Bagchi who asserts, "Motherhood without the mother's selfhood is not complete". The idea of mothering vis-a -vis motherhood and the various takes on the concept of motherhood has always been a contested terrain among literary scholars, critics and feminists. Through their writings on motherhood as a central topic of discussion in feminist scholarship, Adrienne Rich and Andrea O'Reilly also garnered attention with their far -reaching meditation on the meaning and experience of motherhood. As rightly put by them, it is quintessential to understand and initiate discussions to strike a conversation on how the act of mothering can be a source of

empowerment despite being entrenched in the patriarchal institution that places excessive demands, expectations and responsibility on mothers which in a way or the other imposes restrictions and invisible lines hampering their selfhood and growth.

As Maithreyi Krishnaraj rightly says in her edited collection *Motherhood in India: Glorification Without Empowerment*, that

It is not the fact of mothering that makes women vulnerable, but their social construction, the implications for women flowing from the meaning attached to the idea of motherhood, and the terms and conditions under which it is allowed to express itself.

It is in this context that we would like to place one of the most revered and representative works - *Mother of 1084*, of Mahasweta Devi to critically analyze and understand the changing nuances of motherhood, the negotiations associated with it and how far have the women protagonists been able to break open the shackles of motherhood to redefine or reassert their selfhood.

Mahasweta Devi and her narratives

These days when literary diaspora dominates international cultural space, the renown achieved by a writer like Mahasweta Devi is a great success. Her writing that is almost exclusively in a regional language that discusses on regional, social, familial, political issues is a striking and welcome phenomenon and the Jnanpith award does come in the wake of this renown. Mahasweta Devi and her writings stand as a distinct category in Indian literature. Unlike her contemporaries and seniors, especially those writing in Bengali who documented a different woman's world altogether, the women characters portrayed by Mahasweta Devi are quite strong and have a tremendous sense of self-respect and are prepared to fight all battles to the end, even if the end is death.

It is generally viewed that, the world of Mahasweta's women is not just limited to cooking, eating or sleeping. Their struggle for life and existence and for justice and identity continues alongside their men and alongside thousands of others in the same position. Let them be sombre and calm at the start, but the end product would be those women, who beyond all their social identities work towards or struggle for their rights in a society far removed from the purview of the urban middle class.

It is found that , women in the Indian society , not only have to battle social prejudices and 'imaging' but also have to counter such images by participating more proactively in the struggles of society. Feminism for such women is certainly very different from the Western ideals of feminism. One of the themes in which this becomes all the more apparent is in Mahasweta Devi's discussion on motherhood.

Radha Chakraborty writes :-

From Jashoda in *The Breast Giver* to the unnamed mother in *Jamunaboti's Mother*, her fiction offers an array of maternal figures as well as diverse figurative constructions of the maternal idea. (Chakraborty pg 198)

Irrespective of their socio-economic identity, where women might have been simultaneously marginalized and defied, the position accorded to them demands high attention. Even if, a woman is criticized and considered an outcast from mainstream society, it is her role as a mother that gives her a unique position that no one can replicate.

The Indian theoretical outlook on Motherhood

In the Indian context, writings on motherhood are not only associated just with divinity, but also with the Nation. A look at the nationalist agenda would show that it was the figure of the woman as the 'mother' that had the most emotional potency. Even though there existed contrasts or dichotomies between the traditional, loyal wife and the 'veerangana', the image of the mother was so powerful enough to cut across all boundaries and permeate through all sections of society.

A number of critics and theorists have also written and discussed about the constructions of motherhood and the maternal idea. Psychoanalytic studies combined with feminist studies have proved the most useful in analyzing the representations of motherhood and the construction of the maternal role. There have been different approaches to the study of motherhood. Psychoanalytic theorists have examined the mother's unconscious actions exploring her deep attachment to her children while sociologists have attempted to trace her actual experience of child rearing, identifying the way that society and culture have affected her behavior and her attitudes.

Feminists especially since the beginning of the liberation movement in the late 1960's, have been concerned with the subordination of women in the mothering role and have offered impassioned and often contradictory ways of thinking about motherhood. Whereas, Freud's ideas of differences between the male and female behavior have provided a starting point for many theories on motherhood. He argued that as the parent, with whom the child shares the closest love relationship in his infancy, is no one else but the mother. It is the mother, who occupies a prominent and central position in the child's world. French theorist Julia Kristeva posits a more complex theory of motherhood. She believes that, motherhood is associated with a repressed desire to recover the maternal body. In fact, Kristeva uses the maternal body as a model for all subjective relations. Like the maternal body, each one of us is what she calls a subject- in- process. As subjects-in-process, we are always negotiating the other within, that is to say, the return of the repressed. Like the maternal body, we are never completely the subjects of our own experience. In the Indian context, three prominent and different discourses worked in tandem, in which, each of these discourses, contained within it a series of further multiple discourses. These discourses were:

- ❖ The discourse of the family (the biological mother)
- ❖ The discourse of religion (Devi or goddess)
- ❖ The discourse of the nation (the motherland)

The conventional Indian ideology of motherhood has been put forward as the natural and primary destination and responsibility of woman. Woman's mothering has continued to be basic to woman's lives and the organisation of the family and fundamental to the genesis of ideology about woman. Motherhood as a social practice is regarded as dialectically uniting discourse and activity.

The role of being a mother or experiencing motherhood places the virtuous self-abnegating mother on an exalted position while in reality; to a certain extent it deprives her of real power-of control over material resources and of rights over her children. Women are not oppressed because of the biological fact of reproduction, but are oppressed by men who define this reproductive capacity as a 'function'. In India, a long history of Mother-Goddess worship legitimizes woman's glorification or deification as the divine mother, the source of energy, power and fertility while the same motherhood is an institutionalized form of oppression and subjugation of women. In a patriarchal kinship structure, a woman's status in the household is determined by her ability to produce male issue for her husband's lineage. Her identity revolves around the wife or mother roles beyond which no individuality needs to be established or recognized. Indian culture is deeply informed with the myth that motherhood is woman's inevitable destiny and happiness can come only through it. With Sita and Savitri as predominant models of reference, Indian women are expected to be pure and faithful as wives and self-effacing, loving and giving as mothers.

This ideological glorification of the son's mother carrying a great deal of effective charge has deprived her of any real power that she could claim as the sole agent of reproduction. Conceptualization of motherhood often determines values and norms with regard to what women ought to do and offer ideal patterns of maternal behavior and nature. Indian mythology and cultural symbols glorify woman's role as mother - she is the benevolent mother goddess, the food-giver but without actual control over external factors which govern the food supply to the home. The cultural artefact of 'Deshmata' or 'Janmabhoomi' the perception of a geographical entity or a country as mother land also gained strong legitimacy during the nationalist movement- "the very earth-mother which has given life". The individual mother figure therefore bears the heavy weight of a very diffuse ideology which indicates society's expectation of her.

Motherhood is far from the liberatory and enriching experience it should be. The concept being very much under male control, motherhood operates strictly within the marital framework and is not autonomous. The mother can give birth but cannot give her child a social identity. She is the 'soil' into which man 'sows' his seed, and therefore can claim the child as his. She nurses the child at her breasts and be the Stanadayini (the breast-giver). She is confined to her domestic role as food-giver and child-rearer. These were some of the conventional concepts of motherhood.

Mahasweta Devi's representation of 'Mother' in her writings

In the above mentioned complex contexts and constructions of motherhood and the maternal concept, it might seem not that hard to locate motherhood in Mahasweta Devi's short fictions. Motherhood is an integral part of society, and her mothers are very much part of the milieu around them. Through her plays and short fictions, Mahasweta Devi tries to destroy the homogenisation that surrounds the entire concept of motherhood especially in India. By understanding the historical trajectories and theoretical underpinnings related to the theme of Motherhood, my paper tries to look at how well Mahasweta Devi redefines the very concept of motherhood through one of her powerful

fiction -*Mother of 1084* that concludes with the emergence of an independent self-reliant woman.. The concept of motherhood or mothering forms the central experience through which the main protagonist, the woma/en, the mothers are awakened to a greater understanding of society and its evils, where they acquire the strength to sustain themselves and fight for justice even against the toughest odds and even if they fail to succeed at the end, they leave an impressive track of a great battle they bravely fought to make their own space in this hostile world. Thus, motherhood is redefined here. She is not the ordinary mother, who blindly follows the conventions of society but one who has redeemed her freedom, one who has at the end broke all existing customs, restrictions and found a new identity and the society now accepts it. While some learned from the bravery of their children, some learned from their circumstances, but after a brave fight back to destiny so that, they stand up with their head held high. The mother (Sujatha , protagonist) and Somu's mother (minor yet powerful character) in *Mother of 1084*, share a unique relationship not only with their children but also with each other when destiny brings them across each other. They portray multifarious emotions or role ascribed to that of a mother- the dutiful mother, the soft spoken yet caring mother, the stereotype ideal mother, the spiritual mother, the plain sufferer and the silent hushed voice being an ideal wife and ideal daughter-in-law.

Analyzing the Text: *Mother of 1084*

Mahasweta Devi's Bengali short fiction *Hajar Churashir Ma*, translated by Samik Bandyopadhyay as *Mother of 1084* is a moving story of an apolitical mother. The protagonist, Sujata, has been a witness to the horrifying situation during the suppression of the Naxalite uprising in which her own son, Brati, the corpse number 1084, takes part and becomes a martyr. Unable to free herself from the clutches of the male dominated society, Sujata fails to realize her own being. But after her discovery of Brati through the confrontation with people outside her respectable existence, Sujata does not remain a passive sufferer. She feels punished for not knowing her son, Brati. She decides to carry out what he left unfulfilled. This story is set in the backdrop of the Calcutta of the 1970's that witnessed constant strife and stifle.

The text of mother of 1084 spans just over twenty –four hours in terms of time frame, but this single day symbolizes an entire journey and process of evolution in the life of the protagonist Sujata Chatterjee. It is the rising of an apolitical mother, it is a rebirth of a new person with social and political understandings and resistance, and it is the death of the suppressed, unrecognized voice and birth of a bold, politically conscious, socially determined mother.

Sujata, like many other women from similar strata of society has remained blissfully unaware of the political happenings around her. She has never taken any personal interest in understanding it nor had anyone tried to make her understand the conditions or discuss about it. That is one of the reasons why she does not understand why her husband and elder son get so perturbed and upset at being asked to go to Kantapukur. Kantapukur is a government morgue, where the corpses of all those killed by the state machinery are kept for identification. She is shocked to learn that, her youngest son, and the one whom she had always held close to her heart, Brati was also involved in such

movements and had got brutally killed by the state machinery. The first shock for Sujata was that, Brati was an active part of this movement about which she did not know, since she felt that Brati had kept no secrets from her.

Now two years later, from that fateful day, when Brati and his comrades were killed, ironically also Brati's birthday (17th January), Sujata stands at crossroads in her life. It is evident that the mother-child relationship with her other three children –Jyoti, Nipa and Tuli are extremely fragile. All are caught up in their own worlds of artificiality and hypocrisy to have any sensitivity around them. Perhaps it is their way of pretending that everything is all right. But Mahasweta Devi has been able to locate the distanced relationship between Sujata and her other three children within the structures of the patriarchal society. Dibyanath, Sujata's husband had no interest in her physically, except when he wanted another child. Having done his 'job', he would play no further part as a parent. This is evident from the words of Sujata when she goes to the hospital on her own for Brati's birth and the hospital authorities ask her,

“Why did you come by yourself?

My husband's out of town.

Sujata was surprised. She had not expected her husband to come with her even if he had been in town. Why should the doctor expect it? Dibyanath never came with her, never accompanied her when it was time. He slept in a room on the second floor lest the cries of the newborn disturbed his sleep. He would never come down to ask about the children when they were ill. But he noticed things, he noticed Sujata, he had to be sure that Sujata was fit enough to bear a child again”. (pg 3)

From birth to the upbringing of her children, Sujata was left alone. But, she had a deep relation with Brati. Brati, born six years after the birth of Sujata and Dibyanath's third child Tuli, was the one child born out of Sujata's own desire to have a child. So when Brati died, no one was as affected as Sujata. She had lost her hope, her other self. His death did not create havoc or shock for the other family members as it was for Sujata. The other members of his family had conveniently forgotten his very existence.

As she relives the nerve chilling and dastard killing of her son, Sujata searches for an explanation, but fails to find any legitimacy for his death. But at the same time, Sujata gains a new insight into the society and realizes that the cancer of illegitimacy has spread throughout the society –in the “administration, in the cultural-intellectual establishment, in politics, in the existence of a whole anti-social fringe of killers prepared to serve the interests of any organized police force anywhere.”

In her journey Sujata also faces many situations, for example her meeting with Somu's mother that makes her aware of the sharp dichotomies that exist in society between the various classes. For Sujata this journey was an understanding of the society and social class, the sufferings they undergo. In a sense, this act can be seen as Sujata's self empowerment and realization of herself,

and identity and of the other mother (Somu's mother), of Nandini (the other strong woman) and of her own son Brati.

The family structures and their economic implications also define the individualities of the three women (Sujata, Somu's mother and Nandini) to the extent of setting up a hierarchy of self-assertion or independence: from Somu's mother at the lowest rung to Nandini at the highest, with Sujata at an intermediate level. There are hints or traces of mobility between the rungs, with indications of possibilities. We see a helpless fear and submission of Somu's mother (that is voiced in her insistently pleading 'didis', literally meaning elder sister, interspersed through her address) whereas there appears a foil in the resentment or anger in the voice of Somu's sister, (because all hardships are on her shoulder, since Somu is no more) that in a sense is also a foil to Sujata, offering a more inchoate version of Sujata's own dogged resistance to the power imposed on her by Dibyanath and family (both independent earners, though the circumstances that have motivated them to the choice have been so different). Nandini is the one who knows, and has decided, while Sujata is in throes of learning or knowing and edging towards deciding.

In fact, it is only on her return from her day long odyssey that Sujata confronts or challenges Dibyanath for the first time (Sujata tells her husband that she has all knowledge about his illicit relationship with his secretary and sharply tells him to mind his own business) – a step –up the hierarchic ladder –“her words hit him like a whiplash. Dibyanath went out tamely wiping the nape of his neck”. (Bandyopadhyay, pg xvi)

As a mother, Sujata suffers a lot. Her gentleness and trust upon her family is taken for granted. In spite of all her attempts to keep the whole family and the atmosphere calm and candid, many situations and behaviors put her assumptions at stake. The most painful act of her family members towards her is when Dibyanath refuses to take his car and go to Kantapukur to identify Brati's body in fear that it would affect his social status and family name. His son and his life seems worthless to Dibyanath and others when they think about the position they hold in society. But, Sujata fails to resist herself. Her motherly instincts break all the chains and suppression she is put under and flees to Kantapukur to have a last look of her son.

Using his clout and influence Dibyanath is able to ensure that Brati's name does not figure in the media. Thus the five deaths become four; it seemed that Brati had vanished not only from the newspaper headlines but also from the life and memories of Dibyanath and other members. They continue to live as if nothing had changed and as though Brati had never existed. His name in the present scenario only conjured up memories of an embarrassing interlude:

Brati belonged to the family. But his cruel murder was an embarrassment for his father, brother and sisters who did not know how they could explain his death to their social circle. (Bandyopadhyay, pg 29)

On the other hand, for Somu's mother, living at the margins of mainstream Calcutta society, it is a different world. There is no scope for her to pretend that her son never existed. She mourns him certainly; the plaintive wails of the night of the murder are now replaced by quiet tears, but for her

there is no other alternative but to continue the struggle for survival. Yet both these women, otherwise far removed from each other, are bound by their grief and loneliness.

Somu's mother enables Sujata to really know of her son- his belief, his ideals, his love- and the reason for his death. She still has to continuously relive the horrors of the incidents two years back. Somu's sister is constantly harassed as she struggles to keep the household going. Her reality is far harsher than Sujata's; it is a question of survival. Somu's sister hates Sujata's intrusion into their world because now, she has to struggle more hard to keep the household going.

She hated the idea of an outsider coming in once a year to remind them of her dead brother.(pg 36)

Though they are both bound by the common sorrow of losing their dear son, these mothers differ in terms of familial support and care. While Somu's mother has a daughter who supports her in every way possible, Sujata is left all alone; with no emotional support. Sujata is and will always continue to be an outsider in this world, limited and constrained as she is by her lack of understanding of the realities of life. Two years after Brati's gruesome death, everything remains "normal" in the outside world. It is Sujata's world, her dreams, her wishes, her greatest support that perished. Except for Sujata, everyone has moved on, living their own lives.

Apart from Sujata and Somu's mother, the third mother who is projected in the story is Mrs. Kapadia, Tuli's would be mother-in-law. Although a minor character, she plays an important role. She shows the other side of a mother who also doesn't understand the pain and grief of a mother who had lost her son, for society and welfare of the people, but who was stamped as an anti-government revolutionary and brutally murdered. Mrs. Kapadia is least interested in her son and his actions; she is so insensitive that she has no hesitation in inviting Saroj Pal, Brati's alleged killer to the engagement party.

Among these people, all supposedly her own, Sujata is the "Other", an outsider in the true sense. And yet, apart from the pain of loss, she cannot identify with the grueling reality that makes up the life of Somu's mother and sister. Her visit to Somu's place in one sense is not to meet Somu's mother but to be in that same house, same room, where Brati had slept; where he had food and had breathed his last. It is to know and hear more about her son, things she failed to notice or understand about him from the conversation with Somu's mother. That is the reason why she asks Nandini, Brati's lady love, whether she can come and meet her again often so that at least after his death., she is able to walk along with him, his ideologies and his memories. However towards the end of the story, the protagonist, Sujata is able to locate in Brati's silent revolt,

"an articulation of the silent resentment she has carried within herself against her corrupt –respectable husband and her other children and their spouses and friends... in a sense she can "find" her son and hold him to herself only when she can find in his death a fulfillment that she has yearned for and never dared to claim for herself." (Bandyopadhyay,)

Nandini has also played a prominent role in making Sujata understand the socio-political conditions and given her the strength to fight it. To an extent it is also regarded that it was Nandini's political or ideological commitment and analytic understanding that gives her the strength to endure and carry on. Her understanding about power, betrayal and also revolutionary optimism seems new and leaves Sujata gaping in wonder and amazement. She understands that she had been living not a secluded life within her home but also within the society, within this whole world.

Sujata felt that she had already been deaf and dumb to all the shuddering realities around her and finally decides that enough is enough; no more bondage, no more sufferings and no more silences. It is time to react and resist. Nandini also forced Sujata to rethink the parameters and limits of the mother child relationship, by questioning the very foundation of her relationship with Brati:

Everyone remains a stranger these days to everyone..... it's an obligation these days to know one's son. (pg 80)

Changing times have meant that no relationship can be taken for granted anymore, even the mother- child bond. Parents may live under the illusion that they know their children, without actually making the effort to understand them. Thus the fundamental questions of motherhood, mothering moreover parenting arises? It becomes important that both, father and mother understand their children. For that, father and mother need to understand each other. Both should have equal respect and equal say in family matters. Dibyanath is seen scolding Sujata for letting 'her' son (even though it is 'their' son), Brati rebel against him. Dibyanath who never turned to look after the children's upbringing finally puts all the claims on the mother who was left all alone to tend to herself and her children. Once he tells to Sujata:

Mother's child! It's you who taught him to be my enemy.

It took Sujata by surprise. Why should she tell Brati to be an enemy to his father? Why should she? (pg 15)

Immensely disturbed, when Sujata inquires about the reasons for her beloved son's such behavior, Brati calmly consoles her and tells her :

The individual who goes by the name of Dibyanath Chatterjee is not my enemy..... All the things and values he holds on to. There are many others who swear by the same things and values. The class that nurtures these values, we consider it our enemy. He belongs to that class. (pg 16)

Even though this does not answer the question raised by Sujata because she doesn't understand that, this was not just an opinion but his ideology, it was his perception of the Calcutta society and the enmity he had towards those 'values' that did not bring equality or perfect distribution among all sections of the people. She leaves the conversation making a conclusion that:

Brati, you are changing.(pg 16)

It never struck Sujata, that when a son became a stranger to his mother, when they had lost touch with each other even while they lived under the same roof, there was a possibility of a threat growing from it. She remained unsuspecting and this turned out to be the worst realities that a mother

had to face with her son's brutal death, who had sacrificed his life for the poor section of the society. The poor section that was rendered homeless and without proper amenities by the so called "value – oriented" people, high in class and caste.

Brati's death was an intense pain that pricked Sujata's conscience and hurted her now and then. Nowhere a mother would have gone so numb towards the surroundings around her; the happenings around her. The family had made her so. Dibyanath never tried to understand Sujata. He never understood her importance, how she kept hold of the family together, as a single unit, compromising and adjusting all things.

But, that day, with Brati's death, Brati's father had also died for Sujata. The way he had behaved that day, that moment when he refused to identify their son's body in the police morgue and had condemned any of the family members from going there, and how Sujata all alone went to the morgue to have a final look at her son who had sacrificed himself at the altar of redeeming peace and equality to the rich and poor sections of Calcutta alike. That day had shattered Sujata's numberless illusions about her family and the people for her. She realized everything there was for namesake and she was a mere puppet working day and night keeping the family together with no respect meted out to her. That day and the behavior of her husband had burst upon her with explosive force. It was like one of those mass meteors crashing upon the ancient world billions of years ago. The aftermath or consequence of such rigid behavior created a very deep wound in Sujata for her, it felt like one of those explosions that broke up the solid mass of the earth into solid continents separated by the oceans.

Nobody saw or bothered about a mother's pain. Everyone was busy to settle the matter before it spread around. Everyone in the house except Sujata and Hem wanted this case of Brati to be undercover. So, here pops a question; both mother and father have an equal part and share in the life of their children. Then why did Dibyanath fail to recognize it and perform his duty? In spite of supporting Sujata so that she comes out of this tragic incident, why did the father look for other shortcuts to extinguish this fire of burning motherhood? Was that, the heart of the mother could only identify herself with the lost son..? Then if motherhood is so noble, why didn't her other children understand and stand by their mother in such a situation? Is mother hood just a biological bond, a symbiotic relationship linked by the umbilical cord? Or is it something more than that?

Conclusion

The three central women in the text- Somu's mother, Sujata and Nandini are also representatives of three stages of knowing/ realizations and three stages of hierarchy. Somu's mother is firmly located in her socio-economic-cultural reality- "the helpless fear and submission of Somu's mother as indicated earlier (voiced in her pleadingly insistent 'didis') has a foil in the resentment and anger of Somu's sister. Sujata is in the next stage, the process of knowing and understanding.

In many ways, she may be considered to be an independent woman, holding a job in the nationalized bank. This very significant day in her life (Tuli's engagement, Brati's birth and death

day; 17th January) begins for her recalling Brati's birth so many years ago- the pain and the absence of her husband even at this time; ends with her finally able to confront the hierarchical order and challenge him for the first time, leaving him voiceless and with no option but to leave the room. The cry that Sujata lets out at the end has thus been interpreted by many as a 'second birth', a corollary to the pain she had experienced at the time of Brati's birth. This second birth or rebirth of Sujata can also be seen in terms of her acquiring a powerful voice of her own drowning out all other voices; a time when the meaning of 'motherhood' has become clear to her.

The society which has been her identity has now become truly alien for her. They are dead, while the dead are truly alive. The final stage in this process of knowing is Nandini, who is younger than Sujata, but of course much more brutally experienced in the ways of the world and aware of the prevailing power relations in society. Thus, the very concept of motherhood is redefined here as an awakening of an apolitical, numb and deeply dutiful mother who after going through all these ups and downs of life finally finds her voice to react against the indirect imprisonment of being caught between the duties of a wife and mother. Her reaction towards Dibyanath and his weird behavior, towards her other children is a reassertion of the lost place and status of being a wife and mother of the house. And it was through her dear son Brati, that the bereaved left alone mother finds her space.

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