

Women's problems and dilemmas in Kamala Markandaya's novel: *Nectar in a Sieve*

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Abstract

Kamala Markandaya is a renowned name in Indian literature. She has been a revolutionary writer especially in point of view women. Woman has been the core of numerous abstract works as the centuries progressed. During a time of improvement and flux in each field one can't undoubtedly overlook a large portion of the populace. Indian journalists in English have likewise left their cases of "nonattachment" and 'non-inclusion' and have begun recognizing the status of the Indian woman in a male overwhelmed society. The idea of Indian womanhood is as dissimilar as the nation itself and has experienced extraordinary and sensational changes from period to period. India has gone from her great past to degeneration, from otherworldly authority to collective conflicts, from imprisonment to freedom, from agrarian upheaval to digital innovation. In her works Kamala Markandaya hints at significant impact of a women's activist school of composing. In her state of mind to ladies, she is a preservationist women's activist, to a specific degree and woman's rights is certain in her novels are a presentation of the essential truth of enlivening female cognizance. Women have a noteworthy place in Kamala Markandaya's novels, in an investigation of her works woman subject can't be overlooked. In a large portion of her novels we have women storytellers. An investigation of her novels demonstrates that she is female in her point of view and a women's activist in her philosophy. Her examination and presentation of womanlike awareness is coordinated towards a target record of woman's feeling, evaluating Indian womanhood's showdown with male reality. She is not a radical women's activist and her novels are not a through and through judgment of a severe male ruled society calling for radical remaking of male female roles. They are not naturalistic records of the exploitation of woman.

Keywords: Setbacks, predicaments, upheaval, contradictions, complexities, impulses etc.

1. Introduction

Kamala Markandaya is blessed with fine faculty of aesthetic conviction as well as thinking. She has not left any stone unturned in revealing women's problems. Kamala Markandaya is a perfect author and has a 'fluctuated collection of women characters of her fiction. (Krishnaswamy162) she has effectively displayed all the imperative parts of life. She has displayed an expansive assortment of her topics with an uncommon reasonable touch. She doesn't romanticize or celebrate yet portrays life. She has effectively and reasonably given a genuine record of life in her novels. Life is a blend of good and awful components we see the saintly and the devilish characters in our day by day life. Similarly we go over this assortment in her fiction. Her novels are for the welfare of mankind. She composes with the crusading soul for the welfare of humanity and calls her writing a 'writing of concern. (Bhatnagar120) A post-Independence author, Kamala Markandaya draws her canvas on the evolving financial scene making her novels a brilliant kaleidoscope. She indicates skill in her determination of characters and circumstances. Her characters speak to a wide range: workers, rulers and courtesans, rustic and city-breeds, English authorities in India and Indian émigrés in England. An adept teller of tales," she claims to be on the side of the human and life, against machinery, against exploitation of the weak, against war and violence" (Williams 112). *Nectar in a Sieve* is a touching novel managing the topic of craving told in the leading individual by its hero, Rukmani. Her family comprises of Nathan, her significant other, a poor sharecropper and seven kids, Ira, Arjun, Thambi, Murgan, Raja, Selvan and Kuti. In spite of the fact that the group of Rukmani is poor, it is a glad

family, completely happy with what it has. 'But the intrusion of industrialism on the one hand, and the vagaries of Nature, on the other, coupled with landlordism, spoil the sweet harmony of the peasant family and destroy the joy and placid rhythms of their simple lives.' (Reddy87)

In Kamala Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve*, we have the voice of the female hero. The champion here appears to be distressingly near the model enduring Hindu woman, easygoing and resigned. A more critical take a gander at the hero be that as it may, uncovers a more positive and women's activist poetics. Kamala Markandaya's state of mind to woman's rights is set up as individual logical and exploratory as opposed to open, political or polemical. She doesn't make a woman world she shows this present reality. She examines the genuine social and passionate bonds that shackle women the part of the Indian woman has additionally transformed from that of god to devadasi, from shakti to abala, from home-bound animal to an expert. Each individual is molded by his/her race and milieu. The women of India reflect of the separate society they live in. Looking over the history and changes of the status of Indian women one watches that women once delighted in extensive respect, flexibility and benefits in both private and open fields. Be that as it may, with the hundreds of years moving by the circumstance changed unfavorably for ladies. Medieval forms of victimization like child marriage and *sati* are replaced by female infanticide and more recently by amniocentesis. The average Indian woman has now begun to stir out of stoical acceptance of her tradition bound roles, yet "the air of 'freedom' which touches the women is like the kite though flying yet, being stringed into the manipulative and maneuvering hands of their men" (Singh

8). The figure of the Indian woman battling her way through an exploitative, sexually segregated world serves as a well-suited image and befits a nearby study.

2. Woman's struggle

Woman's struggle is one extending from survival at the sheer physical level to the journey for personality. Most women need to ponder clashing circumstances at home furthermore outside. In Markandaya's wide collection of women characters extending from the annoyed, exploited laborer women to the princesses of havelis we observe the situation of the Indian woman disabled by her sex, society and financial condition.

Customary patriarchal Indian culture limits woman to the unthinkable ridden way. Rukmani of Nectar in a Sieve, Markandaya's first novel, embodies the substantial mass of underprivileged country women whose backs are twisted with not well remunerated work. She narrates her life with tenant farmer Nathan "who was poor in everything but in love and care for me, his wife, whom he took at the age of twelve" (8). They progressively get to be casualties of two shades of malice: the zamindari framework and industrialization. The development of a tannery changes the substance of their town and adjusts the lives of its occupants "in a myriad ways" (135). Setbacks immerse her: one of her children is slaughtered at the tannery, the harvests fall flat, another child kicks the bucket of starvation, and her little girl turns into a whore lastly they are ousted from the land, their exclusive trust. Nathan and Rukmani expel themselves to town and there their denied of an upbeat wedded life by virtue of her infertility brings forth a pale skinned person kid. Despite the fact that a mother does not recognize a genuine and ill-conceived type, society, especially customary Indian culture, does not welcome such a type nor does it regard an unmarried mother. Saddled with an ill-conceived, Ira battles her fight alone.

Indian womanhood has "to be explored, experienced, and understood in all its vicissitudes, multiplicities, contradictions and complexities" (Parikh 41). Indian woman's voyage from the support to the tomb goes through various stages, assuming familial parts. However she remains a riddle. Incidents, misfortune and societal approvals limit her opportunity yet they can never crush the soul inside. Markandaya's ladies, however casualties of nature and society never give in totally. Underneath the lacquer of delicacy and shortcoming lies an innate quality. They resemble leaves of grass: the humblest, the most oppressed, ceaselessly being dug up and constantly returning, pushing their direction, surviving all weights and growing again with force and essentialness. Touchy, sensible and wise, they have life asserting qualities.

Hardship immerses Rukmani. Her family is tormented by financial variables as well as by the impulses of nature. However she survives the difficulty by residual the hub, around which different lives spin. Hesitant to run route from her obligations she acknowledges her parts as spouse and mother. At the point when the divine beings turn a hard of hearing ear to her petitions for a child she intensely looks for the assistance of a remote specialist. The same determination, combined with her nervousness for Ira's future drives her at the end of the day to risk her circumstance. A woman of soul, she ascends against the authorities when they caution her not to request any remuneration for the passing of her child in the tannery. Accepting her loss she asks, "What compensation is

there for death?" (95). her quietness, serenity and stoic acknowledgment of the inescapable help her persevere through her trial. It enables her to forgive Nathan's pre-marital and extra-marital affairs. A new peace dawns upon them "freed at last from the necessity for lies and concealment and deceit..." (90).

An endeavor to be joined with their child falls flat. Nathan bites the dust under the strain of softening stones up a quarry and Rukmani comes back with her received adopted child to the town. Debasement of the female is flawlessly woven into the texture of this novel. When Ira is born Rukmani sheds "tears of weakness and disappointment, for what woman wants a girl for her 'firstborn?' (19). It is male progeny that elevates the status of a woman in our society and not a "pooling infant who would take with her a dowry and leave nothing but a memory behind" (20).

Lack of education and numbness regularly breed dread and superstition. In spite of the fact that proficient Rukmani likewise looks for the force of the stone lingam to battle sterility. In her gloom she crosses the social forbidden in counseling an outside male specialist. Be that as it may, then science triumphs, as she sires children in a steady progression. She has hardly any way to bolster her children.

3. Indian woman as pativrata

Writing and additionally society around us fortifies the picture of the Indian woman as pativrata, the paragon of all temperance. However the same society does not chasten a spouse for conjugal traitorousness. Rukmani is stunned to find out about the betrayal of Nathan. "Disbelief first, disillusionment, anger, reproach, pain. To find out, after so many years, in such a cruel way" (90). The insensitivity with which he attests himself as the father of Kunthi's children is deplorable to her. Neither does he dither to deny her of rice amid starvation to accommodate Kunthi.

That the life of an Indian woman runs an eccentric course gets to be apparent when we witness the destiny of Ira. The docile girl who accepts the man of her parents' choice as her husband is soon sent back accused of being barren, "a failure, a woman who cannot even bear a child" (54). The chances that weigh intensely against her hurl her life. In her nervousness and longing to recapture her position she looks for the assistance of Dr. Kenny. However, it is past the point of no return for her significant other had as of now re-wedded. She withdraws into "that chill hopelessness" (121). Ira again bears expressive observer to the way that whores are made, not conceived. Amid the starvation she offers her body, for there is nothing else to offer, to sustain her debilitated sibling. In spite of the fact that she neglects to there is respect in her acknowledgment of mishaps and distresses as crucial elements of life. This lifted viewpoint is the aftereffect of her brave battle and quiet enduring. She remains as the image of the comprehensive, cherishing and pardoning mother figure. As Krishna Rao remarks, "the real truth of the novel is the spiritual stamina of Rukmani..." (57). Even when a woman is not biologically a mother, she can function as one emotionally. As a young girl Ira was a surrogate mother to her brothers. When her youngest brother is born "Ira's feminine instinct of nurturance takes precedence over hurt, sorrow and resentment (Krishnaswamy 173). She becomes a "harlot," a "common strumpet" not to quench any burning fire in her body but to feed her ailing brother (103). A strange and bewildering

change comes over her. She ceases to be a child "to be cowed for forced into submission, but a grown woman with a definite purpose and an invincible determination" (104). She defies society, but fails to give life to her brother. What she gets in return is an illegitimate albino child. Physical or mental aberrations of an offspring cannot annihilate the innate love and understanding of a mother. Unperturbed, Ira accepts proudly her child's 'fairness.' "Her bearing astounded and even awed" the fault-finders (121). Krishnaswamy lauds the inborn gentleness and resilience with which "the likes of Ira and Rukmani care and nurture all around them, even under the worst circumstances" (175).

In spite of the fact that not of the gauge of Rukmani or Ira, survive the weights of their decaying money related position and the fierceness of her significant other. Her tenderness and sensibility empower her to manage Ravi step by step from the grip of the underworld. Disregarding his fierceness and instability her delicate and adoring methodology reestablishes peace in the family. "She was constant, a rock to which he could cling and keep his head level when his views and values began their mad dance" (118). Her children take refuge in her constant and undemanding love. Her first born's fatal sickness and death drain out all her energy. Yet she does not allow herself to be shattered for she knows "life has to be lived and other children have to be looked after" (Uma 43).

4. Woman Dilemma

Even amidst material prosperity "many women live with harrowing feelings of psychological insecurity, lack of personal status" and a sense of alienation (Parikh 162). In spite of the fact that better outfitted with instruction and riches than their partners in the prior novels self-satisfaction turns into an inaccessible aim, unattainable objective to the women in *Some Inner Fury*. It annals the repercussions of the opportunity battle on the lives of taught, high society ladies. Premala typifies the customary idea of high society ladies. Hailing from a moderate Hindu family she tries to remold herself to her significant other's cutting edge, anglicized tastes "though she tried desperately, she plainly found it difficult to adapt herself to him" (37). She gives up all goals for individual flexibility and joy, yet she neglects to connect the social crevice amongst herself and Kit, her better half. Mira, her sister-in-law, feels sorry about her: "If she had not loved Kit so much, she would not have tried so much to please him" (97).

Supported in by the customary Indian soul she drags out her anguish and dissatisfaction. Her unfulfilled maternal sentiments discover an outlet in sustaining a vagrant type. School work discharges her to a degree from her disappointments, wretchedness and depression however there she meets with her heartbreaking passing. As Srinivasa Iyengar opines, "she is symbolic of Mother India who is compassion and sufferance, who must indeed suffer all hurts and survive all disasters" (440).

Through her Markandaya ventures the bewilderment and helplessness of conventional Indian woman going up against a culture in flux. In spite of her being a casualty she demonstrates a dash of inward quality in her endeavor at sparing the school ablaze taking a chance with her own particular life. Torn between her western situated spouse and her own particular routine childhood she sublimates herself through give up: "Her silence is stronger than all rhetoric; her

seeming capacity for resignation is the true measure of her unfathomable strength" (Iyengar 440) Suddenly in those frantic moments, nubile and naked before men, her childhood had gone" (142). Vasantha emerges from that ordeal to "a closed stricken woman, thirteen years old, locked in fright, in shock, and in tragedy" (Krishnaswamy 207).

In spite of the fact that *Nectar in a Sieve* has been contrasted and Pearl Buck's *The Good Earth*. "it's ever closer relationship would be K.S. Venkatramani's *Murugan, the Tiller*,"? (Iyengar 438) *Nectar in a Sieve* is an adventure of the sufferings of the laborers of India. It is an account of a laborer couple filled with financial components, social shades of malice and common disasters. In this novel a worker woman endures because of the threatening vibe of nature and industrialization. She is constrained of lead an existence of vulnerability, appetite and corruption. Because of the shrewd powers of Nature, they starve and confront hopeless neediness. Owing to these odds of life, Rukmani and Nathan lose their land and are caught in the powerful clutches of draught: "Day after day the pitiless sun blazed down scorching whatever still struggled to grow and baking the earth hard until at last it split and great irregular fissures gaped in the land. Plants died and the grasses rotted, cattle and sheep crept to the river that was no more and perished there for lack of water, lizards and squirrels lay prone and gasping in the blistering sunlight." (81) In *Nectar in a Sieve*, Markandaya has portrayed starvation, legitimately and practically. Look at the word-painting of hunger and starvation portrayed by Markandaya: For hunger is a curious thing: at first it is with you all the time, waking and sleeping and in your dreams, and your belly cries out insistently, and there is a gnawing and pain as if your very vitals were being devoured, and you must stop it at any cost and you buy a movement's respite even while you know fear the sequel. Then the pain is no longer sharp but dull, and this too is with you always, so that you think of food many times a day and each time a terrible sickness assails you. (87)

Evil forces of nature play a significant role in destroying the crops of Rukmani and Nathan as they recall how their paddy crops were ruined by the heavy rains: It rained so hard, so long and so incessantly that the thought of a period of no rain provoked a mild wonder. It was as if nothing had ever been but rain ... but Nathan and I watched with heavy hearts while the water rose and rose and the tender green of the paddy field sank under and was lost.... The novel is in the method of first individual portrayal. The story of Rukmani and Nathan, and through them the account of the changing way of life of the town, is described by Rukmani. It is unmistakably a female voice. This is a story cast in memory. The old woman begins thinking back at night of her life. She is the single drive that joins the entire structure of the novel, she is the storyteller. She has a firm handle of points of interest, an amazing memory, and limit for an innovative rendering of her vibe, a stark severe vocabulary and the unit of a playwright.

Rukmani is not just a town young woman, a cherishing and gave spouse and a giving up mother. She rises above these restricted physical characters to speak to the all-inclusive mother figure. She is not limited to a specific class, statement of faith or tradition. She is not an informed woman but rather she is proficient and mindful. She has been instructed to peruse and compose by her dad and this achievement welcomes the mocking of the womenfolk in the town, where

she settles down after her marriage. She is imagined as the incorporating, persevering, and committed, relinquishing, enduring, adoring and pardoning mother figure. She is the everlasting mother. Her most unmistakable element is her tranquility and feeling of adjust in direst circumstances. She has no dream in life and is not irritated by any craving or aching.

Rukmani has a dynamic and liberal way to deal with the issues of life. When she finds that she has some skeptic issue, she meets her mom's specialist Kennington- - called Kenny. This English specialist bails her out of her physical unfitness, cures her powerlessness to conceive an offspring after the principal issue, and lifts away her incredible dread and tension. She builds up a sentiment family relationship with him for whatever remains of her life. He finds in her that vibration of life. That closeness of which he has been denied in his own particular family circle. He is pulled in to her glow, her effortlessness. Their fellowship extends over the span of years. Somewhere down in their souls they are loaded with affection, appreciation and regard for each other. She doesn't, be that as it may, uncover reality to her better half since she feels he may feel hurt somehow. She never needed to agitate Nathan.

Incidents cross her way over and over; neediness and starvation don't dehumanize her. Catastrophes of the surge bring real assault of starvation and distress. Rukmani does not indicate outrageous enthusiastic upheaval. However, profound inside, she is exceptionally bothered and discouraged, and languishes over her friends and family. She ingests all mishaps that comes to her direction. She has outrageous industriousness forever and she works out. Rukmani additionally languishes over Ira, her girl, when she returns home rejected by her significant other by virtue of her childlessness. Rukmani has known the torment, the desolation from her own particular experience. She, by and by, methodologies Kenny.

Nathan and Rukmani demonstrate surprising patience when their eager children are influenced by their appalling results of dry season. It is not in her tendency to force her decision, her conclusion over them. She acknowledges their decision and conforms herself to the change her future creatures. Her time of serious distress and anguish starts when her children get to be included in the strike in the tannery. Her children decline to submit to abuse and they stay unemployed, eager, and hungry. Rukmani endures peacefully; she is tormented and tormented by her exceptional feeling.

Rukmani becomes smoothly from a young woman into an old woman. In her long life as a woman, she meets with an entire array of encounters. Be that as it may, none of them can mutilate her spirit. As the novel continues Rukmani develops as dynamic and positive. She manages her better half when his body, will and soul, begin giving way. The peregrine-country of this matured couple in the city, stripped of their ownership and personality, is a moving picture of neediness as well as of gallantry amidst existential misery which is the part of numerous underprivileged in India with the experience of hardship. Rukmani continuously accomplishes clarity of observation, clarity of soul.

Rukmani's soul of acknowledgment and continuance helps her endure the misfortune that takes after the time of dry season. With all its fruitlessness and ripeness, the land pulls Rukmani's spirit to itself. It represents her soul of survival. It shows her continuance. This soul of perseverance is not

stoicism as is rehearsed in the West, a soul of acquiescence. It is not perseverance tempered by adoration which does not capitulate to disappointment nor does it end in sharpness. Rukmani will go to beat destiny, she is notwithstanding ready to be uprooted from the valued land; however she won't capitulate in a yellow way. She is ever aware of her starving, enduring family her own torment is overwhelmed by her affliction for her family. The learning of Nathan's unlawful association with Kunthi, abandons her hurt, baffled softened and up absolute anguish. Be that as it may, the power of her sentiments knows no appearance, she is a quiet sufferer.

Rukmani has given birth and has known the intimate, umbilical power of profound devotion that binds her to her kids. She is continually vexed by her inability to encourage them. Her little girl takes to prostitution to nourish her starving most youthful sibling Kuti, she considers and conveys a pale skinned person child. Here Ira demonstrates an astonishing quiet. The topic of frivolous ethical quality is transmuted by the sacredness of warmth. Baffled and tormented at first, she acknowledges all. Regardless of the amount she endures, acknowledgment is in her tendency. Rukmani's misery knows no limits when she discovers her child Raja pounded the life out of, his limp, delicate body lies at her feet. The force of her distress and wretchedness abandons her stunned. She ruminates: "For this I have conceived an offspring my child that you ought to lie at last at my feet with fiery debris in your face and coldness in your appendages and yourself withdrew without follow leaving this group of bone and tissue without implications."? Under the quiet pulled it together is found the solid undercurrent of torment and enduring. She assimilates all agony; she is the womb invulnerable to all stuns. Her melancholy stricken look has poise and honorability.

At the point when Kuti endures, she endures, with him, and for him and in her distress she practically wishes him dead. Kuti's battle forever is terrible. Her distress has not been decreased, but rather acknowledgment and assimilation have made her continuance more grounded and more grounded. None of these occurrences can change her spirit's inclination toward lumination. To her mishaps and distresses are fundamental elements of life. Requesting help is an outsider thought to her off' she is very much aware of invalidations. Her courageous battle and her quiet acknowledgment and noiseless enduring give profundity and honesty to her character and land her with a raised, philosophical viewpoint. She says that there is glory in perseverance.

At night of her life abandoning her exciting past, she sets out with Nathan on her voyage. She experiences outrageous mental clash, however she sets out to face life extending her adoration and backing to Nathan. There take after gigantic hardship, misfortune, starvation and enduring. She twists however never breaks. After every one of her trusts is disappointed, Nathan and Rukmani buckle down and strain themselves to gather the cash with the goal that they could backpedal to their town. In any case, she continues to live. Her destiny she acknowledges mutely. She battles to when in doubt refrain from interfering. At last she retains the down and out Pali into her glow and conveys him to her town, gets him cured of his sickness and injects significance into his life. In him she discovers relief and solace for her profound injuries of distress and enduring. From Pali she takes in a considerable measure, who is going up against unflinching the hard actualities of presence. This realizes an extension of

cognizance, it discharges her inner self. She develops in stature. Rukmani demonstrates that inside the conventional part she can suit her different parts as a person. She demonstrates that through development and fellowship a more profound self-learning can be achieved.

Even with all disasters, Rukmani unfurls her lap to take in everything and everyone around her. Her exceptional inclusion with life and the profundity in her character have helped her to make logic of life. She trusts that in resilience, continuance and quiet enduring one can be cleansed of all blame and can develop a decontaminated being. This spiritualist and philosophical truth goes to her not through adapting, but rather from a significant knowledge, profundity of character and abundance of experience. She is innovative. She has been innovative organically. Profoundly too she is innovative. She clears the least difficult approach to liberation from natural subjugations.

Fundamental the affliction conciliatory part sneaks the new woman dynamic with the liberation cries. The legendary example of woman as Eve incarnate has been disposed of and Kamala Markandaya admires parenthood in her virgin novel. Rukmani is the best case to delineate the author's position. Rukmani is by all accounts the unbelievable prime example of a perfect housewife, however we find that she additionally ascends against the social strengths standing up to her, staying inside the holiness of her home. Rukmani in her attestation against the social strengths rises as a positive develop pioneer. Kamala Markandaya gives her woman a chance to have the customary part, however makes them. For Rukmani the home goes up against the sacredness of a place of worship in which the mother priestess praises a fellowship, joining the individuals from the family hover by method for an otherworldly life drive. She regards parched cherishes her significant other. Nathan an average worker householder fizzles in his manly part as a spouse and supplier. Notwithstanding when the mechanical insurgency in their general public shook and scattered the group of Nathan, the coupling impact of Rukmani helped them to survive the experience.

Kamala Markandaya tries to build up the way that when a coupling impact, for example, Rukmani is deficient with regards to, genuine group and perfect family life will be unthinkable and the indecencies natural in the social request. In *Nectar in a Sieve*, she displays the preclusion against free living for fear that the virtue of women and the dependability of the house be jeopardized. In *Nectar in a Sieve* when Ira turns into a whore, headed to it by destitution,

5. Conclusion

In a nutshell we can say that *Nectar in a sieve* largely signifies the very basic problem of female sex. Women have been found quite largely in her life in two minds and she has tried to sort out this problem and kamala Markandaya has highlighted this. In a large portion of the novels, Kamala Markandaya, as a woman essayist utilizes her content, as a major aspect of a proceeding with process including her own self-definition and her earnest recognizable proof with her character. "Woman Subject" can't be disregarded in Kamala Markandaya's novels, since women have a critical place in her novel. Indian woman in her novels characterizes herself by an arrangement of connections and models of lead inside a made society. She goes up against a convention situated society and figures out

how to live under the twin whips of legacy and advancement. In her state of mind to ladies, the writer hints at significant impact of a women's activist school of composing.

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