

An Aberration in Generational-Abuse Retaliation: An Insight into Chetan Raj's *The King's Harvest*

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Abstract

Abuse of the sheer brawl strength in the male dominion of the family is commonplace in the mostly patriarchal world we thrive in. Not to mention the fact that women on the other hand are subjected to generational, rigid and ancient societally preconceived performative zones in which they are expected to endure their misfortune without question or retaliation. This is more so prevalent in the Indian context, as a matter of fact, is widely accepted to be the acknowledged equilibrium for the society. This study aims to break down the preconceived stigma about dialogue for women subjugated towards the generational abuse and victims of domestic violence in general. Moreover, the work also aims at the disarmament of patriarchy by multifaceted representation and retaliation of women against the evils of domestic violence and sexual abuse, with special reference to the first novella "An open and shut case" in the novel *The King's Harvest* by Chetan Raj Shrestha.

Both "An Open and Shut Case" and "The King's Harvest" are nuanced yet really dauntingly realistic novellas that question the reader's understanding of the inner workings of the societal structure. The former shows an actualization of a sort of role reversal in a way that forces one to reconsider his/her stance in life, in addition to that the careful use of undertones and digressions in the novella draws the readers more towards the issues at hand and leaves them hanging on to multiple cliff-hangers. Though a mental tax is levied upon the readers with an 'open to interpretation' sort of ending, the mind of the reader completes the story. The novella is anything but what the title suggests, but the title is strangely apt as the pitch is of a murder mystery, though the murder is anything but mysterious. The key takeaways though should be the underlying but ever-present representation of the woman's domination in the world of male dominion.

Keywords: *The King's Harvest*, "An Open and Shut Case", domestic violence, generational abuse, psychosis, retaliation towards violence, women representation.

Introduction

The victims of repetitive and barbaric cases of domestic violence show an irreversible and impairing level of trauma. Court cases can neither account for, nor ever fully understand the extent of damage that might already have transpired. Thus, I side by Chetan Raj Shrestha's approach in "An Open and Shut Case" of giving a feminine yet stringent personification of the law in the form of the Dechen OC, who was the officer-in-charge of the murder case. The convict is Kamala- the mother of two girls and wife of the dead constable Puran. Puran can be seen as a barbaric and ill-tempered man who never refrained from violating his wife and is of the opinion that her bad-mouthed self... deserved it. Though sensitive towards his daughters, Puran was a vicious and cruel man which can be seen in multiple instances of the novella. One could agree his fate had it coming for him when he crossed the line after getting drunk on the occasion of New Year's Eve. He engaged in continual hitting Kamala till he threatened to kill her using a knife. This acted as the final nail in the coffin where Kamala could take no more and does chop her husband into forty-seven pieces.

The journey is majorly seen through the eyes of Dechen OC where there are multiple timelines and subplots including Dechen OC's backstory and childhood experiences which had evidently shaped her character and her dislike for dominant males. She is a loud yet capable police officer and is said to be equivalent to or even better in some cases than her male counterparts. Moreover, she in some parts is seen to also sympathize with Kamala as more facets of her story emerged. Her story is not the subset to Kamala's but a parallel as she is reminded of her mother's condition after her father had left home without notice. Dechen OC does not like to be told what to do nor does she understand or entertain toxicity due to the male chauvinism present because of the previous OC of the Nayabazaar police station and wishes to bring everyone to the right track soon. Chetan Raj Shrestha instills in the reader's respect for women and the research aims to regard it. Moreover, the study highlights a deeper understanding of the second novella is also shows reminisces of domestic violence against women which is further explored through this study keeping in mind the different and nuanced subplots of both the novellas.

1. Psychosis in women subjected to brutality and domestic violence.

“Psychosis refers to the presence of delusions (fixed beliefs that are firmly maintained despite contrary evidence) and hallucinations (sensory perceptions experienced in the absence of an external stimulus and occurring while the person is awake), both accompanied by cognitive distortions and emotional and/or behavioural impairments.” (V Seeman 215)

The condition of psychosis is aggravated when the thoughts and perceptions of a person are disturbed and the individual is left having difficulty understanding what is real and what is not. It can be seen affecting both men and women but as far as various researches suggest, the rate of psychosis in women is more severe. Psychosis can occur in response to a large number of varied reasons in which a victim is subjected to distress because of his or her community. Trauma, erratic behaviour, starvation, stress, sleep deprivation, etc. are some of the contributory factors and symptoms of the same. There is a high-risk factor for the above condition in men and women that are in the age group of 14 to 40 years. The onset of psychosis in women that are older than the age of forty usually accompanies an increase in rates of physical agitation and aggressive behaviour. Crime rates among women with psychosis appear to be up to four times more than the crime rate among men with the same condition. The mortality rates related to crimes committed by victims of psychosis are higher than any other instances of violent crimes. People who have been diagnosed with psychosis are more susceptible to committing suicide or harming others, which often results in casualties and serious injuries.

Psychosis is a health complication that affects a person specifically in their mind. Though in olden times “violent madwomen were chained by the ankles to the walls of long gallery” (Foucault 71) things have seemed to be changed for the better. Though the patients with psychosis have trouble with logical reasoning and consorting in ideas and solutions that do not coincide with their notions. Victims of psychosis have problems in differentiating what is real and what is not; the occurrences of delusion are common in the victims of psychosis. Approximately three out of one hundred individuals experience some amount of mental disease in their life period. Mental diseases affect men and women equally all over the world, irrespective of cultures and socio-economic groups. Experiencing mental disease is horrifying, confusing, and distressing to most of people. It is additionally confusing to those that witness someone battling psychotic thoughts, which can cause misconceptions concerning what's happening, which results in the further increase of their own distress. During periods of mental illness, men and women often resort to believing in things that aren't true. These false beliefs can be referred to as delusions. A person with such mental issues may believe, for example, that their partner is disloyal to them or is cheating on them. They may see or invent meanings in their partner's actions, gestures, and tone of the conversation that support their worst fears, which may not be entirely based on facts. A person going through a psychotic episode could 'hear voices in their head confirming their prejudices, which they may take as proof that their beliefs are true. It is difficult to challenge their fastened beliefs, regardless of whether there is proof that contradicts them.

In our generally male-dominated society, women are more prone to face poverty, domestic abuse, and harassment during childhood. Other life burdens that women often face include a relative lack of independence from men, suppression from cultural norms and conforming to social standards that oppress women's rights, the expectations of society to be an ideal mother and a family caretaker, all while holding a job that would enable the family to be financially safe. In some households, these problems loom terribly massive. Additionally, migrant and refugee women might face discrimination, exploitation, isolation, and problems resulting from language barriers. It is suspected that such pressures contribute to the onset of mental disease and influence the speed of recovery.

In the novella 'Open and Shut Case' by Chetan Raj Shrestha, just before midnight on New Year's Eve, in a village above the Rangeet river in Sikkim, a woman named Kamala cuts her husband Puran into forty-seven pieces and then turns herself to the local police station. Dechen OC, the straightforward and tough cop oversees this case. While investigating the case, Dechen OC begins to discover that the lives of Puran and Kamala were full of secrets and mysteries. Puran was a policeman posted in Gangtok. Kamala and Puran have fought every time he came home. On New Year's Eve, Puran was drunk, and a conversation started between Kamala and Puran, by Kamala inquiring Puran about his transfer, and Puran peacefully answers her and Kamala started accusing Puran that he has an affair with a girl in Gangtok. Puran loses his calm and hurts Kamala physically and abuses her with his words. From the noise of the argument between the two, one of their daughters wakes up and tried to figure out what happened between her parents. Both Puran and Kamala ask their daughter to go back to her room, because nothing had happened. As soon as they were alone, Puran and Kamala started fighting again. Puran kicked and slapped Kamala. Kamala used a *bamphok* (a large knife) as a weapon against Puran. She struck him on his face and slashed his cheek, nose, and his left eye till she had cut into his flesh and saw white bone from Puran's body. Kamala struck Puran with the *bamphok* again at his neck and arms. Puran struggled to get out of there until he was screaming when he collapsed and fell on the floor. Kamala knelt over her husband and hacked his body into pieces.

Through the story of Kamala and striking her husband to death, we see the psychosis of Kamala where she thinks that her husband had an affair with a girl in Gangtok. Kamala who was very prickly towards her husband does not seem to be accepting the facts that had been presented before her by Puran. We see Puran wanted to sort out all the misunderstandings between him and Kamala, but Kamala resorts to ignoring his explanations of Puran proving that he had not been cheating on Kamala. This results in them both engaging in a tense argument, which ends up with Kamala hacking her husband to death.

“Domestic violence is not simply an argument. It is a pattern of coercive control that one person exercises over another. Abusers use physical and sexual violence, threats, emotional insults and economic deprivation to dominate their victims and get their way”. (Susan Schechter) Domestic violence is a global issue where it can be described as the misuse of powers by one adult in a

relationship to control another person. Domestic violence is the common variety of violence against women which we come across daily in news and media. It affects women mentally and physically.

2. Break in the generational atrocities to which the females are subjugated.

“She knows herself to be at the mercy of events, and she knows by now that events have no mercy”(Margret Atwood)

Women have faced gender-based violence, physical mental and sexual harm or suffering from dates back Rape, domestic violence, female foeticide, mob violence and customary or traditional practices like female circumcisions for generations. Therefore, their state of being under control or being treated as a secondary human after men in our society that makes women feel inferior to men does not let them excel. Chetan Shrestha's novel comprises of two novellas, “An Open and Shut Case” and “The King's Harvest”. The former is the story of a woman named Kamala, who on New Year's Eve, murders her husband, cuts him into forty-seven pieces, and surrenders herself at the police station. The murder, at the surface, seems very easy to decode, given Kamala had turned herself in, but there are more layers to it. And then there is the lady investigator, Dechen who begins investigating the murder, she discovers secrets, betrayal and including the resurfacing of some of her own as well.

The investigation officer Dechen OC faces a challenge as the truth appeared blurred and multi-dimensional as this was a brutal, premeditated murder and the woman should be punished accordingly. But as the investigation continues, her husband's atrocious character and terrible treatment of her become clear. He frequently beat her, was never at home, and had several other women in other places. In fact, he was paying to live with another constable's sister in Gangtok, where he was normally stationed. In this situation, is it morally acceptable to punish the woman for killing this man? He made her life miserable, and, from the accounts of the neighbors, the neighbourhood is much better off. On the other hand, the journey is majorly seen through the eyes of Dechen OC where there are multiple timelines and subplots including Dechen OC's own backstory and childhood experiences which had evidently shaped her character and her dislike for dominant males. She is a loud yet capable police officer and is said to be equivalent to or even better in some cases than her male counterparts. Her story is not the subset to Kamala's but a parallel as she is reminded of her mother's condition after her father had left home without notice. How should the police react in order to be fair and see that justice happens, but also to be compassionate towards all involved?

So, from the aforementioned section, it is very well clear that Kamala murdering her husband was a very crucial step taken by her, partly to protect herself from him and partly to destroy this very humiliation against women. Moreover, no matter what she did there was no way the society would have let her take herself to seek justice as, “Like a compass facing north, a man's accusing finger always finds a woman.”(Khalid Hosseini 7)

Adding to the fact, religious patriarchy works as a vehicle for aspiring women to simply accept gender oppression through religion, so as to keep up the cohesion of the male-dominated scheme in India. Examining religious patriarchy and also the politics of location requires a search of the historical, geographical and cultural boundaries which provides the groundwork for understanding the phenomena. Religious patriarchy brings to the forefront many theoretical questions regarding the position of ladies in religion, which is really supported by multiple locations that have evolved through the integration of complex configurations of culture and power. The presenter will analyze the growing resistance by women in Kerala, India to dowry-related traditions and also the violence that usually results from this resistance, still because of the lack of support they're receiving from religious institutions. This presentation will examine the religious, post-colonial and feminist discourse on women's position in India by investigating the conditions that produced this discourse, its correlation with male domination, and also some ways within which its ideas were deployed to stay women oppressed.

A detailed study of Shrestha's work leads resonates with the idea that “These gaps are unfair and must be closed now, not over decades or centuries. At the same time, women are not waiting for the doors to open. As members of a new Generation Equality, they know they have the right to lead and participate and don't hesitate to be an individual to claim it”. Adding to that “...until society treats men and women equally, it will be impossible to know the natural abilities of women, or whether there are inherent differences between the sexes” (Stuart Mill)

Referring to “To meaningfully promote women's leadership—that is to say, the ability of all women to achieve maximum political, economic, and personal empowerment—the social structures, political roadblocks, and policies that hold women back have to change. Structural change requires collective action. But women cannot come together for a cause that does not feel inclusive”(Susan Faludi).

Women in most settled societies of the world and virtually all class societies have experienced low status, exploitation, oppression, and loss of self-determination. For example, most settled and class societies transmit names and property through the male line, as explained above

1. Given the importance of paternity in patrilineal societies, it is scarcely surprising that many settled and class societies insist on female premarital chastity.
2. The inherent uncertainty of paternity has often produced bizarre and barbarous attempts to secure the fidelity of married women as well.

A recent investigation of the origins of animal domestication and sacrificial practices in the Near East from 8,000 to 5,000 years ago suggested a novel interpretation of the origins of women's oppression. Prior explanations have tended to make assumptions about prehistoric sexual dimorphism in strength and size, the rigidity of primitive sex-based divisions of labour, the belated discovery of biological paternity by men, or the innate perfidy of men.

The argument here explores the consequences for women of the sedentarization of human groups in the Near East, beginning about 14,000 years ago. Sedentarization heightened the vulnerability of societies to localized environmental changes by reducing the frequent mobility by which societies hitherto coped with them. The collection and storage of food and other resources in excess of day-to-day needs provided an alternative coping strategy. The investment in architecture allowed by a more sedentary existence made this a feasible alternative. Therefore, one could conclude that women do face a lot of havoc in the modern-day age and the novella clearly tries to showcase the generational shift that can be seen in the character who was suffering for long and finally, she like amongst millions of women took such a crucial step just to end up her psychosis setting an example of a generational shift

3. Shift in the paradigm observed in the author's approach in the retaliation of violence against women.

“The universality of female subordination, the fact that it exists within every type of social and economic arrangement and in societies of every degree of complexity, indicates to me that we are up against something very profound, very stubborn, something we cannot rout out simply by rearranging a few tasks and roles in the social system, or even by reordering the whole economic structure.”(Sherry B. Ortner 67)

Contextual understanding of the novel and reading between the lines reveals to the readers a plethora of fundamentally wrong and outright absurd practices. In the first novella, the words of the author provide us with occasional details of agitation between Kamala and Puran. They would ‘call each other names’ in an act of provocation. To rile up Kamala, Puran would call her by the name ‘Budi’. Likewise, Kamala called Puran ‘Maya ko Bau’ (Maya’s father), when she wanted to agitate Puran. The author makes it clear to the readers that the instances of Puran’s violence towards Kamala were not a rare occurrence-“They had fought every time he came home. They had fought when she found out about the girl in Gangtok. He had gripped her thin wrists with his left hand and whipped her legs with a belt, as he did servants accused of stealing at the thana. He had beaten her when he came to give his statement in the Daman OC case and she asked him thrice over dinner about his transfer. She had spat in his face and accused him of being involved in the incident and raping the mother and daughter. He had shown her then what rape actually meant.”

Instances of Kamala talking back to Puran’s insults were common, but Puran would occasionally not care about Kamala arguing with him - “these exchanges did not bother him too much, they gave him something to do in this wilderness, and often worked as a form of arousal, culminating in sex. And the arguments that threatened to go nowhere, he deflected into beatings. What else could one do with a short-tempered wife who insisted on being flogged.”

The author notes that the quarrels and fights between Puran and Kamala had begun soon after they got married “After eloping Kamala from her parents’ house, they had set up home there, and soon the quarrels had started.” There is evidence of Puran being happy with being away from Kamala because of his transfer to Gangtok- “For Puran, the posting was almost a reward; it had taken him to the city, and away from the stupor of Zoom and from his new wife, who had begun to sniff his clothes daily for the remains of other women.”

Puran’s character is shown by multiple instances that he has a problem with alcohol abuse and that he gets violent when he is intoxicated. Kamala tries to stop Puran from drinking alcohol on the eve of New Year’s Day- “What is there to have a party for? You were drinking, the children are frightened by what you do after you drink.” Puran is angered by his wife’s ‘suggestion’ of him not being able to do whatever he wants- “What did you say? Say it again! Tell me! Is someone plugging your hole while I’m away?” At this point, the author takes a clear stance on the status and the positions that a man and a woman take in a fight- “vulgarity is often a woman’s weapon in a fight; its power lies in its ability to shame. A man has rage, the strength to hurt; if he adds filth to his arsenal as well, he cannot be defeated. Silence, then, is the best defense.”

As soon as Puran shouts at Kamala, there is a sense of assurance ‘in the air’ that a fight will ensue later between them both. “Kamala held her tongue. She glanced at the clock on the wall; it was only 8:40. They would fight tonight, there was no doubt about it, she had quite a few things to say. But the earlier they fought, the longer would be the beating she would have to endure.” That night Puran expresses that he was not in the mood to fight and he just expressed that he wanted to have a good night and hoped to wake up to a good next year- “He did not want that now. The drink

had made him mellow. He wanted to sleep naked with his wife tonight, just like he did with the girl in Gangtok. He wanted to dream without bitterness and to wake up in the New Year to face whatever it would bring.” He asks Kamala to have sex with him, but Kamala refuses Puran’s demands. She wanted to talk about the girl Puran was cheating with, in Gangtok. When Puran tells her that the situation with the girl in Gangtok is over, Kamala expresses her displeasure with Puran’s lies by saying “She’s not gone, I know, you can go back to her. I’ll find a man here, for a small thing.” Puran is angered by Kamala’s words and he shouts at her and calls her a whore.

Kamala gets enraged by the harsh words of Puran, a fight breaks out, both Kamala and Puran get hold of a *bamphok* and a *khukuri*(two kinds of sharp knives) and they wave their knives at each other. When Puran almost hit Kamala on her neck, Kamala swings her knife and hits Puran’s arm and slices it. ‘Since the damage had already been done’, Kamala goes on to stab and slash Puran till he is a pile of 47 pieces of himself.

Another instance of the author expressing his perspective on Kamala killing her husband is through Dechen OC when she advises Kamala’s father to tone down the seriousness of the case during the court hearing by claiming that Kamala acted in self-defence. The author enunciates that the verdict of violence and murder to the scale of Kamala brutally murdering her husband can be ‘watered down’ by claiming that the actions were taken in self-defence; and that someone can get away with their deeds by providing excuses to the problem.

In the side-lines of the narrative of the story, Dechen OC is assigned the case of a school teacher who had supposedly molested a minor girl. When Dechen OC visits the house of the girl for the investigation, she reveals some inappropriate letters that were allegedly written by the girl to her boyfriend. Dechen OC claims that a minor girl could not and should not be able to write such inappropriate letters. Dechen tells the mother of the girl to have a blood test done to attest the girl's real age. The mother of the girl is shown to be reluctantly dropping the case against the school teacher. The author presents a peculiar case of legal charges being dropped by the victims when the circumstances do not seem to favour them. No sense of compensation is provided for the 'minor' girl because of a small imperfection in their case against the school teacher.

Another instance of the author's attitude towards the consequences of violence against women is through the case of a forced incest rape, which was overlooked by Daman OC, the former in charge of the Nayabazaar police station. Daman OC had forced a boy to rape his sister in front of his mother when the family came to the police station to lodge a complaint. The boy later fell into depression and committed suicide. The reaction of the villagers to this event was very strong, and they demanded Daman OC be punished. Daman OC was punished only by him being suspended from the police force. The author expresses through the narrative of the Daman OC case, that an underwhelming punishment for a heinous crime can be considered sufficient for a person with such power and influence.

In the second novella of the book, Tontem is a character who seems to be a clean-sheet innocent person who grew up in an honorable family. Tontem has a bigger-than-usual pair of ears, which people use as a way to make fun of him. Tontem, through his experiences and stories of the local people, learns that some imperfection in one's body is important for them to have 'good luck'. Many stories of people without imperfections meeting horrendous fates and losing their lives in tragedies enforce Tontem's ideology that imperfection is key to survival. This makes him do things like cutting off a toe of his newborn son, attempting to cut off a toe from his sleeping wife, whom the 'king' had sent him. Tontem's attempt to nick his wife's toe alerts the woman and she runs away in horror.

In another instance, when Tontem finally gets the woman, he had been waiting decades for, he really cares about her and leads a happy life. The woman provides him good food, works harder than him in the fields and provides him children who will grow up and help Tontem in the fields. Since Tontem is really elated and satisfied with the woman, he is seen showing mercy to the woman when he beats her- "In appreciation, Tontem took care to avoid her head whenever he beat her" The author expresses the idea that domestic violence and a husband beating his wife is only normal and necessary. Through the character of Tontem, the author expresses that the idea of beating one's wife is passed on through experience and is considered a norm of society.

4. Disarmament of patriarchy with brutal yet multifaceted women representation.

"Like any artist without an art form, she became dangerous." (Toni Morrison)

Representation of women in the fields prior dominated by men can be one way in which one can backtrack on the societal degradation that has already transpired due to the evils of patriarchy and male chauvinism. Chetan Raj Shrestha as aforementioned has discussed a pan-cultural phenomenon, one which is seen behind the closed doors of most households to some degree. But what the feminist ideology wishes to bring is a change, from closed-door domination to an open and equivalent delineation of the male who abuses and the female who accepts, and for both parties to introspect. Though Shrestha in his novel inundates the readers with brutal forces via both the feminine and the masculine counterparts of the story, one must understand in the twenty-first century, the forefronts of these sorts of wars are less on the front physical shackling but more as mental bondage. Thus, the study also aims to shift the conversation from a contextual-based physical abuse to broader vanguards like the outlook of the society about the predetermined societal performative zones, marginalization of women in the work field, denial of women of equivalent calibre.

The bounding approach of men towards women has always been similar to man's own approach towards 'mother nature'. The most celebrated and beautified entities are actually usually the ones that are the most exploited and suppressed. On one hand, man can only be seen pouring heartfelt and considerate love and care only in the front of prose and poetry but on the other hand, the hypocrisy is abysmal at the very least in the real world where he extracts every last drop of utility out of her and abandons when he gets no more. This is well described in the novel in the case of Dechen OC's mother and how her father abandoned her and never returned. Moreover, this is also the case of Puran the constable when he feels he can no longer extract any more sexual satisfaction from his wife Kamala, which further catalyzed his sexual hunger and he resorted to prostitution in the larger city of Gangtok, leaving the town where his wife and children resided. What followed was a cataclysmic chain reaction and when the dust settled, the feminine supremacy was established at least in the novel. In real life though, an equilibrium can be seen as the pinnacle of societal balance. Though only superficial at best, equilibrium is much sought after, like how nature prefers organized chaos in its way to achieving equilibrium.

Though equilibrium is the last thing one can observe in the characters of the novel, as Shrestha seems to have overdone and exemplified their roles, they are in no way modest in their propensity but do represent real-life extremities. Extremities are bound to coincide and clash. This holds true for the character of Dechen OC who is loudmouthed yet magnanimous all throughout the novella. The fate of the women according to her will never be served on a silver platter and she suggests one to work harder and be crueler than what the men already are. She represents the extremity of the brutal representation of women in the domains previously dominated by men. This fact is highlighted by the mention of the atrocious acts of the previous Officer in Charge of Nayabazaar Police station- Daman OC. One might be misled to believe she only favored the females, but that is proven wrong when she sides with the school teacher who had allegedly molested a female student when evidence tainted the innocent character of the girl. Adding to that, she also understands the feminine way of manipulation and detests it, which is clear from the incident when the mother of the girl comes to the police station wearing clothes which might seem provocative for a male officer in charge

like Sangay OC. She contrasting other women, does not use sexual provocation at her disposal but similar to other women she has a sharp tongue and does not hold back when it comes to a verbal combat.

The novel though starts with Straun the foreigner who has come to Sikkim in search of adventure and the magnificent Himalayas, the readers are made aware he is just a pawn as he is no way as competent as his feminine counterparts in verbal combat. Straun is seen to crossways with Dechen OC more times than once and represents a stark contrast to her. Though they both portray matching interests like competitive Tambola (Housie game), there is also a repeated mention of “Resham Firiri”, a Nepali song which on the literal level is quite gibberish but represents a plethora of emotions for the different characters of the novella. We here see the example of how Straun and his liking for this song is always overshadowed by Dechen OC’s hate for the song. The song used to be sung to her by her father who left her family to fend for themselves. Straun on the other hand tries to understand why Dechen OC is so irritable and cannot really perceive the reason someone could hate the song he loved so much. This is a common theme where characters in the novella are often left comprehending Dechen OC and her strong actions. Sangay OC, the second in command after Dechen OC in the Nayabazaar police station is one such character. He is enraged and displeased by the methods Dechen OC takes during her investigation and shows his discontent to her in most cases but Dechen OC can be stubborn and relentless till she thinks the work is done. The novella showed the male counterparts mostly in a bad light, except for the character of Sangay OC, who is genuinely benevolent, as the readers can see when he takes Kamala’s daughters to his own residence as their mother is kept in custody, but he is most often overshadowed by the pompous nature of Dechen OC.

The other indispensable part of the novella is Kamala and her case, though handled by Dechen OC, who doesn’t sympathize with Kamala, she is thorough in her investigation which unearths many facts about Kamala and her marital life. One does acknowledge her as a strong woman as the case files are filled with reports and statements from the witnesses and neighbours. Puran though abusive knows that his wife does put up a fight with her verbal abuse. Even her parents testify that their daughter did not like to be told what she should and shouldn’t do, and Puran had it coming for him as he treated her like an animal who needs to be restrained and beaten. Kamala sensed Puran’s infidelity and he being a seasoned indulgent in prostitution did not board well with her. She had married him by going against her family’s wishes and did regret her decision. She also regarded Puran as a good-for-nothing husband as even the land their house was built on was also given by her own father. Puran being brutal both inside his house and outside had a huge role to play in the provocative rape and suicide case under Daman OC. But one must realize the barbaric act of chopping her husband into forty-seven pieces and being un-flinched about it does take it too far, as Dechen OC points out to the readers. All in all, she does impart motherly traits but scarcely shows a weak side to anyone.

On one hand, one must also understand representation of women in the effort of disarmament of male patronage will inevitably lead to the villainization of males in general. The detrimental effects of which can be seen in the dismissal of the characters like Straun and Sangay OC, who are relatively harmless as males. One might perceive that the collateral damage is inevitable in this case. But intermediary on any level is bound to bring with itself a toll which both Dechen OC and Kamala along with many other women of the society are ready to pay. On the other hand, the second novella can also be seen to be showing women as a universally subaltern status and Tontem who thinks he spares his wife as she serves him and his family well but hits her generously and leaves her face. This is a stark contrast to the first novella as unlike Kamala and Dechen OC, Tontem’s wife is not allowed to escape her shackles or even voice them. This is what the research aims to extend, the reach and voice of women via considerate and equivocal representation in the battles they fight in regularity.

Conclusion

“... the misogynist kills women simply because he hates them” (Gilles Deleuze 72)

It is hard to think about restructuring the whole societal fabric to change one anomaly hidden in the roots of the human psyche itself, but modern feministic endeavors have always aimed to do exactly so. With immanent the dawn of patriarchy clearly visible, one still has to walk the final mile which can be seen as spreading awareness and encouraging equivocal and equivalent representation of both the sexes. One must also keep in mind its multicultural implication of it. Though society needs radical and strong women it must also consist of accepting and considerate males to bring about any perceivable change. The research successfully and statistically pointed at the follies of the society due to the male domination contextualized in the Indian context and did discuss the outcomes and radical new approaches.

Chetan Raj Shrestha having given us a sort of radical yet relatable story in both his novellas has paved the way for further discourse and in turn dismantling of male domination and female subordination among other values. Matters like psychosis in women, domestic violence and female representation does need to be discussed in the modern context and the research only adds fuel to this fire and aims to be followed by an all-encompassing discourse on the way of a better future.

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