

URMILA PAWAR'S VOICE OF DISSENT: AN ATTEMPT TO UPHOLD EGALITARIANISM

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The subjugated masses are expected to be tongue tied due to numerous social, political, economic and cultural issues. Certainly, in the course of time, the oppressed find themselves in a better position due to announcements and implementation of new policies aiming at their elevation and welfare. A lot has been done and a lot more needs to be done in the future years to coin parity in all the arenas of life. Literature, which started its journey from imagination, mythology, etc., seems to have changed its focus of attention. Since nineteenth century, literature has become purposive and real. It delves deep into the real world and exhumes the frivolities and harsh truths of life. So to say, such truths are furnishing the writers with the idea to write. Consciousness for the oppressed and subjugated too results from the same observations of the writers. This does not mean that writings are only based on observations because they result from one's experiences too. Dalit writings or voicing the concerns of subalterns, projection of the inhuman experiences of transgender or any minor section population emerges from this consciousness. Literature is earnestly shouldering the task of informing the readers about such dark realities of oppression, humiliation and subjugation by narrating the stories of those who have been denied the right of a respectable living.

The predicaments of Dalits, which have usually been brushed under the carpet for long, are now acquiring recognition in the literary society. The silence of Dalit has started bothering literary minds and so they have started writing. Dalit writings may come from upper, middle or lower strata. They may have been shaped by Dalit themselves as a mark of retaliation against what is believed and practised in our society. Dalit writings mainly examine the adverse affects of Caste and gender on the lives of Dalits.

Sometimes writings revolve around the first aspect or may revolve around the latter or both become reasons of their plight. One may notice that male Dalits fight for human treatment and equality while Dalit women are fighting because they are subjected to communal violence and gender disparity. It is pertinent to mention that it is a well-acknowledged notion that Dalit men and Dalit women write with a different perspective shaped by their experiences. It is believed that because Dalit men's struggles are different from men so this becomes conspicuous through their writings too. It is said, "This selective amnesia by Dalit males shows that men are not ready to acknowledge Dalit women's contribution to the family, the community and the Dalit movement at large. The absence of these women in the men's narratives is not only deliberate but also calculated. These men refuse to accord their women equality even in literary representation. The silencing and stereotyping of the women has hence led to an alternative voice from the women themselves" (4). Dalit men are also accused of being neutral to the woeful state of Dalit women. It is remarked, "Dalit women's personal narratives not only challenge their absence in Dalit men's narratives but also voice the concerns shared by women across all strata. These alternative accounts openly criticize the patriarchal structure in their society thus reflecting on women's problems with specific issues in a Dalit society" (4).

Education and various awareness programmes have imbued consciousness, sense of dignity and self-pride in the community and so many have started protesting the age-old divisions responsible for their degradation and unacceptability as human beings. Many Dalit women

writers use autobiographical expressions to show utter detest for the insensitiveness and shenanigans which are deeply rooted in our social setup. Such writings aim to voice the everyday violence Dalit women experience and endure due to their lowest categorisation in the lowest strata of social hierarchy. The narrative of women and Dalit women does not differ much but their inheritance with lower caste and the way they deal with such brutalities make their battles for recognition distinct. To put it in other words, the woes of women as a whole are universally similar but sometimes the existence of other factors make their experiences a little different from each other. Writers have directed their attention to such peculiar stories where women are struggling at each step to make their existence noticeable. Many Dalit writers have challenged the notion that compels Dalit women to accept exploitation as their fate.

Autobiographies of various Dalit women writers became a new fashion of writing because they felt that none expect the real sufferer could express the pain truly and purely. They also opine that though they are obligated to all the writers who have shifted their attention to the deprived Dalit women community, yet they feel that the miniscule details can only be justly share by the original mouthpieces. Dr Tejaswini aptly says:

Autobiographies by the upper caste women were not in direct speech. On the contrary, they were in the indirect speech form. Caste rarely appeared in these autobiographies but, it did appear in Dalit women's autobiographies. They probed into the evil practices of Dalit community, and writer gave criticism of the community from within. The life of Brahmin women, in fact, was different from that of Dalit women as their life was filled with rituals, customs and so. (89)

In support of the argument, Shweta says, "While men choose to remember their humiliation and clamour for self-respect in society, women vocalize their concerns over the double exploitation. Representation itself raises questions of authenticity or alleged authenticity; imagination or perception; and reality or actuality. An autobiography with its claim of genuine remembrance and retelling can also have a counter-claim of genuine forgetting and omission as is evident from the treatment of women in male autobiographies" (45).

A peculiar feature that strengthened their strife for recognition was that they raised voice for the whole Dalit women community and not in the individual drive. Sharmila Rege has a similar take on this. She argues, "Dalit life narratives are in fact testimonies, which forge a right to speak both for and beyond the individual and provide the context explicit or implicit for the official forgetting of histories of caste oppression, caste struggle and resistance" (Rege 2006: 13).

It is pertinent to mention that the voyage to gain recognition was set long back. It started with Phule and Ambedkar. Babytai Kamble, Shantabai Kamble Mukta Sarvagod, Kumud Pawde and Urmila Pawar are a few names who have emerged to underline the double exploitation faced by women. Various Dalit women writers are using their pens to the hilt so as to record the stories of humiliation and subservience to the so-called savarans. They also write to inform the readers about their deplorability in the social, political and economic peripheries. Another aim which compels them to write is to bring to surface their narratives so that they may not only understand their negligible position in the society but also work for their own upliftment.

Speaking about Gayatri Spivak, Clara Nubile writes, "the voice of the subalterns cannot be heard properly: It is not so much that subaltern women did not speak, but rather that others did not speak, but rather that others did not know how to listen, how to enter into a transaction between speaker and listener. The subaltern cannot be heard because of their words cannot properly interpreted. Hence, the silence of the female as subaltern is the result of failure of interpretation and not a failure of articulation" (35).

Dalit Autobiographical expression is a diverse ways of challenging the social mores and the rigid approach of the society towards them. Urmila Pawar brings to fore how her personal experience shaped her writing style and changed her outlook in life. It also traces her journey from a Dalit girl of Konkan to a bride of Ratnagiri and then a Mumbaite. She could not endure the

injustices and humiliation of her community and so decided to retaliate against the same with a special mention directed to Ambedkarite movement and its influence. She became an activist and promoted her aim through her role playing in theatre, awareness camps and her writing predilection. Deshpande writes, “In *Aaydan*, Urmila dedicatedly navigates her readers through her long journey from the harsh landscape of the Konkan region to Mumbai—first as a Mahar and later as a woman—as she challenged the conventions of both caste and gender to emerge as an activist and a strong literary voice”.

Urmila Pawar’s *The Weave of My Life: A Dalit Woman’s Memoir* is an attempt to unveil the harsh realities experienced by Dalit women. These narratives are not mere fictions but they are the stories which Pawar or almost every Dalit woman has lived, seen and questioned all through her life. She has attempted to unfold the stories of struggle, exploitation, and suppression vis-a-vis caste, gender and class. Pawar has also attempted to give voice to the frightened Dalit women who have been unheard or unspoken. Pawar’s attempt will be fruitful only if the woes of these women are heard.

Urmila weaves variegated forms of subjugation in her autobiography. She highlights the stories of powerlessness, apathy and dispassion as inseparable part of Dalit women’s existence. She sketches a detailed picture of her community by sensitively and consciously highlighting gender prejudices and the lowest and demeaning social status women of her community are placed on. She recounts many instances of her experience in her autobiography. *The Weave of My Life*, which originally is *Aaydaan*, has used the concept of weaving to depict the low status of Dalits and extreme poverty they are compelled to live in. Urmila’s mother weaves bamboo baskets to earn and sustain. She declares, “My mother used to weave *aaydans*. I find that her act of weaving and my act of writing are originally linked. The weave is similar. It is the weave of pain, suffering and agony that links us” (9).

Her mother had been a great inspiration for her because from her she had learned that the biggest folly of any human being would be to tolerate unnecessary oppression and injustice. The childhood learning impacted her life so much that she never compromised in her life to please any one. She stood against all odds fearlessly and fought her battles fiercely. In her school too she did not feel intimidated from her teacher who once told her to clean school verandah. She was slapped by him “Because I refused to clean the school veranda” (56). This infuriated her mother and quoted a proverb! “When it is the widow’s son’s turn to receive alms, the giver gets a boil on his palms!” Everybody else can get education, but when it’s the turn of my child, it turns out to be a big problem” (56).

Her mother had managed her life all alone because her father had died in her early years of childhood. Pawar had lamented the condition of her mother who used to toil day and night to feed her children. No matter how much she worked, life was not easy for them. This has been underscored categorically in the writer’s autobiography. She writes, “Therefore food was always scarce in our house” (79).

Urmila has recounted all forms of exploitation, her people had endured due to the caste and social structure, in her autobiography but she directed her special attention to her women community as they had accepted their vulnerability as their fortune. She voices the doleful condition of her women so as to empower the women of this community. She writes to the hilt to represent their unending sufferings within the patriarchal set up where they are pushed to the wall to be placed at the relegated position. Urmila Pawar also questions this unfair treatment experienced by Dalit women. She champions the cause of these women by challenging the stereotypes and inculcating much needed self-respect by enabling them to value their existence and negating the unbalanced standards of society and the upper caste dwellers. She remarks:

The women were commodified and exploited as they were considered not to be at par with men; the lack of representation despite a general sense of injustice harbours a despondent narration. While domestic abuse, be it mental, physical, psychological or verbal, was

finally recognized there is still a lack of fair representation of Dalit women. The contribution of women to the household economy is also overlooked. It was not in the writings of the upper caste or Dalit women but in the writings of the upper caste men that the upper caste women had been valorised, the middle class marginalized and the Dalits victimized. (45-46)

To depict Dalit women's woes, Urmila has illustrated all incidents, acts and deeds of the upper caste living around her community so as to remind the readers of the deep patriarchy. Despite, these women's more than equal involvement in making the family economically sustainable, domestic violence remains a darker chapter of their existence. They are beaten and thrashed but they still discharge their duties sincerely with a hope that someday their contribution will be acknowledged.

The writer remembers it clearly that many women would get back to their domestic chores even in excruciating pain inflicted on them by their husbands for a simple reason of not sponsoring their husbands liquor expenses. Her eyes pained to see the state of these unfortunate women who would walk painfully by somehow managing to drag their aching bodies to work. These women would hurl abuses at their husbands when alone and would pray for their deaths too. They would say, "Let his drinking mouth be burned off forever. Let his hands rot" (23).

In our patriarchal social structure, men would flaunt their supremacy for being men. If this is so, then why are family and economic obligations trounced on women. They would have to cater to men's needs. They would look into house hold affairs, feed children, raise them, earn for family as a whole and some for the husband because the husbands have urge to booze in the evening and then of course they have to satisfy their husbands' sexual desires too. The writer adds more to the already scornful and pathetic conditions of Dalit women by saying that these women would toil day in and day out by developing endurance for starvation. With a sense of duty and responsibility, they would not eat anything all day so that they could return to their kids a little early or may be on time. Pawar narrates the plight of these women through her writings and she writes:

The walk back home would be quite different. Their baskets would be light. Some of the women, before they started their journey back, would first sit in our yard, draw water from the well, quench their thirst, roast cheap tiny fish on dry twigs and eat them with some dry bread. But some, who did not have any time even for this meagre refreshment, would start walking the long way. They would just take some morsels of dry bread and fish in their hand and nibble on them while walking. (25)

Urmila Pawar grew up witnessing all such social evils closely. Her family environment also conditioned her consciousness and she decided to raise a voice of dissent so as to purge the society off such disparaging traditions. Her mind resisted to see her sister's condition who was also a victim of domestic violence. She was tortured to all limits to which she ultimately succumbed and lost her life. Pawar cannot forget the untimely death because of her husband's brutal patriarchal mind set. She writes agonizingly:

Tai tried hard to cope with the problems: space, crowding, people, heaps of dirt, spit covered walls, hoards of flies hovering all over, and the rats and mice. But soon she was at her wits' end. Besides, she had a morning job. She had to get up at the crack of dawn, make chapatis and vegetables for all the people in the house, and reach her office in time to sign the register. She returned to a house in which soiled clothes and dirty utensils would be kept so that she might wash them. Once she had cleaned them, she had to cook the evening dinner! Her mother-in-law ... got angry all too easily—when Tai was late in doing something, when she took help from her sisters-in-law, when she did not like what Tai did. Any of these would make her get mad at Tai. She thought that work in the office was nothing but just sitting in a chair and relaxing. She complained, "How much more work will I do?" The outbursts invariably ended in a threat to commit suicide under the train.

Sometimes she really pretended to walk out of the house for that express purpose. That's when Tai's father-in-law and husband vented their fury on Tai. Poor Tai poured her heart out to us when she came on a visit, and my brother would say, "Here she comes with her tales of woe!" (99)

Urmila laments that subjugation was ingrained in the life Mahars from the beginning. Girls and boys were taught how to behave as per the requirement of the social concept of 'gender'. Boys were told to command while girls to remain subservient to any male figure in their respective families. Urmila detests such a practice and so whenever she used to notice her brother intimidating his wife, her sister-in-law, she would interfere and tell her brother not to. She tells that there was a ritual in Mahar community that was to be observed at the time of marriage ceremony. She narrates:

There was a game that taught the groom how to deal with his wife. The bride would be given a pot to carry water on her head and also a small jug and sent away with four or five karavalis or girl attendants to some distance. Then the groom would be made to sit on the threshold at the back door of the house, with a stick in his hand. They would teach him the lines he would have to tell the wife when she returned. When the bride came back with the water, he would strike the ground with the stick and demand an explanation, "Why are you so late?" The women would help the bride to come up with answers such as, "I was late because the cows muddied the water, so I had to wait till the water cleared," or "The rope fell into the well and I had to wait till it could be brought out," and so on. Then they would make her swear that she would never be late again." (76)

Urmila never found any rational in such rituals but she knew it was not easy for her to make her people comprehend that such rituals were only desolating the lives of Mahar women.

She herself became prey to gender discrimination. An incident from her life filled her heart with hatred for such oppression which shook her out of wits. She recalls, "I was an unwanted child because I was a girl, when I was born, my cousin Govindadada wanted to throw me away on the dung heap. When I grew a little older, many would beat me" (54). Her heart still misses a beat to remember that she could have trapped in the evil deigns of her uncle who tried to molest her and took advantage of her innocence. She writes, "My maternal uncle plays dolls with me and pretends to be my husband drags me into an alcove and presses me hard" (125). She had also tried to speak against the duality of Brahmins who had always stopped lower caste from entering the temple but she her childhood memories had never stopped chasing her. What she could mutely see in her child was protested in her writings. In her autobiography she retaliates against the hypocrite society which calls Dalits 'untouchables' but does not mind making out with the lower caste women or girls. She herself had noticed a priest raping a lower caste girl in the temple but could not react to it at that moment.

Urmila writes that almost every day her village would witness a strange incident of male supremacy. When she was in class nine or ten, she witnessed the most horrific incident of her life. A widow of her village was reported to be pregnant and she had refused to abort her baby. The so called wise men 'sarpanches' of the village pronounces the abortion to be done by kicking the woman till the baby finally gets aborted. It would not be incorrect to say that it was indeed a valiant act of bravery because they managed to protect the false honour of the village. She adds:

In another incident, when an eight-month-pregnant woman openly accused her husband of having illicit relations with another woman, the villagers gave her the same punishment. Women, mad with excitement, kicked her till the baby died inside her, and the woman died in pain in a week's time. Why should this so-called honour, this murderer of humanity, this tool of self-destruction, be so deeply rooted in women's blood? (103)

As a woman, Pawar herself had witnessed a lot of dominance. Life as a bride was not simple for her. She had to make various adjustments in her new family so as to assimilate in her husband's world. Of course, assimilation and adaptation are not easy for anyone and so was hard

for Urmila too. On getting married to Harishchandra, she had to change herself completely. She could never imagine that her husband would also value her virginity on top of everything. After making love with her on the first night, her husband proclaimed with pride that his wife was a virgin. She narrates her private experience:

I got up in the morning and was horrified to discover that I was bleeding. My periods were regular. So I was quite confused as to how this had happened...I asked my husband, who was loitering behind me in the verandah, said, "Aho, how did this happen?" He gave me a sharp tap on the head and said, "You idiot, don't you understand? Let us go in; I'll tell Aai. The first time is always like this." But he was not really scolding me; he was laughing. He had yet another proof of my virginity! Of course, this may not happen with all women. (118)

Our society measures a woman's character with the virginity report that her husband announces after making love with her for the first time. If female's hymn breaks and she bleeds, she is declared 'pure' and if it does not then she is looked with suspicion for she could have slept with many men and that certifies her 'impurity'. Using this yardstick to weigh one's strong character or weak would have been still acceptable if men too undergo the same examination. But our society does not mind being dual faced. In an article published in *The Times of India*, Dr Mahindra Vatsa, a gynaecologist and sex counsellor, "It's just the man's and his family's inflated ego that results in such unrealistic demands". Rachel Fernandes opines, "Remember, virginity and chastity are not the only measures to base a happy marriage on, honesty and trust are far more important traits that both should possess" (*TOI* n.pag.).

Urmila feels agonised to recall that on the very first night she was told about her frigidity in the bed. She broods over women's pathetic condition who cannot express their desire openly because if they do so then their husbands might suspect their moral conduct and if they do not then they earn the title of being frigid. She writes, "Had I taken any initiative, he would have suspected my virginity! I was not at all frigid! I understood every move very well. However, these were being done to me against my wishes...(118). Urmila did not wish to spoil her relations with her husband, so mechanically kept nodding at every demand her husband made. She kept listening to her mother-in-laws advices for quiet good years of her married life. Few of her words were engraved on Urmila's mind. She writes, "Yet a sentence Aai once said had made a deep impression on my mind. "If the husband calls you a whore, the whole world is ready to sleep with you." So I was absolutely sure that I wanted to have good relations with my husband. At any cost!" (124).

Initial days of her marriage were not smooth. She was insulted by her husband for her mother's extreme poverty too. On her first visit to her Aai's house after her marriage, her Aai could never welcome Urmila's husband with pomp and show. This offended Harishchandra and so he insulted her in return. She narrates, "He pinched my arm hard and exploded, "Ugh ... what a house! And what a mother-in-law! Miser of the first order! What a gift she bestows on her son-in-law! A bag of shellfish! To hell with your mother and your family!" (118).

As a writer, she is also heard of talking about menstruating cycle as a natural phenomenon. Not only as a child she was humiliated for menstruating but after her marriage too it became a big problem. She says, "When she got her first period, she started to cry. Her mother handed her a piece of cloth and asked her to sit in one corner lest she make things in the house "impure" by touching them...as if I wasn't discriminated enough by others outside, now family too, has set rules for me". (87). After her marriage too, she faced the same because her mother-in-law religiously observed the restrictive measure to maintain purity of the house. But the observance of those details during the menstruating days was very difficult for Urmila because she was too new for the environment. She recalls her initial days in her in-law's house. She writes, "During those days, washing the pads was a great problem. I had to hide them. When I went to wash, Mai would accompany me and draw water from the well. Again my sasu asked, "Haven't you washed

clothes just now? What are you washing again? And why are both of you going at the same time?" She would watch me like a policeman" (120). As a child and as a grown up too, she could never understand the practice of making her sit in a corner and reminding her off to refrain from touching anything because that could defile the environment. This is a way she has resisted against the society's mention of 'purity' and 'impurity'. Her fearless approach to life and the audacious writing makes her a very popular Dalit feminist writer and wins her a lot of readership.

Urmila raised her voice by writing about these social mores responsible for the subdued condition of women in Mahar community. Her writing penchant also became a victim of society's patriarchal mind set. Though Urmila's husband ridiculed her for various reasons but did not stop her from completing her graduation, though a few conditions were pronounced. When I asked for Harishchandra's consent, he said, "Look, you can do what you like only after finishing your daily chores in the house. Cooking, looking after children, and all that stuff. If you think you can do this and get more education, fine!" This was actually his way of saying "No," but I took it up as a challenge" (153).

Urmila was comfortable with her husband because he stood with her whenever she needed him. She recalls how her procurement of graduation degree was celebrated by him. He would flaunt that she was a graduate. Harish never stopped her from working outside the house. She was also very determined of earning and not depending on her husband. She shares:

When I got my first salary, I could not believe that all that money was mine; that I could spend it the way I liked. Before my marriage, I used to hand over my salary to my mother. Now I started handing it over to my husband. If this is not like deliberately offering your head for the butcher's knife, what else is it? (139)

Urmila was comfortable with her husband because he stood with her whenever she needed him. He was more than delighted to have an educated wife but Urmila's desire to do post graduation infuriated him to the extent of destroying the close marital bond they once shared. Harishchandra would always question her about the need to do post graduation. He would tell her to focus on her family and children which Urmila was already doing splendidly. She retorted:

Look, I am paying enough attention to the house and the children. I take good care of their food, studies, and all the household work. Besides, I work in the office as well. My children are quite healthy. And if they ever fall ill with some minor ailment, I take leave and nurse them without sleeping a wink at night. I am looking after them very well, thank you! It is you who needs to pay more attention to the house now. Instead of going to the bar, why don't you come home early and pay some attention to their studies? That would be far better. Besides, whatever I study, I do it in my spare time! Why should you object to it? (155-156)

Explaining things to Harishchandra was not easy because right from the beginning men are taught that looking after the house is the sole responsibility of the women. Men have the freedom to behave the way they wish. Life could not again be simple for Urmila because she has set on to the journey to live her dreams and do something for the well being of Dalit women. Before joining Maitrini group, she tried numerous times to reconcile with her husband but all her attempts were dashed to smithereens. After a long and tiring working day, Urmila would still press her husband's feet to make him happy. She says, "I was ready to die for a smile, a glance from him". But he accused me, "Let alone an ideal wife, you are not even a good one!" (159) Men seem to have taken Manusmriti's saying rather seriously who propagated that:

The wife should even treat the husband as God though he is characterless, sensual and devoid of good qualities.... If the wife disobeys the husband when he is given to bad habits or becomes a drunkard or is suffering from physical ailment, then for three months she should be deprived of her valuable clothes and jewels and kept away...Day and night women must be kept in dependence by the males of their families... her father protects her

in childhood, her husband protects her in youth and her sons protect her in old age; a woman is never fit for independence. (qtd. in Ambedkar 429)

Urmila endured the pain of her husband's hostility because she loved him dearly. Her heart would often miss a beat when he would accuse her of being a bad mother. All her painful experiences and endurances made her a strong headed woman who wanted to discover herself. She decides to write but becoming writer was not very easy for her. She writes, "my writing, which was getting published, my education, my participation in public programs—irritated Mr Pawar no end. Gradually, he began to be full of resentment" (159). She faced numerous discouragements and de-motivating moments but nothing could stop her from becoming a writer. Her penchant for writing was never treasured in her family. The same resentment for her writing dexterity and predilection was shown to Urmila by her children about which she says, "...and my son and my two girls misunderstood me because they could not understand my need to have a life beyond home. It's as if our lives had been juxtaposed" (*The Theatre Times* n.pag.).

Urmila also brings to the notice of her readers that nothing but only writing would give her a sense of satisfaction. She would complete her household chores and at night would sit down to write without any disturbance. Her husband would often tell her take rest lest she would fall ill but Urmila would tell herself not to stop until her goal, to reform the society, is attained. Extensive hard work and lack of sleep would result in severe headaches. But she could not gather the courage to tell her husband to press her head. She writes:

How can a wife ask her husband to do such things! I also avoided asking him to do such things. Not because I wanted to save him that bother, but because if I asked for something, he would demand something else! Many a time, I would write in the dark. I would keep a pen and papers near the pillow and write whatever came to my mind, even in the dark. I did not want to forget and forego. Thus I continued to write. (149)

Urmila wrote and worked for destitute women. In her activism, she sensed the futility of her attempts to reconcile with her husband. She even found wearing mangalsutra meaningless. She could only see it as a symbol of subservience. She does not conceal her feelings in her writings about the meaninglessness of the string. She tells that she had mustered the courage to go to the women's programs without wearing the mangalsutra, but for marriages or naming ceremonies I would customarily wear it. She narrates it categorically:

Sometimes my troubled conscience made me go to the office and elsewhere with a bare neck. If somebody asked my why, I would deliver a lecture on women's liberation. And sometimes, when my heart overflowed with love for my husband, I found myself wearing it again. In the beginning, my husband would throw a fit if he found me without the mangalsutra. But, later on, even he vacillated between...! (163)

Urmila has faced a lot at every front and every day became posed a threat to her new found identity. She stood all odds and made a mark for herself in her world and in the literary world too. She has inspired many Dalit women to protest social fetters to discover themselves. She was combating against all the odds not only in her outer world but inner world too. She decides not to merely lament the social mores but to deal with them sternly. She fought audaciously against these detrimental forces to discover herself after triumph over her sense of humiliation and inferiority which have been inextricable to her existence ever since her childhood. She was determined to make women to acknowledge that all of them were individuals and certainly have entitlement to all rights of an individual. She questioned the social notion that man has muscle strength which is not a big deal because then the fact to appreciate and consider is that she is the creator of the universe. All human beings have distinct capacities and should neither be compared. Urmila wishes the society to live with a new vision and a new perspective which does not uphold gender disparity. She also envisions seeing an unafraid world which purges off subordination and authority completely. She promulgates a world in which every man and woman is equal

individuals. Her efforts will bore fruit only if the world sets itself free from all prejudices and biases on the basis of caste and gender.

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THE ORIGINAL

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