

Q. Analyse the story "The Intrusion" as a quest for identity.

Or

Q. Describe how Shashi Deshpande draws the plight of the modern Indian woman in her novel "The Intrusion".

Or

Q. How does Shashi Deshpande illustrate man woman relationship and its implications in the modern day society in her story "The Intrusion".

Answer ---- Shashi Deshpande is one of the eminent novelists of contemporary Indian literature in English. Deshpande creates characters that take her readers through the social strata of urban society; but her interest comes to centre more and more on women of the middle and upper middle classes. She talks about well-educated women who fight for their own space, for their place in the family and in their social and cultural setting. This setting is the backdrop to almost all her stories.

Women, in Deshpande's works, are not simply victims of circumstances, of family, of society, they suffer from a self consciousness till the end of their lives. Hence, over the decades that Deshpande's work embraces, they have come to stand out as self-assured, self-empowered, articulate personalities. She introduces a painful topic that had already been there, as 'marital rape', in one of her early stories, "The Intrusion", the meaning of which clearly tells one's forceful entry into another's private world denying the latter's self-respect.

"The Intrusion", a title story deals with a newly married woman, whose sense of worth is dishonored by the appalling treatment by her husband, whom she thinks as an intruder. Deshpande emphasizes the self-effacing role of female protagonists in the short stories under study in a scathing manner. In the story, there is the newly married protagonist whose self-respect and sense of self are violated by her crass and insensitive husband. The wife who finds herself conscious of her being but her husband's forceful pressure to indulge sex with her at the very first night after marriage, considering it his legal right makes everything futile. She has to surrender herself to the vindictive will of her husband. The female protagonist considers this relationship as 'marital rape' where the society and its norms win over one's self consciousness. The psychological being of a woman doesn't have any value to the male chauvinistic nature.

Throughout the story, the female protagonist's sense of suffering makes no room in the traditional sociological approach and she has no way left but to surrender. Although marriage is a legal institution by which a man can have sex with woman freely, but the writer is of the view that one should develop a friendly relation before indulging to sex. He should not remain a stranger to her. An air of trust and dependence must chill both of their hearts so that he should not appear as intruder, as the title of the story implies. Forceful implementation of rights does never reflect manliness, rather earnest efforts to honour others' sentiments and self consciousness defying the self ego brings real laurels for a man. The story speaks not only about the male's intrusion over female's body and mind, but it intrudes over woman's own identity from the psychological perspective.

Thus, Shashi Deshpande has presented in her novel modern Indian women's search for this definition about the self, society, and the relationship that are central to women. Deshpande's novel deals with the theme of the quest for a female identity. The complexities of man-woman relationship especially in the context of marriage, the trauma of a disturbed adolescence is evident in the story. The Indian woman has always been a silent sufferer. While she has played different roles-as a wife, mother, sister and daughter, she has never been able to claim her own individuality. Shashi Deshpande's novels deal with the women belonging to

Indian middle class. She deals with the inner world of the Indian women in her novels. She portrays her female characters in a realistic manner. Deshpande's feminism is certainly not pessimistic or unenthusiastic. She analyses the universal significance of the woman's problem, thereby transcending the feminist perspective and her story "The Intrusion" speaks volumes about it.