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The Character of Faibain Seven Steps in the Sky: The Extremity of Dominance

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Abstract: ***Kundanika Kapadiya isarenownedGujaratifemalewriter. ThenovelSevenStepsintheSkygot the prestigious Gyanpith Award. Kundanika Kapadiya when published this novel, she was threatened by some people. Who were strongly believed that Kapadiya is breaking the rules set bythe society from millions of years. But onthe other hand, she revealed that one ladywrote a letterto her bysaying that when I read this novel, I thought I have met somewhere the lady like Vasudha. But after a deep thinking I became sure that I amthat character. This was the huge impact ofthis novel. Here, the character ofFaiba herself prove that WOMAN IS THE ENEMY WOMAN. Faiba portraythe major role in the life ofVasudha. Faiba is that character who has sacrificed her whole life after Vyomesh, her nephew. She was a widow. Throughthis article we can find that one should have some limitation oftorturing others.You can't mould anyone's life according to your thoughts convience.***
Keywords: renowned,threatened,revealed,sacrifice,submissive, protagonist,

I. INTRODUCTION

The protagonist ofthe novel Vasudha's husband Vyomesh Mehta's parents died in a very young age. Vyomesh was brought up byhis father's sister. After the death of her husband she came backto her parentshouse. InGujaratithewordFAIBAmeans father'srealsister. Vyomesh was brought up under her roof. She knew each and every minute thing about Vyomesh. Abouthis likes, dislikes, interests, his favorite food, his hobbies etc. faiba's life runaround Vyomesh's life. She doesn't have her own choices, likes and dislikes. She has devoted her whole life after Vyomesh. For an example she likes bitter guardtoo much. But as Vyomesh doesn't like it. She never prepare this vegetable for her. Her daybegins with Vyomesh and end with him. Through the novelthe reader come to knowthat she and Vyomeshare having verylittle conversation. But apart fromthis, she canunderstand eachothers feelings verywell. Vasudha does not receive any good response from Faiba. For Faiba, Vasudha was only a daughter-in-law and a workhouse wife. She always think thatVasudha should work all daywithout arguing or complaining. Itstruethat Faiba has suffered at the hands of many, but all their oppressive feelings were stored in her mind waiting for anoutlet and Vasudha isthe best personto pouron it. Butthrought her life,

FaibanevertriestounderstandwhatliesinVasudha'sheart. AsVasudhalaments

"Faiba doesn't know what is my heart. Butsheknowswhatisinmywomb.(1)

Faiba'snegativeattitudetowardVasudhamakesher moreandmorefrustratedandmiserable and give a painfulfeeling. She does not get anysupport fromFaiba. Because she is also nothing more than a work horse. Faiba lives for Vyomesh only. She finds satisfaction in renunciation.

Faiba is a minor character inthe novel. But her impact inVasudha's life is verycrucial. Faiba has devoted her whole life for Vyomesh. She forgets even of her own existence. With tremendous hardship she brought up Vyomesh as her own son. Vyomesh once said to Vasudha "WhenmymotherdiedIwasveryyoung,and ifFaiba hadn't lookedafterme,wherewouldIbe today? Don't I know that? By this conversation anybody can easily impressed with the way Faiba has sacrificed her life.

ButthesameFaiba,whoissolovingandcaringturnedintoaharshladyforVasudha. Even

Vasudha'sownmotherhadsaid, "Nowyoudon'thavea motherorfather inlaw.Youonlyhave Faiba- all of you have to do is to please her and Vyomesh, then there won't be anyproblem.

Faibadidn't let herrest,evenforamoment.Faibawasanoldwoman andshe hassenseabout the house work. She was accurate about every work.

"Vasudhaaathisbedspreadisdirty,get it washed…don't forgettowashthevegetables, lookout for the weevils in the peas…Bhindi must be fried with fenugreek, dudhi must have gravy in it, the clothes should be folded in this way…

"Unpackthegroceriesstraight away;socktheclothesforwashingbeforestartingtherotis;this afternoon clean the glassware with hot soap water"…

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Accordingto Faiba,onceawomanbecomesadaughter-in-lawshe nevergetstired.Inthematter of religious practices too she said " YOUR FAMILY MAY WORSHIP HINDU GODS; HERE YOU MUST GO TO THE JAIN TEMPLE"(1)

Fromherchildhood,VasudhalikesreadingalotathomeKanaiyalalMunshi,Dhumketuand R.V. Desai, translationsofSharadbabuandTagore, ofShakespeareandIbsen. She hastriedto understandthepoemsof ShelleyandMathew Arnold.Shehasreadwhatevershecould layher hands on. Her father was veryproud ofhis daughter's interest in books. Our Vasudha gets so absorbed in reading that she forgets even to eat.

But that matter of pride was certainly a disqualification with Faiba. She used to say' Isn't there anything to dothat you sit around reading?OnceshesawVasudhawithabook."It'sabad habit toreadineveryspare moment". "itsnotgoodforawomantoreadsomuch. Accordingto herifa woman get too much education she will surelygo for work. And once if she will put her legs outside the home she will destroy her married life. She told Vasudha that

'Idon't approveofgivingthemtoo mucheducation. And nowtheyevengooutto work!What's wrong with staying home? Just look at the number of divorces! In our days we married one person for alltime and put up with whatever situation was encountered. What happens to us is God's will".

One morning, while she was tidying up, she saw an article about astronomy in a magazine. She had always been interested inthis subject, and forgetting everything, she beganreading it. Faiba sawherreading.'Vasudha!'Hervoicewasso sternthat Vasudhadroppedthemagazine infright. 'Haven't yougotmoresensethanto readatthistimeofday?'Vasudhaquickly putthe magazine awayand went to the kitchen, throughthe sitting room. Vyomesh was reading the morning paprer.Thiswashisroutine. Hewould have two leisurelycupsoftea while reading the paper for nearly an hour.

Through centuries women like Faiba being a woman too exploits another woman. In a country like India this is very common. Once a woman becomes mother-in-law, she thinks that it is her basic right to dominate or ruled over her daughter-in-law. Being a mother-in-law, she automaticallyretired fromallthehouseholdwork.(2)Thoughphysicallyshe iscapableenough. We have also seen that ifa husband is working, he will put all his attention in the job. Even he will not do small help to his wife or mother. The reader cansee the character ofLalita. She is a working woman. In the morning she completes all the house hold work. Then she goes for the job for 8 to 10 hours. After returning fromthe job, again she has to prepare for the dinner.

Sundayisthe holidayforall. But foraworking ladyshe ishavingdoubleduty. Inthenorthern states of India till now situation has not changed at all. Mother-in-law is the supremo of the family. For her to enter in the kitchen is strictlyrestricted or we can sayprohibited.

Vasudhagavebirthtothreechildren.But neitherVyomeshnorFaibahavechangedtheirroutine schedule. Instead of helping Vasudha, Faiba used to go to the temple every morning. Here, the question arise is, what is more important?To worship or to help a lady who really need help.

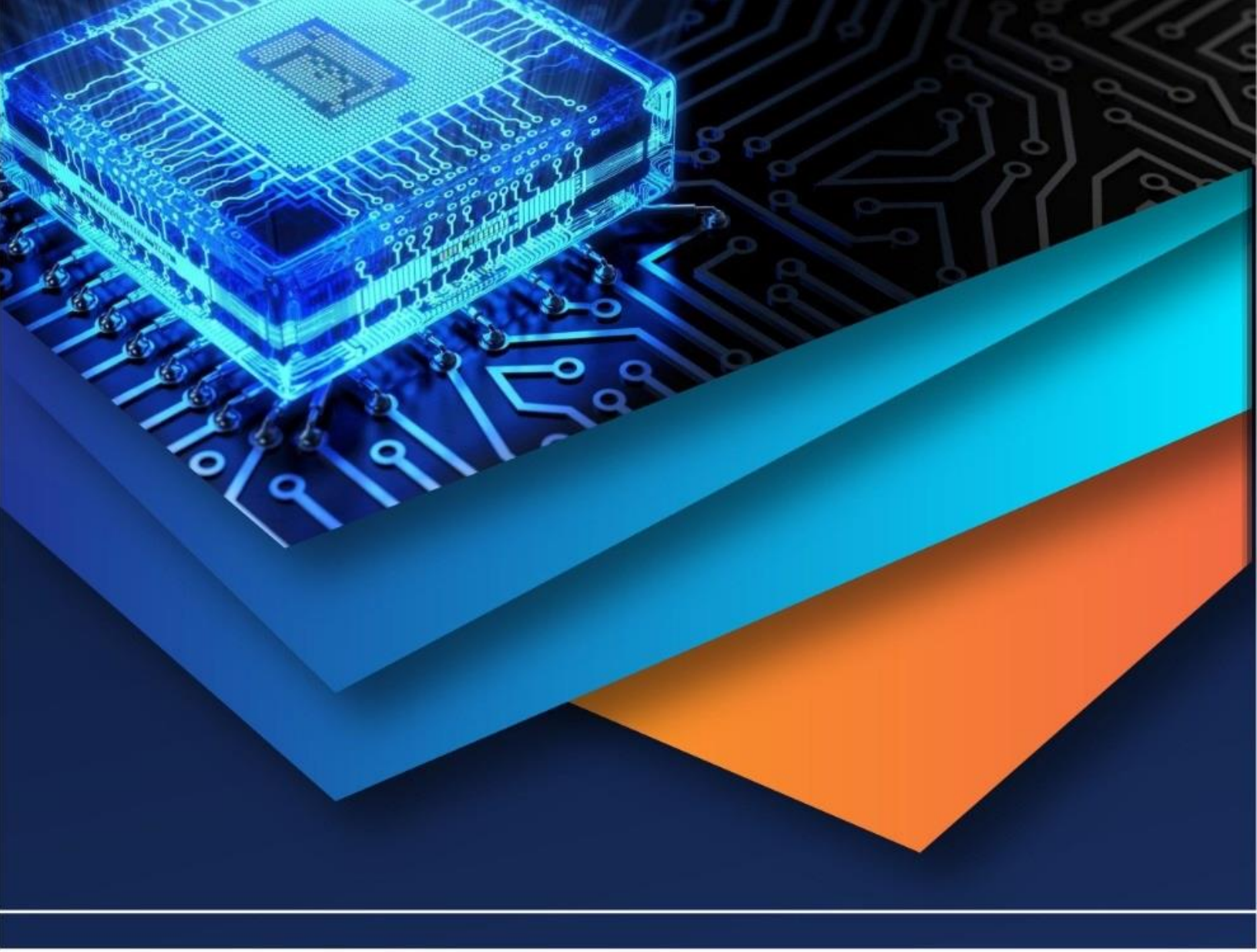
Whenallthethreekidsgot married,Faibawenttothevillage,thinkingshe might notadjust with the new generation daughter-in-laws.

Faiba cares so much of Vyomesh. But when Vyomesh received a letter of the sad demise of Faiba, there was a partyat his home. Vyomesh read the letter and behave as if nothing happen and continue his party. Faiba has given her whole life after him. Vasudha felt very bad for Vyomesh's practical behavior. Throughout her life Vyomesh was in the centre. Faibais nonethelessthanacommender,ordering herconstantly.She isconsideredstorehouseofendless energy. Conservative Faiba is also a woman, but can't understand her.

Here,thewriterKundanika Kapadiyawantsto saythat,wherever yougoaroundtheglobe, you will find gender discrimination. Situation is same for all the women.

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