

The Journey from Setback to Self-Discovery in Amulya Malladi's *The Sound of Language*

¹Mrs. R. Rajanandhini, ²Dr. Y. Vidya

¹Ph. D Research scholar(Part time), Department of English, VHNSN College (Affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University), Virudhunagar

²Assistant Professor of English,
VHNSN College (Affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University), Virudhunagar

Abstract: The path of human existence is interesting despite all of its complexity. Both in the workplace and in daily life, every woman faces many obstacles. It takes time and effort to overcome the difficulties in life that are caused by the circumstances and surroundings. This paper analyses Amulya Malladi's *The sound of language*, which depicts the refugee Raihana's daily struggles with depression and those of Gunnar. It also makes an effort to highlight the concept that discovering one's inner power is the best approach to live a happy life. The paper recounts Raihana's life, who never gives up even when life pushes her to the brink, to emphasize this point. Even though Raihana and Gunnar suffer as a result of societal norms, they triumph by defying the unneeded restrictions placed on them by life and paves the way for every individual to lift themselves and add sunshine to their gray lives.

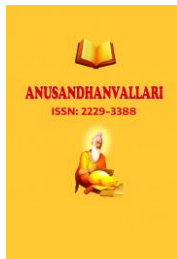
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People frequently look to successful and great individuals as role models and attempt to plan their lives accordingly, but they seldom read about those who have redone their lives after suffering numerous abuses, making mistakes, committing crimes, and experiencing total financial ruin. According to many psychologists, everyone has the potential to alter themselves, and the characters in Amulya Malladi's work both demonstrate this potential and persuade the other characters to do the same. The complicated nature of relationships is woven throughout Malladi's literature, which features a wide range of character depiction colours.

In 2002, Malladi moved to Denmark from the US and encountered the host nation's attitude towards immigration. She had extremely different views of Denmark and the United States. In 2008, Malladi's book *The Sound of Language*, which she had meant to write on the experiences of immigrants in Denmark and an unexpected relationship despite racial tensions, was released. Malladi conveys her personal encounter with Danish via the main character Raihana.

This story centres on Gunnar, a Danish widower, and Raihana, an Afghan lady. Following her husband's capture as a prisoner by the Taliban, Raihana is left alone. Gunnar loses his wife and alienates himself. In order to start a new life, Raihana moves to Denmark and enrolls in a language school. Her progress is impeded by language, so she enrolls in an apprenticeship to help a Danish widower and beekeeper named Gunnar to gather his honey in an effort to overcome this barrier. As a result, the story is about two poor people who discover friendship to be the source of purpose in their lives.

According to Malladi, people cannot attain their objectives by being passive and subservient, lamenting the past, wallowing in guilt, or worrying about their limitations. The key to living a life of satisfaction is to recognise their inner power. Her books realistically portray the daily struggles that women face with depression



while also offering doable remedies. The feminine figures in Malladi's works flail their wings to escape the prison. Even when life forces the protagonists to the brink, they never lose hope. A slow and steady loss of the brain's neurons will result from allowing depression to worsen. One has to discover how to overcome anxiety and sadness and to liberate themselves from the grip of unfavourable thoughts.

The archetypal victims of patriarchy and religious dogma are Afghan women. In the planned marriage, Raihana felt fortunate to have the man's hand in hers. The proposal was organised by Aamir's uncle. Aamir married her by making a paltry payment, in contrast to their custom, which calls for grooms to give the bride "bride money" (Malladi 150). Aamir's sister Assia embraced Raihana since she was a parentless child. Raihana was portrayed as a simpleton who wanted nothing more than a house and a quiet existence.

Raihana appealed with Aamir to live a quiet and tranquil existence rather than become a revolutionist and battle against societal problems and horrible devils. When Kabir speaks, one can see Kabul's location. "It was a violent time...Violence everywhere. No safety, no peace. Only fear. People were taken away to prison, beaten, tortured, thrown back out, then taken back in. They were killed in the stadium, executed in front of everybody. Everyone's life was affected" (Malladi 207).

Tyranny caused people to be hungry, which prompted Aamir and Ismat to look for a means to flee with their family. Aamir made every effort, but even after selling their flat, he was unable to amass enough cash for the trip. Aamir moved his wife to a refugee camp in Pakistan despite being born in a country where women are regarded like things, which is an extraordinary and ideal demonstration of his love for Raihana.

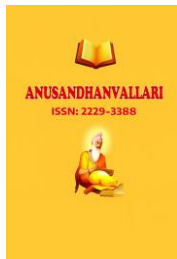
Her dreams were destroyed by the news that Ismat and Assia had died from gunshot wounds. She learned that the Taliban had robbed her father's hamlet, which was barely 50 kilometres from Kabul, and that his little home had been totally set on fire. By accident, a bullet killed her thirteen-year-old brother. Raihana feels as though her life has been completely devastated and shattered because none of her family members has survived or made it to Pakistan. Goel comments, "The strength and resilience of women are in high demand following emergencies" (Goel 3).

Her unborn kid, who was four months old, was aborted as she was fleeing Kabul for Pakistan, as she later revealed to her Danish friends Tatjana and Layla:

It wasn't born yet. It was all that traveling across the mountains,
coming into Pakistan...I saved my life from the Taliban but I couldn't
save the baby...Aamir was so scared. He kept saying what a bad world
to bring a child into, so he sent me away first, so that I would be safe.
He was going to come along as soon as he could. I wish I had stayed in
Kabul. I wish I hadn't left him alone like that. (Malladi 196)

Even though Afghans long for their native country, they are afraid to return. As Layla says, "I miss home, I miss my life there but I don't miss the fear, the futureless living." (Malladi 140). The novel also provides a description. "Life was so difficult in Kabul—the struggling to put food on the table, to go on the street, to take a bath, to buy clothes, all of it had been hard. The day-to-day business of living was like climbing tall mountains with jagged edges" (Malladi 151).

A woman places more value on feeling comfortable and safe than on being loved. Only when a woman feels protected around her can she experience love. Raihana gets a feeling to live, "Once she came to Denmark she had felt safe. There were no men with guns on the street, and no screaming at people like they were cattle.



Most important she was free to live the life she wanted” (*Malladi* 164). She enrolls in the language programme, where she befriends people from other cultures.

Even though Raihana finds it difficult to learn the language, she never gives up. Her “pretending everything was fine and getting on with life, always expecting that everything would work out” (*Malladi* 78) helps her to move on. It is Christina who recommends Gunnar Sandberg, a Danish beekeeper and a recent widower, when a scenario arises where Raihana must accept a praktik, an apprenticeship, and training to acquire the language quickly.

As a result, Christina serves as the catalyst for Gunnar and Raihana's subsequent development of their ideal friendship. Although Layla and Kabir are hesitant to accept this, Raihana remains steadfast in her choice. Raihana considers herself fortunate to receive private lessons with the elderly Danish guy and the extra bonus of her favourite topic, bees.

The first time Christina brings Raihana to Gunnar's residence, Christina finds Gunnar's behaviour, his messy clothing, and the surroundings odd. As she has witnessed far more lethal things in the past, Raihana does not give up despite the fact that the training only lasts three days a week and fifteen hours. Despite all of the objections that her family had raised about her working in a Danish man's home, Raihana's desire to work there demonstrates her willingness to seize chances when they present themselves.

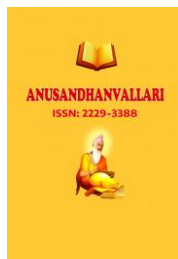
One of Raihana's classmates, Wahida, talks in class loudly and freely in Danish when a bee bites her on the cheek. “This is what happens to whores.” (*Malladi* 79). Despite the fact that it destroys her psyche, Marika and Suzi, her classmates, encourage her and help her become strong. As a result, she maintains her strength even when she is criticised for her morals.

Gunnar is mysteriously motivated to stand by Raihana despite all of the opposition from his own friends and family by her hard work in the foreign country, her dedication to riding her bicycle to the praktik classes, cleaning the house, her upbeat attitude, etc. Josselson states:

“In the modern world, with its much freedom, coherence of identity is no longer assumed by the defining force of collective identities. Integration of one's identities into an identity therefore becomes the task of the individual. Identity construction involves, among other things, locating oneself, through choice, in an array of communities-nation, class, sex, family, professional guilds or even imagined communities. (Josselson 18)

Women are stronger than males in times of calamity. The courageous Layla responds intelligently when Kabir encourages Raihana to cease her Praktik courses in light of her safety. “But if she doesn't go back to the bees, Kabir, they win...She should go and show that she isn't scared. You should take her to show that she has protection and that we're not scared. This is our home too, Kabir, we can't let some stupid boys run us out.”(*Malladi* 164). Both Raihana and Kabir understand their error after hearing this. As a result, Layla exhibits great bravery in the host country.

It becomes increasingly clear how Raihana's psychology changes as the book goes on. When she initially arrives in Denmark, she finds it difficult to communicate with anyone, including her own family, and she is fearful for the future of the entire country. Later, she begins dating Layla, her sister-in-law, who is also



responsible for her transformation. In order to overcome the language barrier, Raihana musters the confidence to enrol in a language programme. She struggles with her despair and dissatisfaction in order to advance in her education. Against the advice of her family and community, she follows a different course of action and befriends strangers. Her experience has been amazing because she is a single lady.

The heroines of Malladi grab the chances that provide them a chance to improve their circumstances and quality of life. She attempts to advance in a new direction while removing her barriers. She is aware that she is building a special life and that her passions, family, and job all contribute to who she is. Women's education serves as a platform for independence, releasing them from the social and cultural dominance of men while also educating them in the face of adversity. With unwavering persistence, Raihana overcomes all obstacles and wins the title despite having a terrible history. She develop the ability to control her egos and emerge unstuck from the complicated situations.

The female protagonists in the chosen work don't give up the fight so easy. Despite their ugliness, insanity, and boredom, they engage in self-analysis, self-discovery, and self-actualization by making accommodations for life's circumstances. To overcome the disasters, they smash through obstacles, overcome difficulties, and overcome depression. They overcome emotional ailments and difficulties by strengthening their resistance abilities. Being their own architects, they transform regression into progression.

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