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## EXTORTION IN THIRTY DAYS IN SEPTEMBER BY MAHESH DATTANI

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### ABSTRACT

This paper deals with the extortion done to the women in the contemporary Society. As you all know extortion is very common in the prevailing Indian society. This paper throws a light on this critical problem. It is quite painful for literary mind set. The play came out as a remedy to this harsh treatment on women. It is the greatest dramatic composition from Mahesh Dattani from the feminine point of view. It is really unexceptional for ordinary human beings. This extortion is big blot on the Indian society. The playwright underlines how the important characters Mala, Shanta are exploited. They try to bring forth degradation in close relation in the Society. Both the women Mala and Shanta exploited in the hands of Vijay through his clever tricks. Society should concentrate on these grim problems like child abuse, extortion and do their level best to eradicate these monstrous problems.

Key Words: Extortion, Relation, Society, monstrous

### INTRODUCTION

Mala is in rebelling mood. Now she doesn't want to hide anything what had happened with her. It is February 2004. She doesn't hesitate to use her real name Mala Khatri. Mala has nothing to hide from the people. She conveys that He (Vinay) must hide his name and must avoid being recognized from his known, parties in the streets. He should be shameful when someone spots him anywhere. Mala wants to people realize about his mistake what he did. Mala wishes about him (Her maternal Uncle Vinay). "...I wish he were here now, I could

see his face when I tell him I have nothing to hide. Because I know it wasn't my fault... Now, I know now.” (DATTANI, 2005, p. 8) But there is no point of this he is dead now.

Mala reveals about her pain on the terms that on listening that people will stop that crime. Mala is nervous and feels guilt for her past and wants to stop that stuff things from happening again with others girls too. Mala says “...I know it is all my fault really... It must be. I must have asked for it... Somehow, I just seem to be made for it. Maybe I was born that way, maybe... This is what I am meant for. It's not anybody's fault, except my own. Sometimes I wish that my mother...(It gets to be difficult for her.) I am sorry but... I can only tell you more if you turn this thing off.” (DATTANI, 2005, p. 9)

When Mala's friend Deepak enters into the Shanta's room he saw a man in the room. Deepak thinks that he was the paper wallah. Man says: “...No gas smell now. I told you it was the tube...That is right. I also help madam with small things. There is no man in the house, that is why. If there is a man in the house, what is my problem whether her gas is leaking or her terrace is leaking. (Turning to Shanta and speaking with the authority of a man.) Hahn. Have you kept the money ready? Quickly.” (DATTANI, 2005)

Man and Shanta both are talking on the amount of magazine or papers. Shanta and Mala both are lonely in the family. There is no man in the family. There is no way of earnings and way of survive. We can assume that there is getting something wrong with the family as Man itself stated that he often helps them with stuff things. Deepak wants to know about Mala all stuff things. Deepak says that Paper Wallah to give them a lot of magazines. But on this that Man expects to sell them books Femina. Elle. Cosmopolitan. All... Deepak assumes that man is close to Shanta's family. These two Shanta and Mala are lonely without any man in family. Shanta doesn't know where was mala on Holi? She thinks that she is enjoying anywhere with her boyfriends. But there is something more she was with his boyfriend Deepak who wants to rescue her from the grip of her maternal Uncle and his friends' wrong doing with her. Deepak praises for Mala that she is the most intelligent, sensitive and dynamic woman. Mala wanted to say Deepak that she doesn't want to continue our relationship. Even she doesn't want to see me ever again.

Shanta has a caring nature for her daughter but she is afraid of shame for her. She fears that nobody will marry with her on knowing about her truth. In society we see that a girl in society is not easily accepted when she is blamed for her wrong doings or for her affairs. Shanta tells Deepak “She tells me she is going some place, and she...Oh, why should I, her own mother, say all this to you? You will not like her then.” (DATTANI, 2005, p. 16) Shanta always thinks for the worst and fears for her daughter.

Shanta is a traditional lady who keeps on singing. 'Mere to Giridhar Gopal, Doosro na koi Mere to Giridhar Gopal, Doosro na koi...' (DATTANI, 2005, p. 9) Whenever Mala tried to convey her pain in front of her mother she always ignored her on saying that you often see bad dreams. Shanta tries to save relations. Later we know she doesn't know how to save her. She wants that her daughter should forget that bad dreams. Whenever Mala tried to tell her mother pain she often thrushes a piece of Potato stuffed Parantha on saying that you like it most. In this situation we see how Shanta doesn't want to reveal secrets about her brother Vinay. Shanta blames her own daughter that you were enjoying on kissing with her maternal uncle. Mala is going to do something wrong with the Krishna Portrait. Shanta stops her to do so. Mala wants to make her listen but Shanta doesn't want to listen she is hiding herself in the bhajan of Shri Krishan. Even now Shanta pretends of forgetting everything whatever Mala knows. Shanta tries to say Mala that it was Mala's fault and don't say this to anyone otherwise no one would accept her. Mala conversation with Shanta reveals the pain of Mala.

"MALA. It doesn't matter now. I just have to learn to live with the pain.

SHANTA. Not just the pain. I remember, much as I was trying to forget, what I saw. Not **when you were seven but when you were thirteen. (Gently.)** Please don't misunderstand me, Mala. I remember, seeing you with my brother during the summer holidays. You were pushing yourself on him in the bedroom.

MALA. No! that's not true!

SHANTA. I remember, Mala. You want me to remember? You were telling to kiss you.

MALA. No.

SHANTA. To touch you.

MALA. I didn't –

SHANTA. To pinch your-breasts.

MALA. Stop it

SHANTA. You were forcing him to say things to you.

MALA. Stop it, I said!

SHANTA. To do things to you.

MALA. I did not! I did not!

SHANTA. That is why I forget. I went to the kitchen to vomit Then I prayed. I prayed for you Mala.... so He could send his Sudarshan Chakra to defend you, to defend us from the demon inside you, not outside you. But you wouldn't let me. You don't let me.

MALA. (crying). No! (DATTANI, 2005, pp. 27-28)

Mala is Shanta's daughter. Mala is sexually abused by her maternal Uncle Vinay when she was thirteen years old and thereafter her nephew. Mala blames her mother for all these. Mala says her mother to remember Mala's pain in childhood. In this we see how much she suffered in her childhood.

SHANTA. I remember other things also. When your cousin, your father's nephew came for his holidays....

MALA. Why don't you believe me? He told me that I was uncle's reference! Those were his words! 'Your uncle Vinay has given me your reference!' Uncle told him, Ma! I didn't do or say anything to him. He came to my room! Once he said uncle's name, I just couldn't stop him!

SHANTA. Why should you stop him? You were enjoying it. Your cousin told me in private that he was concerned about you, that I should not send you out of the house.

MALA. That was after! He told you that after he molested me!

SHANTA. But Mala, I have seen it with my own eyes. You enjoyed it. You were an average child but you had my brother and your cousins dancing around you. That is what you wanted. Yes! How can I forget? I am trying to forget, please help me forget.

MALA. (quietly). Yes. You are right

SHANTA. And please don't talk about trying to forget the pain... Try to forget the pleasure.

MALA. That is part of the pain, Ma. The pleasure is part of the pain. (Composing herself.) I-I will try, Ma I can only try.

SHANTA. I forget. I forget everything. Be like me." (DATTANI, 2005, pp. 28-29)

Mala has suffered from many persons in relations. Mala blames that her mother doesn't listen to her. Everything happened in the knowledge of my mother. Secondly Her maternal Uncle Vinay has extorted her mentally and physically in her childhood. Her cousins also kept surrounding with her and said don't allow her to go out of home. Mala's father had left them lonely of grace for the other woman. She blames herself that she is made for this extortion. Mala again and again is expecting from the society to turn this off the monstrous things like these. Mala feels the terrible thing where her father left them for the other woman. She wishes " My father left us, for another woman... I feel if I were more lovable he would have at least visited us... We continue to get money from him every month, and he pays the rent... but I haven't seen him in fifteen years... I ... don't think my mother and he got along-that way. Again, because of me..." (DATTANI, 2005, p. 33) Here through this we see the playwright wants to show the pitiable condition of the family where a male head of family left them on pity to exploit.

Shanta says Mala to stay outside in the morning because Mala's uncle is coming here to stay with them for two days. Mala says to ignore her maternal uncle Vinay but Shanta says he has helped them in many ways. When Mala questions for that she ignores that. Shanta says that "... Mala, I am sorry I should have told you but... The money that we kept receiving after you father left us was from your uncle." (DATTANI, 2005, p. 35)

Mala blames her mother for being left by her father. Her father said Mala about her mother "I married a frozen woman'. A frozen woman. So don't try to tell me that you were concerned about me by hiding the truth. The only truth you want to hide is your failure as a wife and a mother. Shanta says that she may be not a good mother and wife but she is a good servant. As soon as Man entered house and goes to Shanta and pats her on the arm. Man says to Mala "Hello, Mala. Off somewhere. (Turning back to Shanta.) So how have been my dear

sister?" (DATTANI, 2005, p. 36) Mala again wishes that "I wish she wouldn't be so lost in her religion. I wish she had been there for me!" (DATTANI, 2005, p. 41)

Here Shanta wishes for Vinay "Just make sure that the marriage happens. Just be there as if you were her father. Man (replies): I have always been there like a father for her, in spite of everything." (DATTANI, 2005, p. 42) Vinay recalls Shanta for her seventh birthday when she was physically extorted by him. "Man. Shhh! Don't cry. You want to come here in your holidays, no? Then don't cry. This is your seventh birthday, no? You are seven now. Ready for a real birthday present. Lie down. Come on quickly." (DATTANI, 2005, p. 43) Man says that he will love her more than her mummy and daddy. Again man says "...I love you even you are so ugly. Nobody will tell you how ugly you are. But you are good only for this...only for this. See how much I love you. See... Now go away. Quickly...You like it! You enjoy it. After four years, you have become a whore! At thirteen you are a whore!...Bitch! Whore!" (DATTANI, 2005, p. 44)

Here are arguments between Mala and Shanta. Man Gives documents of flat to Shanta. It is now yours. On This Mala says to Shanta that "...He didn't just buy a flat. He bought you!..He bought your silence. So that you can never tell anyone what he did to your daughter!" (DATTANI, 2005, p. 52) Mala put question to her mother Shanta that where was she when he locked her in the praying room for fifteen minutes when Mala was napping. Mala multiplies fifteen minutes to thirty or thirty one days when he was destroying Mala soul. Mala blames her mother she couldn't say her anything. She never gave me chance to. If she had looked into her eyes and seen the hurt, or asked her 'beta what's wrong? Then maybe, she would have told her. Man says that Mala has wild imagination. She often sees bad dreams. Deepak says Mala to come with him away from her but she says that she can't love you because she sees her uncle's face every time. MALA says to Deepak: "You don't understand! YOU JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND!! I cannot love you." (DATTANI, 2005, p. 54) Shanta also says Mala to go with him and learn to love him. Remember what she told her to forget. Shanta is feeling defeated and cannot remain silent. That is why God is punishing her. Shanta says: "... I remained silent not because I wanted to, but I didn't know how to speak. I-I cannot speak. I cannot say anything. My tongue was cut off... My tongue was cut off years ago... ( To Deepak.) Please save her. I did not save her. I did not know how to save her. How could I save her when I could not save myself?.. (To Mala.) You say I did not help you? I could not help you. Same as you could not help me. Did you ever see the pain in my eyes? No. Nobody saw anything. Nobody said anything. Not my brothers, not my parents. Only (pointing to the Man) he spoke. Only he said, only he saw and he did...I was six, Mala. I was six. And he was thirteen... and it wasn't only summer holidays. For ten years! For ten years!! (Pointing to the picture of God.) I looked to him. I didn't feel anything. I didn't feel pain, I didn't feel pleasure. I lost myself in him. He helped me. He helped me. By taking away all feeling. No pain no pleasure, only silence. Silence means Shanti. Shanti.....eeeeee! (DATTANI, 2005, pp. 54,55) Mala accused her mother not recognizing her mother pain in anger. Man says not to reveals their secrets. Man says: "... Thirty days has September. April, June and November, February has twenty-eight. All the rest have thirty-one! Once again. Keep on singing! Stop only when I stop." (DATTANI, 2005, p. 57)

**Conclusion:** Mahesh Dattani shows all the cause of evils where no one tries to stop in the hide of relation for the sake of shame and to save relations. Leaving family alone by the Head of family became a cause root of extortion of Shanta and Mala again. Shanta was physically extorted in her sixth. And again Mala was extorted in her Seventh. In Indian society talking about hidden issues like sex is considered shameful. In spite of all these Dattani reveals hidden issues of Indian Society. Dattani gives remedy also that how Deepak rescued Mala from extortion again.

## Works Cited

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