



# The Female Character's Challenges in Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence*

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## Abstract:

Shashi Deshpande is a well-known Indian woman author who was born in 1938. One of her books, *That Long Silence*, won the Sahitya Akadami Award in 1990. This research paper is based on this book, which won an award. Relationships between men and women, problems with being married, discrimination based on gender, self-definition, the search for identity, power, and sexual politics are the things that bother the author the most. People think that Shashi Deshpande writes about girls of today. Deshpande's main female characters are hurt by the well-known bias and discrimination against women, first as daughters and then as wives. In Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence*, the goal of this research paper is to find the conflict between the women. In the book *That Long Silence*, Jaya is the main character. She looks at how Jaya feels about herself and the world. Mohan, Jaya's husband, is in charge of all the wedding plans. Shashi Deshpande is trying to figure out who she is and what it means in Indian culture to be a woman. Deshpande shows how they really lived, especially how hard life was for Jaya. The author likes to write about how hard it is to be a woman, but in this book, she talks about herself as a woman, a partner, and a mother. So, the story in the book shows how even small problems can make someone sad. On the other hand, the author makes it sound like the main character, a woman from a middle-class family in India, puts up with the tyranny of man in silence. After a long time of silence, Jaya calls to break the silence. Deshpande is trying to figure out what it means to be a woman in India and who she is.

**Keywords:** *Identity Crisis, Discrimination, Suffering, Dominance, Marital Discord*

## Introduction:

In her books, Shashi Deshpande talks about how hard it is for women. This research article has a similar title to help you find similar basic ideas. Her books change the way women struggle and, by extension, how they try to figure out who they are. In her books, she talks about how Indian women are often victims who don't speak up for themselves. In Indian culture, a girl's place as a child is interesting, holy, and hard to explain. Before she got married, people thought she was religious. She is the town's and group's little girl, which is a religious duty that must be kept for a long time. When a person gets to a certain age and decides to get married, they show all of their different sides. But nobody can deny that there are people in their own families, towns, and communities who don't. If a young woman passes the test to become a religious social leader, she earns the respect and admiration of the group and will have good relationships with her family, town, and group for a long time. No one knows enough about the subject to say anything else. In many societies, men and women lived in different classes, and women were usually treated like second-class citizens. In communist societies, women now have the same rights as men. However, this is usually just a change in the law, not a change in the way things are. In a lot of places, men always win over women. Most people think of women as mothers, but it was women who came up with gardening and fed about half of the world's population. People know that they make things, but they think that anyone can do that.

The roles of women have become even less important in modern societies. Marx said that the difference is clear when you look at values. There are two kinds of qualities: those that are useful and those that can be traded. Men and women both worked to make a living before the modern era, but they did different things. As work became more specialised and production became more market-driven, men started making more things to sell and moved toward becoming makers of trade value, while women kept making things for their own use. It became clear what the difference is between "wok" and "work." Women worked at home, but they didn't get paid for it. Because of this, people thought they were out of work. The words "working women" and "minor housewife" show how important work outside of the home is compared to work done at home. So, men were called "providers" because they were the main source of trade values, and women were called "subordinates" even though they did a lot of work at home.

Over time, a man's status became tied to having children, and a woman's status became tied to having more children. As men got richer and more powerful, things started to get worse for women. From this point of view, it should be easy to see how important changes to women's freedom are to give them the same chances to work together financially and lead in politics.

Shashi Deshpande has brought to light the sad and unusual situation of Indian women, whose rights as people are taken away by a conservative society. The rules of society say that women should be housekeepers and cooks. They always forget who they are and what makes them different because of this. In her book *Feminism*, Shashi Deshpande talks about how women can be set free by the law and by society. People will keep saying no to women until they start to see them as people. Women are torn between old and new ways of doing things, even when they have their own money. Shashi Deshpande is from India, so she has carefully and clearly explained how Indian society works and what the rules are for women there.

She showed modern, educated, middle-class Indian women who are trying to find themselves and get back in touch with their families. In all of her books, the main characters are women who are caught up in the complicated world of marriage and relationships. They want to figure out how to deal with the parts of their lives that are hard to understand. Shashi Deshpande has shown a wide range of women in his work. For example, *That Long Silence* by Deshpande shows how hard life is for women. Jaya, who comes from a middle-class family, is the main character in *That Long Silence*. Jaya's grandmother tells her that she should act more traditionally when she gets older so that she can find a husband. She says that educated women are good at cooking, cleaning, and other housework.

Jaya gets married to Mohan, a successful businessman, after she finishes school. Mohan goes to work, and Jaya is in charge of taking care of the house. Also shown is how hard it is for Jaya to find her place in the world. She says that *That Long Silence* has made it hard for her family to talk and be honest with each other.

#### **Analysis of Female Characters & Their Struggle in the Novel:**

Shashi Deshpande has done her job as the most important person for the sick woman. She knows that a woman is not the same as a man in India and many other places where people move. Since the post-Aryan age, she has been hurt, limited, and put down in ways that make it hard for her to reach her full potential.

Jaya, a woman from a middle-class family, is the most important character in *That Long Silence*. Jaya is smart, curious, and bright when she is young, which are traits that most people think are more common in men. Jaya's grandmother tells her to date less traditionally so that she can find a partner when she's older. She says that well-educated and cultured girls are good at cooking, religious ceremonies, and taking care of their families. She also tells Jaya that if she doesn't agree, she should be told how to be less nice and to be quiet. All young women should be able to get along with their parents at some point. She can do a lot better in this area if she learns how to make a real difference.

In the end, Jaya learns to act like a submissive girl so that she can keep her own sense of self. She writes in her spare time, even though her books haven't been big hits. As Jaya gets older, she realises that most people don't like it when she shows who she is, so she learns to hide it. Jaya calls the way she and her studies are being stopped right now "*That Long Silence*" because it lasts from her youth to her middle age. Jaya's father is the only one who supports her and sees her as either a boy or a girl.

Jaya goes to school, and when she's old enough, she marries a wealthy man named Mohan. Jaya and Mohan don't always agree, so their marriage isn't always close or happy. Mohan tells Jaya that during their courtship, she can't say what she thinks and must agree with everything he says. Jaya takes care of the family while Mohan is at work. She feeds him and blesses him as if he were one of them when they were teenagers.

Because of his bad behaviour, Mohan loses his job, and Jaya has to tell him what happened. Jaya and Mohan have to move out of their big apartment and into a small, dirty one so that their kids can sleep in the other room with cousins. Jaya starts to write less so that her family can make more money. Some of her papers are direct and open

about her problems, like how her husband is not allowed to be close to her or their children. Mohan isn't always happy with the composition, but he won't tell Jaya anything about it right now. She can tell from the way he looks at her that he doesn't like what she's writing, so she tries to make him happy without thinking. When Mohan loses his job for making fake documents, he will have to laugh at himself. Kusum, who is part of Jaya's family, goes to see her and talks to her about her husband, from whom she just got a divorce. Jaya thinks that Kusum's "scalding married person" and her "truly own remote bone" are very different, but they both come from the same creative ideas about how men should treat women. The next day, Jaya sees her family. Who says the same things about Mohan as Ravi. When Mohan finds out this, he is afraid of Jaya.

Mohan needs Jaya's help and love because he's having a hard time, but neither of them has ever felt comfortable talking about their feelings and fears with the other. Jaya gave Mohan what he needed, but Mohan doesn't know how to thank Jaya, and Jaya doesn't know how to thank Mohan. Even though Rahul is far away from home, the script could come back to haunt them. Mohan finally leaves the house and tells Jaya that it was partly her fault that she left her husband during a hard time. She says that her family hasn't been open and public because of "the long silence." This has made it hard for her marriage to work and for her marriage to work for her. Mr. Kamat, an old man who lives in her building, helps Jaya figure out how she feels about herself as a person and as a woman, as well as how she feels about wooing her husband.

In the end, Mohan sends a wire to Jaya's business to let them know that he might be coming home soon. He will probably have to do it again at work. Jaya is glad to have Mohan back in her life, and she promises that the long time they spent apart won't keep them from talking again.

### Conclusion:

Shashi Deshpande looks at the lives of women from the lowest class to the highest class to give a full analysis of women's struggle. Deshpande says that women in the upper class have it rough. For them, getting married might be like going to work for someone else. They treat their men like slaves and act like they own them. For them, a wedding means pain, trouble, and a lot of work. Even though they have better lives than most women, bourgeois women still have to deal with pain. In patriarchy, marriage is used to help men and keep women down. All of the weddings in show how this works. Women are expected to be patient and not to be critical, religious, or obedient. A woman shouldn't have any doubts about love, kindness, attachment, or patience, but temperament isn't thought to be a good way to tell about these things. This could be the point of Shashi Deshpande's book. Deshpande also makes it sound like girls shouldn't give in to the pressures they have to deal with. Women shouldn't be afraid, because their fear keeps them from being treated fairly. More than just men make women do things they don't want to. She is also to blame for her situation, and it may be hard for her to figure out who she is. Jaya is more sure of herself now that she will be able to do something on her own. This might be her chance to get out of jail. Jaya becomes more private and sure of who she is. She breaks through the wall in her head that was based on who she was and decides to stay with her family. Shashi Deshpande shows that women want to be loved, respected, and able to show who they are at their wedding, but a patriarchal society doesn't give them what they want. Deshpande says that a woman can have a balanced and meaningful life if she breaks away from what society teaches her and doesn't need men to prove her studies, passions, and behaviour. With a happy ending, a woman's relationship with her family should get stronger as she gets older.

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