
**Suffering and Humiliation of Disparate Society in 'Karna's Wife:
The Outcast Queen'**

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Abstract:

This study delves into an approach to the history, caste consciousness, and cultural identity of Indian author Kavitha Kane. This text articulates that it has misled the identity of gender in society. "The novel is a blend of mythology and contemporary society". In the retelling of epics about Mahabharata, Kavita Kane talks about the unsung hero Karna through the eyes of his wife, Uruvi. Uruvi is a fictional character created by Kane; they were underserved, as they were disparate from society and isolated from their belongings. The novel Karna's Wife is occupied with many struggles and sufferings in terms of caste and gender, and it also symbolizes resistance. The thing which is unchangeable in India is the caste consciousness, which leads to the marginalization of people belonging to the lower class. And also the destruction and contentious destructive threats of marginalized people.

Both Karna and Uruvi were called 'outsiders' by their own family. They were alienated because of their actions, decisions, and caste. A Kshatriya princess who falls in love and dares to choose Karna over Arjuna, with the special implications of their marriage. The story of Uruvi and Karna unfolds against the backdrop of a struggle between the Pandavas and Kauravas. The characters of Karna and Uruvi were royal and rich by birth but humiliated and alienated because of their caste. It also shows how caste plays a very important role in a person's life, and Kane's mythology is a mirror of Indian culture. Her novel focuses on the reason behind their alienated characters.

Keywords: Caste, Humiliation, Alienation, Struggle, Pratiloma, Suffering, Society, Outsiders.

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Introduction:

Uruvi and her husband Karna were humiliated by their society and family members. Humiliation implies making someone feel ashamed or embarrassed about their lower position. "Humiliation, which he underwent as a sutaputra, as a low-born." Additionally, this novel explores the challenges faced by women in a patriarchal society. Uruvi was the only daughter of King Vahusha and Queen Shubra. She was the Kshatriya princess of Pukeya. The novel begins with Sutaputra, the low-caste Karna, in an archery contest in Hastinapur.

In that contest, Karna was not allowed to showcase his special ability in archery. "According to the rules of the game, only a Kshatriya, a high-born warrior, can fight another Kshatriya in a tournament." (Karna's Wife: 4). The writer has portrayed Uruvi as a peculiar woman who makes decisions boldly and is ready to face the consequences with valour. "She had a charming candor, a blithe audacity steeled with stubborn resilience, with her captivating beauty and wit, and others gazed at her in wonder." (Karna's Wife: 8) Uruvi, the princess of Pukeya, possessed great skills, knowledge, abilities, and mental strength. She has been portrayed as a woman who is confident in her abilities. She was proficient in music and art, as well as an outstanding horse rider. During her childhood, Uruvi was a curious person who persisted in learning. She sought knowledge from her guru about Ayurveda and healing, assisting him in his work. This tendency drove her to learn many things, excelling in areas such as mathematics, astronomy, medicinal herbs, and gardening.

Karan identified. In the Mahabharata, the Kshatriyas were the prevailing social group compared to the Brahmanas, the Vaishyas, and the Shudras. Kshatriyas were the ruling kings and queens of the land. "That man, with his thick mane, brooding eyes, and twinkling earrings, wearing glittering gold armour under the blazing sun" (Karna's Wife:1). As Karna was the son of Adhiratha, the king's charioteer, his talents were not taken into consideration by the Kshatriyas. Even his education was denied due to caste consciousness. The childhood of Karna was unpleasant as they had basic rights in society because of his low caste and as a sutaputra. This illustrates the suffering of people due to practices with different identities and determines the pain and suffering of a particular person who was treated as lower caste due to the superiority of ethnic culture triumphing in that period. It also describes the challenges and difficulties they face.

"**Humiliation and degradation** surrounded his birth," Bhima interrogated, "Does Anga indeed need a king? Because he could not accept Karna as the king of Anga." "You are but a son of our charioteer!" he sneered. "You are no prince, you are no warrior! All you need is a whip to drive the horses! You are fit to rule the stables, not the kingdom of Anga!" (Karna's Wife: 5). Bhima's harsh words stabbed Karna like a thong in silence. Karna seemed broken, with his eyes full of despair. Again, Bhima mocked Karna as unworthy of the kingdom given to him and urged him to help out his father by whipping him. Karna was discarded for being of a low caste, a Sutaputra, even though he was an expert in archery. Princess Draupadi cleverly reminded him of his status as an ineligible suitor. "As a noble warrior, he was cast off for not being a Kshatriya. As an eligible suitor, he was disgraced for being of a lowly caste, a

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Sutaputra" (Karna's Wife: 12). As a warrior, he was destined for a better life. He didn't long to be a charioteer like his father. Guru Dronacharya, the best teacher of martial arts, refused to teach him because of his caste. Soon after, he became Parshurama's (the guru of gurus in warfare) best student and became the rising star of the Kuru dynasty as he defeated Arjuna in the Hastinapur archery contest. Despite being degraded about his birth and ancestry and ostracized for being a Sutaputra, he was not allowed to revel in his glory. Always seen as a Sutaputra, his birth did not mark him as a king, but his worth did.

Uruvi's revelation of choice and acceptance by her father:

King Vahusha glimpsed his puzzled daughter, realizing that she was trapped in the dilemma of marrying Karna, fearing she might become a spinster and face a life of misery. Uruvi retorted to her father, reminding him of how he had taught her to make her own decisions and be brave in tackling problems. When Queen Shubra, Uruvi's mother, learned of her decision, she insisted on Uruvi marrying Arjuna. She refused to interact with her daughter for a while. Despite the passing days, Uruvi remained resolute in her decision to marry Karna. Shubra called Karna an "outsider," urging her daughter to marry Arjuna, whom she considered the best match for any woman, with Kunti to take care of Uruvi like a mother. However, Uruvi refused and confronted her mother, asserting that the life she had chosen was the best for her and filled with love, expressing pride in her decision. Eventually, Shubra admitted her words were ineffective after the prolonged strife. "Acceptance of his daughter's decision paved the way for Princess Uruvi's Swayamvara to be held on the fifth auspicious day of Margashirsha that year" (Kavita Kane: 24). Uruvi's honesty succeeded in gaining approval from her parents to choose Karna as her groom, demonstrating the love between father and daughter and the acceptance of choice.

Swayamvara

Karna was invited to the wedding of Pukaya princess Uruvi. Her swayamvara was full of many brave kings, princes, noblemen, sons of Dhritarashtra, Pandava princes, and so on. Karna was astonished by his presence in the glorious hall. He tried to shake off his sorrowful memory about Draupadi's swayamvara, where she would only wed the best archer. Karna's confidential arch and how Draupadi's command stopped Karna and ill-treated him due to his birth as a low-caste Sutaputra. The ashamed moment remained with him. That was not the first time Karna was derided about his birth. The moment Karna was humiliated for being a Sutaputra, Uruvi placed the garland around Karna's neck. Bhima shouted, and the whole assembly erupted into a wild uproar in chaos. A Kshatriya bride has to choose among Kshatriyas. But Uruvi married a low-caste Sutaputra in a pratiloma marriage. As she broke the stereotype within the legal construct of marriage and in her mind, she became Karna's second wife. Everyone around there screamed at this outrage. A battle erupted, but Karna stopped it by taking his sword. Krishna stated that the marriage held in public cannot be abrogated, and they were affirmed as married.

Duryodhana's Play

The news of Uruvi's swayamvara spread throughout the palace. Shona, who is Karna's younger brother, reacted with the most outrage. He portrayed Uruvi as an "outsider" who would destroy the peace of their family. He warned his parents that she may take Karna away from them. Even though Vrushali, Karna's first wife, tried to soothe her brother-in-law, Uruvi felt like an interloper and destroyer of the happiness of other women. "Uruvi felt she was a guest in her new home, trespassing on unknown territory" (Karna's Wife: 47). And she was called the Pariah's wife. Duryodhana upheld Uruvi's swayamvara and planned his cruelty behind it. Because Uruvi arose in support of the Kauravas, he planned to use her as a new "trump card" to play. As he did to Karna with his selfish mind, Duryodhana made Karna the "king of Anga" to fight against the Pandavas because he feared that no one could defeat the Pandava archer.

The Wife of the Pariah

Everyone ill-treated Uruvi as "The Wife of the Pariah." Even the well-known ladies ignored her. Uruvi entered happily into her place after the contemptuous happenings with the ladies surrounded at social occasions. She felt very embarrassed because of her marriage to a Sutaputra, clearly demonstrating the status of a Pariah's wife and the lack of respect meant for her. At the family lunch, many of her relatives neglected to attend, and among those present, some had frosty thoughts. She planned not to bring this to her mother's attention. She faced the humiliation where her mother had already insisted on how people would behave towards her in a specific way. Here, Uruvi faced many struggles after her swayamvara. She used to bury everything within herself and dismiss it without reacting. But the humiliation persisted. "Courage is very odd, she's a lioness all right!" (Karna's Wife: 61). She cleverly analyzed Karna's friendship with Duryodhana and questioned aggressively towards Karna. Her point was to convince him to dispute for his respect and dignity.

Conclusion:

Kane asserts that Uruvi led a happy life until she chose Sutaputra, demonstrating that Uruvi's life of pleasure was marred before her Swayamwara. Her actions, decisions, and words were respected and accepted by the people of Pukeya. She was well-treated in her palace, but her marriage changed everything. Despite Uruvi's determination towards her married life, which represents the purest form of love, she shattered societal norms by becoming Karna's second wife and living with his family. This marriage reflects the patriarchal system. Her pursuit of a happy life is fulfilled through Karna's love and well-being. She carved out her own space without disrupting the existing order, affirming her self-assertion of choice and triumph over patriarchy.

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