

**Home, Domesticity and Women in Anita Rau Badami's Novels,  
*The Hero's Walk* and *Tell It to The Trees***

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***Abstract:***

This paper examines the representation of home and domesticity in two novels written by the Indian Canadian novelist Anita Rau Badami. The first novel is *The Hero's Walk* which focuses on the lives of the women of Sripathi Rao's family who live in an old big house situated in a traditional small Indian town where women are expected to be housewives who perform all forms of housework, like cleaning and cooking and taking care of their children. The second novel selected for this study is Badami's latest novel, *Tell It to the Trees* which takes place in an isolated town in Canada, called Merrit's Point. Vikram J. K. Dharma who was born in Canada to Indian parents has not adopted Canadian traditions and way of life. He still keeps a traditional Indian household with his bedridden mother, Akka, his children Varsha and

Hemant and his wife, Suman. Aided by the isolation of his house that is surrounded by vast areas of natural landscape, mountains and snow most of the year, Vikram succeeds to control his household, isolate his family and hide his abuse. The paper will examine the attitude of the female protagonists towards their home in both novels and whether they regard it as their safety and comfort Zone or as a prison they are forced to live in. It will also examine their attitude towards their domestic duties and whether they accept them or regard them as a burden.

**Keywords:-**

Home—Space—Domesticity—Isolation—Gender

**الملخص:**

تتناول هذه الورقة البحثية تمثلات المسكن والحياة المنزلية في اثنتين من روايات الكاتبة الكندية الهندية الأصل أنيتا راو بدامي وتلقي الرواية الأولى، طريق البطولة، الضوء على حياة النساء في اسرة سريباتي راو التي مازالت تعيش بإحدى المنازل الكبيرة في مدينة هندية صغيرة، وتحيا نساء تلك الأسرة حياة تقليدية محافظين على التقاليد الخاصة بدورهن كزوجات والتي تشمل الأعمال المنزلية مثل الطهي، ونظافة المنزل، والعناية بالأطفال، أما الرواية الثانية التي تتناولها الدراسة فهي آخر روايات بدامي والتي تحمل اسم احك للشجر، وتدور أحداث تلك الرواية في إحدى المدن الكندية المعزولة، حيث يعيش فيكرام جي كيه دارما مع أسرته المكونة من أمه المريضة وزوجته، وابنته وابنه في منزل تحيط مساحات واسعة من الأرض وسلاسل من الجبال وتغطيه الثلوج معظم العام. وقد ولد فيكرام بكندا لأب هندي وأم هندية، ولكنه لم يتبنى أي من عادات أو مظاهر الحياة الكندية وظل يدير الأسرة كزوج وأب هندي محافظ، وقد ساعدته عزلة المكان على

التحكم بأسرته وعزلهم عن المجتمع الكندي، وإخفاء إساءته المستمرة لزوجته وبنائه، وتناول الدراسة بالتحليل موقف الشخصيات النسائية الرئيسية في الروايتين من مسكنهن وهل هو مصدر للراحة والأمان ام سجن يرغب في الهروب منه، كما تتناول أيضا موقفهن من الأعمال المنزلية باعتبارها مسؤولية النساء ومدى قبولهن لتلك المسؤولية

### **الكلمات الدالة:**

المسكن - الفراغ - الحياة المنزلية - العزلة - النوع

### **Introduction:**

The novels of the Indian Canadian writer Anita Rau Badami shed light on the lives of traditional Indian women who live either in India or abroad. The majority of these women are housewives who perform all kinds of domestic duties. They clean, cook and raise their children, and Badami focuses on their relation to their homes, their husbands and their attitude towards domesticity. This paper will examine the female characters in two of Badami's novels; the first one is Badami's second novel, *The Hero's Walk*, published in 2001, which depicts a traditional Indian Brahmin family and the changes it witnesses in India during the seventies of the previous century. The events of the novel take place in the small city of Toturpuram, focusing on the family of Sripathi Rao, his wife Nirmala, his old mother Ammayya, his unmarried sister Putti and his son Arun. The unexpected death of Sripathi's elder daughter, Maya who married a Canadian against her father's will and who lived in Canada becomes a turning point in the family's life. As a result of Maya's death, her young daughter, Nandana arrives from Canada to live

with her Indian family. The death of Maya and the arrival of her daughter, affect the lives of the women in the family, especially Nirmala, forcing her to contemplate her role as a housewife and her relation to her home.

The second novel is Badami's, *Tell It to the Trees*, published in 2011, which also deals with a traditional Indian family that lives in Merrit's Point, Canada where the patriarch of the family, Vikram J.K. Dharma, runs his family like a tyrant. The family consists of his bedridden mother Akka, his wife Suman and his two children, Varsha and Hemant. They do not dare challenge his authority until Anu Krishnan, a new tenant arrives to rent the cottage in their garden. Anu is different from Suman, the traditional Indian wife who is only trained to obey her husband, in spite of his abuse. She is an independent woman who provides support to Suman, helping her to contemplate leaving Vikram. The paper will examine the attitude of women, in the selected novels, towards their homes and towards domesticity.

### ***I. Defining Home and Domesticity***

In his book, *The Poetics of Space*, Gaston Bachelard portrays home as the most important space to the human experience, describing it as "our corner of the world" and "our first universe."<sup>(1)</sup> He shows how a house helps shape our memories and experiences; its different parts arouse different sensations, yet it brings up a unitary, intimate experience of living, by providing its dwellers with various images, coined by their

imagination which can sometimes transcend reality.<sup>(2)</sup> He illustrates this idea by showing how feelings of safety and familiarity felt by dwellers towards their homes are sometimes imaginary. Sometimes people live in an unprotected house, but they feel safe as they comfort themselves with “the illusion of protection” and sometimes they do not feel safe in a completely sheltered mansion, surrounded by thick walls but still “tremble behind thick walls” or mistrust the “staunchest ramparts.”<sup>(3)</sup> Thus, their feelings towards their home are completely subjective.

Bachelard shows how people are deeply affected by their childhood home. They remember this home through their different senses of vision, smell or touch. He adds that such images and sensations of home can be captured and invoked through literature, especially poetry, although they are difficult to describe.<sup>(4)</sup> These sensations also become part of their dream world even after they leave their home and they also become part of their day dreams.<sup>(5)</sup> Thus, home becomes a powerful part of human experience, providing people with precious memories that become part of their daily experience.<sup>(6)</sup>

Although home is important to all people, it is particularly important to women who live in traditional families. Although these Women's lives revolve around their home, they always have complex and sometimes contradictory feelings towards it. At times, they see their home as their familiar space which makes them feel safe; at other times, it becomes a prison, a confinement and a source of oppression. In a study entitled “Gendered Space? An Exploration of the Gendered Meaning and

Experience of ‘Home’ in Contemporary British Society,” Paula Townsend defines “home” as “the dwelling in which we live, or used to live, and the relations and social interaction within the dwelling, in which we find emotional attachment through a shared history, memories and a sense of familiarity.”<sup>(7)</sup> She adds that the concept of home is gendered because it is deeply associated in people’s minds with domesticity and “division of labour” where the husband is the bread winner and the wife or the mother is usually described as the “carer and nurturer of the nuclear family, content in her cozy, comforting kitchen.”<sup>(8)</sup>

The definition of home or domestic space for women is closely associated with the definition of domesticity. Domesticity is usually “culturally coded as feminine.” It involves “preparing food and washing dishes, doing laundry, sewing, cleaning toilets, and eliminating clutter and dirt from surfaces.” It also involves the “physical maintenance” of the dwelling as well as its creative decoration such as interior decorating, design and crafting. Women are expected to turn the “home space” into a “haven” for their husbands and families from the harsh external world or public space.<sup>(9)</sup> Moreover, this issue of turning home into “haven” is a constant concern for women regardless of their race, class or sexual orientation.<sup>(10)</sup> In his article, “What is Hegemonic Masculinity?” Mike Donaldson shows how the concept of domesticity is employed, among others, to subjugate women. He adds that the political, religious, educational and cultural institutions of the society weave this concept and make it sound as a “natural” or “normal” part of women’s duties.<sup>(11)</sup>

Thus, focusing on domesticity as the responsibility of the wife alone turns it into a tool used by men and patriarchal societies to control women.

Many women writers and critics focus on a feminist reading of home and domesticity, regarding them as tools of stereotyping women and their roles in the family as well as limitations to women's choices and abilities. In an introduction to a collection of essays entitled *Literature, Gender, Space*, Sonia Villegas-Lopez and Garcia Beatrice-Dominguez show how domestic space has been a source of interest for women writers and critics because of its contradictory meaning for women. Although to some women domestic space might represent frustration and confinement, to others it can also represent an important meaning or value in their lives:

*Perhaps space has been such a rich source of interest for women writers and feminist critics alike, because of its complex and contradictory meanings for women: space such as the domestic sphere may signal frustration and confinement for women at particular historical moments and in certain cultural locations but the domestic as a "woman space" may also be a source of identity for women, a site of meaning and value in many women's lives which has been trivialized and underestimated in the literary tradition.<sup>(12)</sup>*

However, most feminist writers and theorists focus on the negative side of domesticity, handling the frustrations of women's confinement to

their houses, rather than dealing with this house as a source of protection or identity to women.

## ***II. Home and Domesticity in Badami's novels***

As a woman writer, Anita Rau Badami focuses on women and their relation to their home or domestic space. Badami's female characters are traditional Indian women who either live in India or abroad. Most of them perform their traditional role as housewives who are responsible for all sorts of domestic duties, like cooking, cleaning and taking care of their children. However, when it comes to decision making and financial issues, it is the responsibility of the husband, the patriarch of the family. Some of Badami's women regard their homes as their safety and comfort zone and they seem to accept their traditional role and domestic responsibilities; others regard their homes as prisons they are forced to live in and from which they wish to escape.

In *The Hero's Walk*, both attitudes towards home and domesticity are represented. Badami represents home and domestic life in a small Indian town through the women in Sripathi Rao's family who live in Big House. In *Tell It to the Trees*, a very negative image of home and domesticity is presented as Suman and her mother-in-law, Akka, feel trapped and isolated in their home in Merrit's point, a small, distant town in Canada surrounded by mountains and snow most of the year. In both novels, Badami portrays what Thomas Foster refers to as two separate worlds, "a masculinized public sphere" inhabited by the male characters like



Sripathi and his son in *The Hero's Walk* or Vikram in *Tell It to the Trees* as well as “a privatized feminine one” inhabited by the female characters but controlled by men. <sup>(13)</sup> The women in *Big House* and the women in *Merrit's Point* have different attitudes towards their homes depending on their relationship with their husbands and families. Most of the events of the two novels take place in the family house and involve conservative, non-working, Indian women who only leave home to visit the doctor's clinic, go to the market or to the temple in India.

In *The Hero's Walk*, both Nirmala and Ammayya develop an attachment to their home, regarding it as their comfort zone for different reasons. Nirmala who enjoys a lifelong stable relationship with her husband, Sripathi regards her house as her familiar inner space and comfort zone. She develops no negative feelings towards her home and she is totally at ease with the obligations of domesticity. She manages to run *Big House* in spite of her husband's low income and she also manages to deal with her tyrannical mother-in-law, Ammayya. The novel has many domestic scenes with Nirmala and the maid, Koti, cleaning, storing water in containers and cooking. The first chapter in the novel, introduces the reader to the ritual of “water day” as fresh water is only available in the city of Toturpuram for a couple of hours, once a week and Nirmala rushes to fill every vessel in the house with water, remove the towels from the balcony, prepare breakfast for the family, tea for her husband and prepare the clean clothes to be ironed. She explains to her husband why she cannot answer the phone, “I was busy emptying out the vessels in the kitchen. Today is water day, remember? In between I

was trying to make breakfast before your mother started shouting that she was hungry'... She began to remove the towels from the balcony wall, where they had been spread up to dry the previous night.”<sup>(14)</sup>

While Nirmala is performing these tasks, Koti, the maid is washing the dinner plates of last night in the backyard and soaking the new laundry in water. Sripathi describes the first floor where the kitchen lies as a space that “bustled with life,” showing how Nirmala and the maid work hard, cleaning and cooking three meals a day.<sup>(15)</sup> This shows how domestic work in the family is the responsibility of women whether the wife or the maid. They are not aided by the husband who does not even want to answer the phone and complains to his wife that it has been ringing for a long time.

Home to Nirmala and particularly her kitchen is not just a familiar space where she has spent the majority of her adult life. It is a “site of meaning and value” to her.<sup>(16)</sup> When Nirmala is very upset about her daughter’s death in a car accident, thinking that Sripathi has pushed her daughter, Maya away with his stubbornness, “Putti and Koti lead her away into the familiar warmth of the Kitchen.”<sup>(17)</sup> Thus, it is the kitchen in particular which triggers this feeling of warmth and familiarity in her and helps her overcome the shocking news of her daughter’s death. Sripathi, on the other hand, is overwhelmed with anger and guilt. He feels that he must leave the house, “otherwise, he might do something he would regret” because he fails to exercise his usual self control.<sup>(18)</sup> Unlike his wife who finds comfort in her familiar space at home, Sripathi

always leaves the house when he is upset or angry. As a traditional Indian man, he is supposed to hide his feelings from his family.

Another comfort zone for Nirmala in the house is what she calls “the gods’ room” which is situated next to the kitchen, “where images of various divinities [are] kept and worshiped.” Overwhelmed by the shock of her daughter’s death, Nirmala sits “crouched on the floor of this room, in a corner”, with “tears streaming down her face,” reading her daughter’s letters. “Next to her was a shallow tier of shelves holding rows of silver and bronze idols of Krishna and Shiva, Ganesha and Lakashmi. Their placid, metal faces gleamed in the subtle light of cotton wicks burning in tall brass lamps. Incense sticks sent up dark spires of smoke.”<sup>(19)</sup> After Nirmala is taken to her comfort zone in the kitchen, she resorts to the gods’ room where she tries to find peace and overcome her feeling of loss. Unlike the skeptic Sripathi, Nirmala has strong faith in her gods. When Sripathi kicks the statues of the gods in a fit of rage, telling her that they are good for nothing, she cowers in her corner, “rendered speechless not by grief or anger at her husband but by his act of desecration.”<sup>(20)</sup>

As a traditional housewife, Nirmala takes good care of children. When her granddaughter, Nandana arrives, Nirmala immediately tries to bond with her and make her feel at home. She does not seem to consider taking care of Nandana as part of the duties of domesticity, but she does it out of love and with dedication and patience. She takes care of both Nandana’s physical and emotional needs. She feeds her, bathes her and sings to her the same way she used to do with her children. She prepares Arun’s room

for Nandana to share and she “[has] taken pains to make the room pleasant for the child.”<sup>(21)</sup> She also keeps a “suitcase and other unopened boxes full of memories” which are full of Maya’s old clothes, certificates and photos and she knows that Nandana would want to open them some day as they would remind her of her mother. However, she does not impose these memories on her, knowing that she is still trying to overcome the shock of losing her mother.

Nirmala is also clever enough to keep Maya’s coat and Alan’s jacket in the wardrobe for Nandana to comfort her and make her feel safe. She keeps reminding Nandana that she loves her and she never reveals “her private misery” over Maya’s death in front of her.<sup>(22)</sup> Although Nandana does not speak or show any signs of accepting Big House as her home, Nirmala patiently gives her the love, care and attention that she needs as she tries to make her feel at home. “She insisted on bathing the child just as she had Maya and Arun. Sripathi had thought that Nandana would object, but to his surprise, she stood acquiescently while her grandmother soaped her and scrubbed her and sang to her... She obediently allowed Nirmala to comb her hair, feed her and pat her to sleep.”<sup>(23)</sup> Nandana gradually starts to feel safe around her grandmother in the kitchen and she is comforted by the way Nirmala hugs her hard against her chest that she describes as “soft and damp.”<sup>(24)</sup> As a result of this, she starts to bond with Big House, regarding it as home for the first time.

Nirmala has never rebelled against her traditional role as a housewife or her domestic duties. She has always respected her husband’s decisions although she sometimes does not approve of them and she has never

challenged his authority even when he decided to disown his daughter for marrying against his will. However, when Nirmala learns that her daughter is dead, she feels angry for the first time because it is Sripathi who has made the wrong decision about Maya and punished her away from her home and family. She realizes that after Maya's death, it is too late to change that decision and she even attacks her husband physically by hitting him on his chest.<sup>(25)</sup> However, Nirmala's temporary rebellion, triggered by the shock of losing her daughter, does not last and she is back to herself as the loving, hardworking and caring housewife. Maya's death becomes a turning point in her feelings towards Big House which begin to change gradually.

Another turning point in Nirmala's attitude and way of thinking is her presence at the apartment buildings for the first time which triggers her memories about the way she has lived her life. As a young girl, Nirmala was raised in a big house that is quite similar to her husband's. Her childhood house bustled with life as she lived among her extended family. Similarly, in her husband's house, she has lived with her mother-in-law and her sister-in-law and she has rarely been left alone:

*As long as she could remember, Nirmala had lived in large, independent houses full of her own people. First with her parents, her grandparents and her siblings. Then, after marriage, with Ammayya and Putti, Sripathi and her own children. The only time she felt truly alone was when she was surrounded by strangers on the bus, or on the brief walk down to the temple.<sup>(26)</sup>*

When Nirmala enters the apartment buildings for the first time, she contemplates her previous life, whether in her parents' home or in Big House. She has never been given the chance to develop a character of her own, make decisions or have any kind of life outside her home. Thus, her home does not only represent familiarity, but also lack of privacy and individuality. She starts to think on her own and consider leaving Big House, wondering how life would be if she lives with her husband in one of these apartments and "the freedom of not living in the same house as Ammayya!"<sup>(27)</sup>

Although Nirmala is not happy to live with her mother-in-law who keeps violating her privacy, she has never complained about it because "the habit of obedience, of respect for one's elders, of subservience, [runs] strong in her blood."<sup>(28)</sup> She realizes that she has started to see things differently since the death of her daughter:

*In losing her child, first because of Sripathi's ego and then to Lord Yama himself, Nirmala had taken more than she could bear. For all the years of being a good wife, daughter-in-law and mother, this was how she was rewarded? They have repaid her honest devotion with a kick in the face. Now she no longer cared about obeying Sripathi without question or hurting Ammayya. Now she dared to lock her steel cupboard to lock her saris, the few pieces of jewelry that she had collected for Maya, photographs, school reports, curls of hair, baby booties and tiny dresses—all memories of her children, of those more innocent times when happiness lay in the sound of their young*

*voices and in the smile of appreciation that Sripathi sent her way when her cooking was exceptionally good.*<sup>(29)</sup>

Maya's death has made Nirmala reconsider her way of life. Although she does not totally rebel against her traditional role as a housewife or against domesticity, Nirmala becomes aware of her limitations. She even claims responsibility for her inability to stand up to Sripathi because she was "intimidated by his solid impenetrable anger" and she was unwilling "to force a confrontation of any kind."<sup>(30)</sup>

This self-discovery changes Nirmala's attitude towards her home. She starts to claim her right to privacy and lock her wardrobe for the first time to prevent Ammayya from stealing her clothes and personal belongings, a habit she has tolerated since the beginning of her marriage. Although she does not stop believing in the concept of home, she starts to consider a different home and a different way of life in one of the apartment buildings that she wishes to share alone with her husband. Her wish comes true when Sripathi finally sells Big House and moves with her and Nandana in one of the apartment buildings at the end.

Ammayya, Sripathi's old mother, also develops a strong attachment to Big House. She refuses to leave the house and when she finally feels that she is forced to leave it, she dies. However, her reasons are different from Nirmala's. Her attachment to the house results from an abusive relationship with her husband which makes her feel that the house is her only benefit from this relationship. Ammayya arrives at Big House at the age of thirteen, as the young bride of Narasimha Rao. Although her husband spoils her "with saris and jewellery every day," she is shocked

and disappointed that he is keeping a mistress. <sup>(31)</sup> She rushes to her mother for help but her mother scolds her saying that she should be proud that her husband can afford two women. She tells her, “You are treated like a queen. So many clothes, so much jewellery, a big house.” <sup>(32)</sup> Her mother echoes her patriarchal society which forces her to accept the role of a submissive, obedient wife who should not complain about her husband’s treason and emotional abuse as long as he can support her financially and give her a big house.

Ever since Ammayya discovers that her husband has a mistress and that she can do nothing about it, she starts to despise him and develop a strong attachment towards her home as her only source of safety and status. She develops a possessive, tyrannical relationship towards her children, her home and her possessions. When her husband dies, Ammayya discovers that he is deeply in debt due to the way he used to spend lavishly on his mistress and on Ammayya herself. She is advised by a trustee at the Toturpuram Bank to sell the house and pay her debts but she refuses because “the house [is] all they [have] to mark their former status.” <sup>(33)</sup> As a Brahmin woman, raised in a society governed by a caste system, Ammayya has felt that the only thing left to her is her status, and Big House protects her and her children from going down the social ladder. She struggles to pay the debts and keep the house.

Ammayya also struggles to keep her children in Big House, regarding her daughter, her son and Big House itself as her compensation for her injury and damage in a twenty-five-year abusive marriage and that is why she holds tight to them. When Sripathi is offered a job as a reporter in



Delhi, she refuses to let him go, accusing him of trying to abandon his duties towards her and his younger sister, like his father. Eventually, Ammayya's tears and her emotional blackmail persuade Sripathi to refuse the Delhi offer and abandon his dream of becoming a newspaper reporter.<sup>(34)</sup> He never leaves Big House. As for Putti, Sripathi's younger sister, Ammayya keeps refusing her suitors because she is unwilling to let her leave Big House and live away from her. "Toothless and ancient I may be, thought Ammayya grimly, but not a corpse. And as long as I have my wits about me, my daughter will be mine."<sup>(35)</sup>

Moreover, as an old woman, Ammayya does not wish anything to disrupt her daily routine. She has succeeded in creating her own world that consists of Big House where the familiarity of the place, her children and her daily routine make her feel safe and she is reluctant to have Nandana in Big House for fear she can be an element of change:

*She pondered the changes that were likely to take place in the house, and she was not sure if she would like it... She knew her son. He would bring Maya's child to India. She only hoped that she would not be directly affected by the girl's arrival. At my age, she thought petulantly, nobody has the right to upset my daily routine.*<sup>(36)</sup>

Ammayya develops the habit of hoarding which is defined as a mental disorder that involves "the excessive collection and retention of any materials to the point that it interferes with day-to-day functioning and creates a hazard or potential hazard for the individual or others."<sup>(37)</sup> Like her home and her children, material possessions make Ammayya feel

secure. She keeps all sorts of things which may range from her jewellery to threads that she collects from the street in locked trunks under her bed. She claims that the jewellery and golden coins are saved for Putti, but in reality she saves them for herself and keeps checking on them from time to time:

*She reached below her bed with her walking stick and quickly touched the locked trunk underneath. Its solid presence was reassuring. That was her insurance plan—all the jewellery that she was not already wearing. More jewellery she told Putti, than even the queen of England.*<sup>(38)</sup>

In Addition to her jewellery, Ammayya keeps golden coins and silver ingots, old saris as well as stainless steel tins and bowls and hoards them in a cupboard in the corner of her room. Her daughter Putti notices how her mother is “obsessed with saving, with holding on.”<sup>(39)</sup> Everything seems important to her, including old newspapers that she saves and sells to the garbage man; pieces of threads that she picks from the street and rolls into multicoloured large balls; nails, nuts and bolts.<sup>(40)</sup> As a typical hoarder, Ammayya develops “a sense of security and comfort when surrounded by [her] possessions.”<sup>(41)</sup>

In addition to hoarding, Ammayya develops a habit of stealing from her family, especially from Nirmala whom she dislikes for sharing her son and her house with her. When Ammayya is left alone in the house, she is greatly excited as she wanders around, looking for something to steal. She tries to inspect Nirmala’s steel wardrobe, but, to her disappointment, she finds out that it is locked and she cannot steal any

money or new saris. The only thing she steals is Nirmala's scented powder. She moves to Nandana's room and steals her mother's red coat.<sup>(42)</sup> Although Ammayya remembers how good Maya was to her, she does not allow her "momentary lapse into sentimentality" to control her:

*Ammayya had lost so much in life—children, illusions, dreams, trust—that one more loss no longer really mattered to her. Things came and things went. That was life. What she could hang on to, she did with the ferocity of an animal with its kill<sup>(43)</sup>*

This sums up Ammayya's behaviour, her stealing and hoarding. She tries to hold on to things and people because the element of change makes her feel insecure.

Unlike Nirmala whose attachment to Big House reflects a warm, loving and stable personality, Ammayya's attachment to Big House reflects her insecurities and her personality disorders. To Nirmala, her attachment is to the concept of home. She is flexible and she is capable of changing this home. Nirmala's home is, therefore, similar to Bachelard's concept of home:

*And so, beyond all the positive values of protection, the house we were born in becomes imbued with dream values which remain after the house is gone. Centers of boredom, centers of solitude, centers of daydream group together to constitute the oneiric house which is more lasting than the scattered memories of our birthplace.<sup>(44)</sup>*

Bachelard's concept of "oneiric home" that exists in Nirmala's imagination and in her memories, makes her flexible enough to leave Big House which lacks the privacy that she needs as she grows old. She is willing to move to another home. Ammayya, on the other hand, has never adopted this concept of home. Her attachment to Big House is part of the dominating, possessive personality that she has developed after losing many things in her life. It also reflects her fears and insecurities. That is why she fails to change it and dies when she is forced to leave it.

Like Nirmala, Maya develops an attachment to home. To her, Big House represents her inner space, the house of her childhood and dreams. Even after she moves to Canada, marries Alan and has a new home, Maya still remembers her childhood home and wishes to pay it a visit with her husband and daughter, but her father who has disowned her for marrying Alan against his will does not allow her. She calls her mother many times and asks for her permission to visit home, but her mother who is afraid of her husband's "impenetrable anger" keeps postponing the visit.<sup>(45)</sup> Maya shows her daughter Nandana images of Big House and tells her about it:

*Many times her mother had shown her pictures of the house in India and she hadn't even thought much of it. "Are there ghosts inside," she wanted to know. Her mother had laughed and told her that there was a mango tree in the backyard, a snake in a hole at the foot of the tree and a big fat frog near the well, but not a single ghost. "Soon we will go there—you, me and Daddy," she had added.<sup>(46)</sup>*

Like Nirmala, Maya's attachment to her home does not imprison her in Big House forever or prevent her from developing an attachment to another home. As a young girl, Maya is ambitious and keen on travelling. She becomes the first girl in the family to ever go on a trip away from home for five days. Later, she travels to Canada for college, decides to marry her colleague Alan and settle in Canada. Many times, Maya appears in photographs with her family and with her blue house in the background. When Ammayya accidentally sees some of Maya's photographs, she pauses in front of one of the pictures of "Maya, Alan and Nandana in front of a small blue house with a flowering bush beside it." <sup>(47)</sup> When Sripathi sees Maya's blue house in Canada, he remembers how Maya used to like bright colours and comments on this by saying that "people were like trees, they grew and changed, put out new leaves that you forgot to count, and when you weren't watching, they even died." <sup>(48)</sup> Maya's taste changed and her character developed, but she still appreciated her roots and carried her childhood "house of dream-memory," in Bachelard's words, with her wherever she went. This "house of dream-memory" shaped her concept of home. <sup>(49)</sup> However, it did not prevent her from developing, changing and bonding with a new home.

Unlike Nirmala, Ammayya and Maya who have different reasons and ways of attachment to their inner space, Putti, Sripathi's younger sister regards Big House as a prison and wishes to escape from it. Ammayya who clings to Putti tightly and who has no intentions of releasing her manages to turn the house into a prison and to act as Putti's jailor. This

makes Putti unable to develop a healthy relationship towards her inner space and consider it as home. Ammayya's possessive nature stifles her daughter. She does not want her to sit on the balcony because the sun is not good for her skin. <sup>(50)</sup> She does not want her to open the window because "all the loafers... in the neighbourhood," would peep at her. <sup>(51)</sup> Moreover, Ammayya has never sent Putti to school. She brought her a private tutor because home schooling was "particularly attractive" to Ammayya who did not wish to part with her daughter, and it was also much cheaper than school. <sup>(52)</sup>

Putti's confinement in Big House makes her feel alienated. Whenever she goes out to visit her doctor or go to the temple, she feels that the world is changing so fast and she is unable to adapt to such change:

*She was bewildered by the accelerated rate at which things occurred around her. Computers, cars, telephones—all to speed up life. Why did people need to hurry all the time? Where were they going so quickly except to the end of the end of their lives, a destination that was common to all living things? And yet, and yet, there was something so exciting about this new unstable, high-tech world swirling like a magical pool just beyond her reach and she thought wistfully that she might like to dip her fingers in it.*"<sup>(53)</sup>

Unlike Ammayya, Putti does not appreciate stability and sees it as an element of stagnation. Although the pace of life outside home is too rapid for her, it is still exciting and inviting. That is why Putti admires Maya

who has left home and enjoys her letters that are “full of details of a life so exotic in its foreignness.”<sup>(54)</sup>

Putti wishes to leave Big House but she fails to do what Maya has done. Maya's education has helped her develop her own independent personality and make life-changing decisions, but Putti's confinement makes her unable to face her mother and make similar decisions of leaving home or working. When Putti is offered a job at a playschool two streets away, her mother refuses, telling her that respectable women do not leave their home for money and Putti fails to stand up to her.<sup>(55)</sup> That is why, Putti fails to achieve the healthy bond with home that Maya has managed to develop. She tells her brother who has never tried to stand up to his mother while she keeps Putti at home, “my fate lies within the walls of this house... today I am forty two years old and still I am stuck here.”<sup>(56)</sup> Putti develops negative feelings towards Big House:

*Big House loomed like a misshapen creature against the stark afternoon sky, and Putti was filled with a reluctance to enter it. She paid off the rickshaw and stood silently against the inward-leaning gates contemplating the house as if she were seeing it for the first time. She wished that she was like Maya, who had lived, studied, worked, been happy and sad, travelled, loved somebody, created a life out of her own body and died—all in the span of thirty-four years. It had been a brief but full life. And Putti, born eight years before her niece, had nothing to show for her own existence.*<sup>(57)</sup>

Part of Putti's attraction to Gopala, her neighbour is her wish to escape from Big House and start a new life of her own, away from Ammayya. Gopala is Munnunswamy's son who used to bring them milk before his father has become rich and powerful. According to traditional Hindu customs, Gopala and his family belong to a lower caste and he is not supposed to marry a Brahmin girl. Although her mother disapproves of the marriage, Putti does not listen to her mother's threats and agrees to marry him, disregarding old traditional beliefs about caste system. She also disregards the fact that her future husband is actually a thug who runs a gang. His gang has been hired to beat Arun, her nephew and other demonstrators in a demonstration against environmental violations.<sup>(58)</sup> Blinded by her desire to leave Big House, Putti ironically tells her mother, "But they are nice people Ammayya."<sup>(59)</sup> She finally manages to escape from Big House as she marries Gopala and lives in one of the three new apartments that Sripathi takes in exchange for Big House.<sup>(60)</sup>

Like Putti, Suman Dharma and her mother in law, Akka, in Badami's novel, *Tell It to the Trees*, fail to see their inner space in Merrit's Point, Canada as home. They regard it as a prison or confinement. Suman is the second wife of Vikram, an abusive Indian Canadian husband whose first wife, Helen, died mysteriously in a car accident while trying to leave him. Vikram travels to India, looking for a traditional Indian wife, marries Suman and brings her to Canada to take care of his daughter Varsha and his bedridden mother, Akka.

In her secluded house in Canada, Suman draws a comparison between her home in India and her new home in Canada. In her Indian home,



what was really missing was privacy. Her home lies on “the third floor of a rickety old building,” in an old neighbourhood surrounding an old temple in Madras:

*In order to get to her flat, she had to enter through the living room of the ground-floor tenant Rama Shastri, a priest at the temple, slapping aside damp bedsheets and pyjamas, striped underwear, dhotis, saris, petticoats and diapers, dozens of them, that always hung like banners from the low roof, as if to celebrate the teeming life within that small space.<sup>(61)</sup>*

Suman describes how India is a very crowded country with “small space” left for people to share. She has never enjoyed privacy at home. She feels trapped in her small apartment and crowded neighbourhood where her privacy is violated by her neighbours:

*Homes were set so close that young boys jumped from one rooftop to the next without fear of falling between. You could look into neighbours' windows, stretch a leg and an arm and climb in. When windows are shut, everyone knows it was because on the other side a couple was making love or they were quarrelling or somebody was dying and wanted a little bit of quiet darkness in which to slip away from the world they had inhabited for a while.<sup>(62)</sup>*

Indians, according to Suman, are forced to disregard an issue like privacy, considering it a kind of luxury that they cannot afford. This stifling inner and public space has made everyone, including Suman, eager to escape. Like the rest of her neighbours who develop a habit of

watching aeroplanes in the sky, Suman is eager to leave “on horseback, in a train, or a plane, even in an ox-drawn cart if nothing else [is] available,” and she prays for a husband who would show her the world. <sup>(63)</sup> That is why she agrees to marry Vikram because he is her last chance to escape from her crowded world.

However, in spite of this annoying lack of privacy, Suman describes herself as a “happy girl,” adding that “it is perhaps that deep and sturdy foundation of happiness” that has kept her sane in her difficult and unhappy life with Vikram in Canada. <sup>(64)</sup> She describes one of her photographs at home portraying herself as “a girl of sixteen with hope in her eyes and trustful certainty that nothing could go wrong.” <sup>(65)</sup> In spite of her stifling world, Suman has a loving father and aunt.

Suman’s outer space or public space in India can be dangerous whether to those who violate its rules or even to those who follow them. It is a society that is particularly cruel to women. Suman mentions two examples of women treated with equal cruelty by their patriarchal, conservative society. The first example is that of a girl who is spotted holding her cousin’s hand on the beach and who becomes, according to her society, a transgressor, “exiled from the world, sent out alone into the unknowing silence of outer space.” <sup>(66)</sup> They totally disregard her as if she were a ghost. The other example is her childhood friend, Lalli who was killed by her bride and in-laws, claiming that she has committed suicide, in order to receive a new dowry from a new bride. <sup>(67)</sup> Both girls are oppressed by their society although the former violated its traditions whereas the latter did not. However, in spite of the cruelty that her

society might display sometimes, Suman regards it as a “tightly knit but contained universe.” She has understood its familiar traditions and details that are passed from one generation to another as an “unwritten code of conduct.”<sup>(68)</sup> It is this familiarity which has made her feel safe in India, not the protection of her society.

Unlike her cruel public space, Suman’s humble inner space, inhabited by her small and loving family provides her with the love and safety that she needs. Unlike Lalli who lived in a huge house with a large extended family, Suman has lived in a small, old apartment with walls that need to be whitewashed and with old paint hanging away from the old wooden windows and rusted iron bars. Her aunt has always managed to keep the apartment very clean.<sup>(69)</sup> Lalli’s big family fails to protect her from her husband and his greedy family whereas Suman’s memories of her humble but loving family have kept her alive in Canada and have helped her endure her harsh life with her husband.<sup>(70)</sup>

When Suman moves to Merrit’s Point, Canada, she has all the privacy that she has longed for, but she loses this feeling of familiarity, resulting from her “tightly knit but contained universe,” which she did not like while she was in India. She moves to a secluded house which is the only inhabited house in the road and which is surrounded by snow most of the year. In her new secluded home, Suman has to put up with an ill-tempered, abusive husband as well as a possessive and a psychologically unstable step-daughter. She cannot help comparing her past life in India to her new one:

*I am Suman, daughter of a beloved man, wife of a hated one. I still need a piece of paper with my photograph, stamped by the government of a country. Without that I am nobody other than the wife of a man who is my guardian, my custodian, my prison... I thought of running away all the time, and then one day I gave up that too. I can remember the moment when I stopped trying.*<sup>(71)</sup>

Suman's loving father and family have helped her bond with her inner space in India. She succeeds, in Bachelard's words, to build in her imagination "walls of impalpable shadows" that make her small old apartment safe, comforting herself with "the illusion of protection."<sup>(72)</sup> This idea is further illustrated when Suman is ready to leave India and her neighbours and relatives keep warning her of the world outside their dusty road and small apartment which is "full of thieves, smugglers, rapists, hoodlums and other criminals."<sup>(73)</sup> Although India has her share of criminals, their familiar world and inner space give them the illusion of safety at home and danger outside it. Contrary to this idea, is how Suman feels towards her inner space in Canada. Being married to a "hated" husband, she fails to bond with her home, regarding it as a prison and her husband as her "custodian," and guardian. She is not free to leave whenever she wants or make any decision about her life, especially when her passport has disappeared and she suspects that her husband has hidden it to prevent her from leaving. This makes her feel trapped in her inner space that she hates and fails to bond with. This, again, in Bachelard's words, makes her "tremble behind thick walls" or mistrust

“the staunchest ramparts.”<sup>(74)</sup> Although her house in Canada might be as safe as her Indian apartment or even safer, it is how she feels about inner space that matters.

As a traditional Indian woman, Suman is raised to be a hardworking housewife who performs all her domestic duties. She cooks, cleans and does the laundry. Although Vikram seems to find fault in everything she does, she continues to perform all her domestic duties. Varsha notices that the more Suman is abused by Vikram, the harder she works:

*She still cooks all the morning and cleans the rest of the time. She dusts, wipes, mops every single day, sometimes twice a day. I never see her without dusters and rags, brooms and buckets. You can eat off the floor of our house, perform surgery on it. The hum of the vacuum cleaner is our daily music.*<sup>(75)</sup>

Like Nirmala, Suman is raised to accept domesticity as part of her duties as a woman. However, Nirmala does it with love to her family and her home but Suman does it to please Vikram and avoid his abuse. No matter how hard she works, Vikram is never pleased. Varsha adds that Suman “cooks up a feast of his favourite things, irons all his shirts, cleans the house until it sparks like a jewel, dresses in her best clothes. Nothing works.”<sup>(76)</sup> When she fails to please Vikram, housework becomes her means of letting out her suppressed anger and frustration.

When all Suman’s attempts to please Vikram or stop his abuse fail, she starts to contemplate leaving or escaping from her prison. She stops contemplating escape when Varsha brings home a Russian doll and keeps opening it to reveal another one and another one until she gets to the last

one when a “tiny beetle [emerges] and [scuttles] across the table, released from captivity after god only knows how long.” Suman immediately kills the beetle and starts to feel that, like this beetle, she is trapped “inside the house, inside the town, within the circling mountains.” She adds, “There is no escape for me from this place.”<sup>(77)</sup> Suman lives in an isolated house, she has no money and her passport disappears. Like the Matryoshka with the beetle trapped in the innermost doll, she feels symbolically trapped inside layers of inner and natural space that she cannot escape from. It is either prison or death.

In a conversation with their new tenant, Anu Krishnan, Suman shows how Vikram’s abuse leaves her with both physical and spiritual scars:

*Vikram is good at that sort of subtle humiliation. His violence is more hurtful because nobody can see it. You can't put ointment or a cold pack on or eat a Tylenol to take away those marks and that pain. His attacks, they go for the root of your being, kill your self-respect, your idea of who you are, take away your sense of balance. That is why we are always falling. We have no sense of balance in this house. Vikram calls me a fool and I have become one. I hate how easily I've given in. I thought for a while that if I loved him enough he would stop. But it didn't work that way. It could only be the kind of love a prisoner feels for her guard.*<sup>(78)</sup>

Suman’s words do not only describe a typical case of domestic violence and how it affects the victim by destroying his or her self-esteem, but also describe how this abuse affects her relationship to her

home. Suman draws an image of the house as a prison and her husband as a prison guard. She adds that the tactics he uses to keep her always trapped in that prison are not only physical abuse; he keeps her always in need of money and does not allow her to use the credit card to make sure that she does not escape. He keeps shattering her self-esteem until he convinces her that she is weak and stupid and cannot survive on her own. Suman adds that she has given in and she no longer thinks of escaping from her prison and her prisoner.

When Anu Krishnan promises to help Suman if she decides to leave, she symbolically removes one Matryoshka doll/layer after the other and makes Suman aware that she is capable of setting herself free. Anu offers companionship to Suman who feels lonely and confined, appreciates her food and even offers her legal and financial help. She encourages her to leave and helps her gradually regain her self-esteem.

Suman's decision to break away from her prison is triggered by the death of her friend, Anu as well as the death of Akka whom she has loved dearly for giving her the support and care she needs. She knows that she would not have been able to survive in this house without her. While packing Anu's belongings, she admits that it is time to make a decision. Later, her shocking discovery that Varsha, her fourteen-year-old step daughter, has deliberately killed Anu, by locking her outside the house, in the middle of a snow blizzard also helps her carry out her decision of breaking away from her prison. She realizes how Vikram's abuse has turned Varsha into a possessive, harsh, unstable young girl who is capable of murder. She realizes that she must leave to protect her

son from a similar fate, knowing that he is deeply influenced by his sister and follows her like a shadow. However, Badami leaves the reader with an open ending as Suman is determined to leave, Varsha is determined to stop her, and the reader is left to wonder whether or not Suman will be able to break away from her prison, knowing that she has a more dangerous, more determined “custodian” than her husband; namely Varsha.

Like Suman, Akka sees her inner space as a prison. Her custodian was also her late husband who has brought her to this secluded house as his newly wedded wife, forty five years ago, without telling her why he has moved “into this back of beyond,” meaning Merrit’s Point. <sup>(79)</sup> When Akka arrived at Merrit’s Point, she was a smart, well-read, young woman who can speak six Indian languages, in addition to English. In a conversation with Anu Krishnan, Akka reveals how she feels her life has been wasted, “What is amazing is that I used none of my talents. My knowledge has rotted from misuse. What use all that knowledge, tell me? I ended up in this Jehannum where nobody cares about my past or my abilities.” <sup>(80)</sup>

Akka goes on to tell Anu that she wishes to be like her. She describes Anu as a “free bird [who] comes and goes as she pleases.” <sup>(81)</sup> In spite of her Indian roots, Anu represents a very different way of life. She is a free woman who chooses to leave her husband, move from her city house and leave her job to pursue a career as a writer. Anu is not a prisoner of her inner space and her ability to decide for herself, end a marriage which



has made her unhappy and pursue a career is attractive to both Akka and Suman as she represents the kind of life they both wish they have lived.

Akka is aware that her husband and her son are both abusers, and she calls her husband “a demon.” She is not sorry about her husband’s death and the reader is left to suspect that she might have left him outside in the snow to die out of hypothermia on purpose. <sup>(82)</sup> However, Akka fails to leave, even after her husband’s death. When Vikram went to India after his wife died, his desire was to find a new wife; “somebody like Akka, who will never leave him.” <sup>(83)</sup> This shows Akka’s inability to break free from her prison. As a traditional Indian housewife she is raised up stay at home even if she hates it. When Varsha asks her why she has stayed in this house if she hates it that much, she fails to answer. <sup>(84)</sup> She encourages Suman to leave because she loves her and she does not wish her to end up suffering from abuse and confinement for the rest of her life. She wants her to do what she has failed to do all her life, leave. <sup>(85)</sup>

There are a few hints about Helen, Vikram’s first wife, related from Varsha’s point of view. Like Suman and Akka, Helen too feels trapped in Vikram’s house and she is unable to control her inner space. That is why she decides to do what Akka and Suman have failed to do and escape. Varsha refers to her as “my traitor mother, Harini, who called herself Helen and hated living here with me, Papa and Akka,” adding that she left them without explanation. She died in a car accident while trying to leave. <sup>(86)</sup> As a result, Vikram wipes out her existence from the house by removing and destroying all her pictures and belongings as if she had never existed or occupied this space before. He tries to erase her from her

daughter's memories by telling her that her name is never to be mentioned again in the house.<sup>(87)</sup> According to Vikram, Helen's crime is trying to leave him and escape from her home which he sees more or less as a kind of permanent confinement for his women who are not supposed to resist his power. By escaping from the prison that he controls, they are rebelling against his authority and his right to dominate inner space.

When Anu Krishnan, their new tenant and a former colleague at university of both Vikram and Helen, remembers Helen, she describes her as "drop dead gorgeous, busy having a good time," as well as "charming and lots of fun."<sup>(88)</sup> She wonders why someone like Helen would marry Vikram, whom she remembers vaguely as a good looking but quiet, young man who always got high grades. Helen seems to Anu like a misfit in this secluded house. Varsha also remembers how her mother "hated being a housewife" and "was a wretched cook," unlike Suman who is a hard working housewife and an excellent cook.<sup>89</sup> Helen also cherished her freedom. She threatened to leave and she finally left Vikram "who would rather she died than leave him."<sup>(90)</sup>

Vikram's problem with both Helen and Suman is his wish to control and dominate inner space, the way a traditional Indian man should, without giving them the chance to even share this right with him. Although Vikram is raised in Canada, he still sees the archetypal ideal wife, the way his Indian father saw her. The ideal wife, according to the traditional Indian society, is the one who does not compete with her husband over power or try to control inner space. Like Akka, she does not try to leave even if she is abused and her safety is jeopardized. Yet,

Vikram is attracted to Helen, a modern, independent woman who would not allow him to control her although she is completely the opposite of his idea of an ideal wife, and Akka tells Varsha that her father was madly in love with her mother:

*“Papa loved your mother more than anything in the world,” Akka would say. She was his religion, my grandmother explained. And he was like a wild eyed and fanatical believer. It was his love for her that ate away at him turning him into a maniac. And the more he loved her the more he wanted to hold on to her, the more she wanted to get away.<sup>(91)</sup>*

Vikram tries to control Helen and prevent her from leaving him. Instead of giving her the love and safety she needs to live with him in his house and consider it her home, he turns this home into a prison, becoming more like a jailor than a husband. The more he tries to control her, the more she feels restless and uneasy and wishes to escape.

When Vikram marries Suman, he chooses a woman who resembles his mother and who is the complete opposite of Helen. Suman would never compete with him over controlling space and she would not also leave him the way Helen did. Ironically, Vikram hates Suman because she is different from Helen:

*Papa can't forget. Mom was beautiful. Suman is not. Mom yelled back at my father. Suman wasn't quiet at first but now she does not talk very much. Papa began to find fault with everything she did or did not do. He shouted at her, he called her a fool and he told her she can't wear anything other than saris.<sup>(92)</sup>*

The more submissive Suman is, the more Vikram hates her and becomes more abusive and more violent. He is torn between the two worlds of Canada that Helen used to represent and India that both Akka and Suman represent.

***Conclusion:***

The majority of the female characters portrayed in Badami's selected novels, *The Hero's Walk* and *Tell It to the Trees* are housewives who are obliged by their traditions to stick to their houses and perform all kinds of domestic duties, whether they live in India or in Canada. Although Vikram is raised in Canada, he still wants to control his inner space as the patriarch of the family, the same way he would do if he lived in India. That is why when his Indian Canadian wife dies, he goes to India to marry a traditional Indian wife whom he thinks would neither leave him nor challenge his authority. The isolation of the House in Merrit's point symbolizes the isolation of the family as immigrants. The patriarchs of the family; Vikram and his father, wish to isolate their women from the Canadian society to create an Indian household that is similar to a traditional Indian household in India, where family relations are not affected by their new society and its traditions.

Both Nirmala and Suman do not question their husband's authority and control of inner space or home until their world is shattered by the death of Maya in Nirmala's case and Anu Krishnan in Suman's case. Maya's death makes Nirmala aware of her limitations as an Indian housewife who fails to make decisions concerning her home and her daughter as she has always been afraid to face her husband and discuss

Maya's forgiveness with him. She starts to reconsider her life and thinks of leaving Big House. Moreover, the arrival of Nandana, Maya's daughter acts as a catalyst and as an element of change which helps Nirmala make the decision of leaving Big House. Nirmala's flexibility and her willingness to change her home echoe Bachelard's idea that home is the place where one finds safety and familiarity. Nirmala might change her home but still keep this concept of home within her wherever she goes. Anu Krishnan also acts as a catalyst as she helps Suman regain her self-esteem and overcome her weakness. Her death also helps Suman make her decision to leave her home or prison as Suman realizes that Anu dies while trying to free her from her prison. Thus, to Suman her home which represents both safety and familiarity, in Bachelard's definition of home, remains her humble childhood apartment in India whereas her new house in Canada is only a prison where she experiences pain and abuse, but never a home that she can bond with. Nirmala, on the other hand, is capable of bonding with Big House as well as with any other home.

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**Notes:**

(<sup>1</sup>) Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*. Trans. Maria Jolas. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994) 4

(<sup>2</sup>) Ibid, 3

(<sup>3</sup>) Ibid, 5

(<sup>4</sup>) Ibid, 6

(<sup>5</sup>) Ibid, 7

(<sup>6</sup>) Ibid, 8

(<sup>7</sup>) Paula Townsend, "Gendered Space? An Exploration of the Gendered Meaning and Experience of 'Home' in Contemporary British Society." *FORUM: eJournal for Postgraduate Studies in Architecture, Planning and Landscape*. 3.1 (2000) 41

(<sup>8</sup>) Ibid

(<sup>9</sup>) Kalene Westmoreland, *Interior Revolutions: Doing Domesticity, Advocating Feminism in Contemporary American Fiction*. A Ph.D. Dissertation. (Louisiana: The Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University, 2006) 2

(<sup>10</sup>) Ibid 10

(<sup>11</sup>) Donaldson, Mike "What is Hegemonic Masculinity?" *Theory and Society* 22.5 (1993) 644

(<sup>12</sup>) Sonia Velligas-Lopez and Garcia Beatriz-Dominguez. "Literature, Gender, Space." *Atlantis* 27.2 (2005) 221

(<sup>13</sup>) Thomas Foster, *Transformations of Domesticity in Modern Women's Writings*. (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002) 6

(<sup>14</sup>) Anita Rau Badami, *The Hero's Walk*. (London: Bloomsbury, 2001) 11

(<sup>15</sup>) Ibid, 19

(<sup>16</sup>) Sonia Velligas-Lopez and Garcia Beatriz-Dominguez, 221

(<sup>17</sup>) *The Hero's Walk*, 39

(<sup>18</sup>) Ibid, 44

(<sup>19</sup>) Ibid, 42

(<sup>20</sup>) Ibid, 43

(<sup>21</sup>) Ibid, 156

(<sup>22</sup>) Ibid, 157

(<sup>23</sup>) Ibid, 159

(<sup>24</sup>) Ibid, 167

(<sup>25</sup>) Ibid, 35

(<sup>26</sup>) Ibid, 286

(<sup>27</sup>) Ibid

(<sup>28</sup>) Ibid

(<sup>29</sup>) Ibid, 286, 287

(<sup>30</sup>) Ibid, 287

(<sup>31</sup>) Ibid, 85

(<sup>32</sup>) Ibid, 86

(<sup>33</sup>) Ibid, 63

(<sup>34</sup>) Ibid, 68, 69

(<sup>35</sup>) Ibid, 83, 84

(<sup>36</sup>) Ibid, 88

(<sup>37</sup>) "About Hoarding Disorder." *OCD Types*, par. 1

(<sup>38</sup>) *The Hero's Walk*, 89

(<sup>39</sup>) Ibid 79

(<sup>40</sup>) Ibid, 79, 80

(<sup>41</sup>) "About Hoarding Disorder." *OCD Types*, par.15

(<sup>42</sup>) *The Hero's Walk*, 225, 226

(<sup>43</sup>) Ibid, 227

(<sup>44</sup>) Bachelard, 17

(<sup>45</sup>) *The Hero's Walk*, 287

(<sup>46</sup>) Ibid, 70, 71

(<sup>47</sup>) Ibid, 226

(<sup>48</sup>) Ibid, 142

(<sup>49</sup>) Bachelard, 15



(<sup>50</sup>) *The Hero's Walk*, 77

(<sup>51</sup>) *Ibid*, 79

(<sup>52</sup>) *Ibid*, 81

(<sup>53</sup>) *Ibid*, 81, 82

(<sup>54</sup>) *Ibid*, 83

(<sup>55</sup>) *Ibid*, 82

(<sup>56</sup>) *Ibid*, 179

(<sup>57</sup>) *Ibid*, 199

(<sup>58</sup>) *Ibid*, 330-333

(<sup>59</sup>) *Ibid*, 330

(<sup>60</sup>) *Ibid*, 346

(<sup>61</sup>) Anita Rau Badami, *Tell It to the Trees*. (Toronto: Vintage Canada, 2011) 17

(<sup>62</sup>) *Ibid*, 44

(<sup>63</sup>) *Ibid*, 43

(<sup>64</sup>) *Ibid*, 18

(<sup>65</sup>) *Ibid*, 19

(<sup>66</sup>) *Ibid*, 45

(<sup>67</sup>) Ibid, 40

(<sup>68</sup>) Ibid, 44

(<sup>69</sup>) Ibid, 17

(<sup>70</sup>) Ibid, 18

(<sup>71</sup>) Ibid, 121, 122

(<sup>72</sup>) Bachelard, 5

(<sup>73</sup>) *Tell It to the Trees*, 65

(<sup>74</sup>) Bachelard, 5

(<sup>75</sup>) *Tell It to the Trees*, 33

(<sup>76</sup>) Ibid, 34

(<sup>77</sup>) Ibid, 122

(<sup>78</sup>) Ibid, 218, 219

(<sup>79</sup>) Ibid, 13

(<sup>80</sup>) Ibid, 160

(<sup>81</sup>) Ibid, 161

(<sup>82</sup>) Ibid, 14

(<sup>83</sup>) Ibid, 32

(<sup>84</sup>) Ibid, 14

(<sup>85</sup>) Ibid, 49

(<sup>86</sup>) Ibid, 10

(<sup>87</sup>) Ibid, 11

(<sup>88</sup>) Ibid, 126

(<sup>89</sup>) Ibid, 26, 27

(<sup>90</sup>) Ibid, 29

(<sup>91</sup>) Ibid, 27

(<sup>92</sup>) Ibid, 32

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