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## **Introduction to Modern Indian Drama**

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Good morning. Let us complete our discussion of Girish Karnad's plays with a last play which is a shorter monologue called Broken Images. It was performed in Hindi also as Bikhare Bind and it was also acted in Kannada. In Kannada version of the play had Aruniti Nag playing the protagonist and in the English one that I watched which was called Broken Images. You had Shabana Azmi playing the role of the protagonist whose name is Manjula Naik.

Now it's an interesting form because the entire play is a monologue told from the perspective of the female protagonist Manjula Naik who is a Kannada writer who has after having written in Kannada for many years has suddenly come up with an English novel and you're introduced to the other characters of the play through Manjula Naik although they don't really have any much of us speaking. They don't really appear on stage and they don't have a speaking part but we are introduced to her husband Pramod and we're also introduced to her sister Malini who is a disabled woman. She spends much of a life in a wheelchair at home because she is paralyzed from the waist below. And the play itself is staged in a very unusual interesting fashion because you have the female character Manjula Naik on stage.

You also have a TV screen. You have many TV screens and one of the TV screens on stage has an image of Manjula Naik. So it's a speaking image and so much of the conversation that takes place in the place between the female character Manjula Naik and her virtual image on screen. The play itself is a comment on the politics of language and this becomes important in the initial phase of the play where you know there is this impression that Manjula Naik's peers and her audience, her readership may probably be upset with her for having written something in English. As Manjula Naik portrays her own reception and the way she is perceived by her readers and her peers she makes it seem it's actually a comment on the politics of writing in English which guarantees you access to a global audience unlike perhaps writing in a regional language like Kannada which certainly shows you a readership but it's still a niche when compared to English and this in some sense is also a reflection of Girish Karnad's own life as someone who began writing at Kannada and wrote in Kannada for more than three decades and then decided to switch or translate his works into English and the impact that that had on his writing and his career as a playwright is reflected in the play because it's suggested that the whole act of writing in English or the act of being translated into English gives now Indian English writers or Indian writers for being translated greater access to global literary readership rather than those who only write in regional languages.

And so we see that also in the larger context of post-colonial Indian literature in English where you have a generation of writers post Salman Rushdie who have written in English, who have been received in English, who've been read worldwide. You also have at the example of Arundhati Roy who has written a novel in English and now two novels and so the kind of reception that she has writing also about Kerala to larger English audience and readership. and so it's a question of power when it comes to writing in English and being translated into English. There's certainly an impact that it has on the reach that your work has.

So that in some sense becomes the focal point of the play at least in the initial scene of the play. And so for I mean it's a very simple plot. I mean it just it revolves around a writer called Manjula Naik who has written in Kannada and now begins writing in English and much to the disapproval of her readers and her peers who think that it's an act of betrayal because they expect to be loyal to Kannada and this is assumption that as Manjula Naik herself says there's an assumption that writing in one's own regional language corresponds to an authentic self, an authentic sense of self. So you write in Kannada so that apparently is the only way one can express oneself and one's life world in the most sincere authentic fashion as opposed to writing in English which is being considered as a foreign language as something which is culturally foreign. So then there's this whole debate on what it means to write in English as opposed to writing in Kannada and of course the play you know yes discussing the question of I mean it's relating the question of global of the politics of language with which genre. So that the question of form becomes very

important because the play is talking about the the Kannada female writer who has written novel and and not a play. So the whole idea of writing a play in English does not let's say half the same acclaim, the same reputation, the same power that let's say writing a novel in English has. So is a question of form is also very important that you write in English you write a novel in English and it's published in English and that seems to have a far greater prestige than let's say writing a play in English or writing a play in Kannada and getting it translated into English.

So it's also a question of form. So Manjula Naik dramatizes the debates that occurred around the question of language of what language to write and what language to publish it and questions are form of what does it mean to actually write a novel in English when you have hitherto been a writer in of Kannada.

So the initial phase, the initial part of the monologue Broken Images is precisely about this and later on of course is a twist in the play when we realize that the English novel that Manjula has published in her name it's actually been authored by her sister Malini Naik who was now dead. So she has plagiarized her sister's novel and acclaimed it as her own and it's only her husband Pramod who discovers this that much later after it's been published that she had stolen the typescript from Malini's shelf after she died and there are lots of suggestions that from that Manjula it's quite explicit that Manjula was very insecure for sister despite the fact the sister was immobile but you know she had I think Manjula admired and envied her sister for her flair for English, her ability to write in English for the English speaking friends she had and also for her beauty. The fact that she was a very beautiful woman even though she was physically challenged and that she also suspects that perhaps her sister had a very intimate relationship with her husband Pramod although it's not clear or it's not certain that it was a romantic relationship.

So a lot of the different instances in the play that suggests that the identity of being an author or the identity of being a woman who writes and who plagiarizes her sister's novel is a very mediated relationship. So an author has a very mediated relationship to language and to her reader. And so it's not a direct relationship but it's also so the entire play seems about the politics of mediation of the mediation of desire and the mediated relationship that an author has to the figure of the author has to his or her writing and to his or her readership. So it's not a direct determined relationship but it's something which is mediated by many other cultural economic and political factors.

So we need to actually explore this point of mediation in greater detail in the monologue. So in the Broken Images if you just pay attention to the opening stage directions of the play it says the interior of a television studio a big plasma screen hangs on one side big enough for a close-up on it to be seen clearly by the audience. On the other side of the stage a chair and a typically telly table, strong wide semicircular. At the back of the stage are several television sets with screens of varying sizes. A small red bulb glows above the table high enough not to appear on the television screen Manjula Naik walks in. She's in a mid 30s or 40s and has a confident stride. She is wearing a label mic. It is immediately evident that she's at home in broadcasting studios. She looks around. So the set the setting is of a television studio with a big plasma screen on one side and on the other side is a stage of the stage a chair and a telly table on which there are she sits

and behind the telly table you have several television sets with screens of varying sizes and you have a small red bulb above the table which is high enough to not appear on the television screen and Manjula Naik appears as someone who was you know mid 30s middle-aged rather confident and seems to be completely at home in the broadcasting studio and you see how her relationship to the audience and the readership. I mean I'm talking about the audience that's watching the play as well as the readership who's the potential readership of her novel. So it's an interesting irony a contrast between two media. So on one hand you have Manjula Naik playing an actor in a play who is present before her audience who's watching her perform and you also have Manjula Naik performing before a camera.

So the camera so you see that the difference between a play and a film or a camera recording of a talk where in theater you have rather unmediated relationship with the actor. The emphasis lies on language and on the actors' body that is supposed to emote an express and conjure up space, physical space through language and on the other hand you have the camera which determines what the audience will see or should see, what it should focus on and the emphasis of film may not be entirely on space and the actors' body but may also be able to capture other time-space continuum, other layers of temporality, other experiences of time and space. So these two media theater and film cinema and camera are contrasted on stage. There's an announcer who introduces the audience to Manjula Naik so you also have the imagination of Manjula Naik appearing on a TV show in front of a live audience. So the live audience could be the audience watching the play but they could also be another audience which cannot be seen which is watching her through the camera. So you have two layers. You have the layer of the physical space of the playhouse and you also have on the stage and you also have the invisible audience. So the audience is at once invoked as an absence as well as a presence in the play. So the announcer introduces her as someone who has – who's a renowned Kannada short story writer and who was also a lecturer English.

Again you know is reflective of the bilingual status of many regional writers, writers who write regional languages who have to probably teach English because that's the only job they can get which is even fairly decently paid job but she's been writing in Kannada and there's also a very self reflexive reference to the larger literary establishment of Kannada but also just sure many of the Indian languages. So there are other Kannada writers who were lectures in English BM Shree Gokak [00:15:00] right. So that's what the announcer says. You also have modern ones he goes on to say Lankesh, Shanti Nath, Anant Murti and then there's AK Ramachan and so the novel that Manjula Naik has published in English is called The River Has No Memories and she also, the announcer also mentions that she has made a lot of money through royalties from her British publishers who have published the novel to great acclaim and the novel has become a best-seller all across the world. And so there is this initial reference to the fact that writing in English involves a fame and a lot of money and there's also the suggestion that there is that this whole idea of writing in English also implies selling oneself almost prostituting oneself to a larger global audience and readership where you sell yourself in order to actually acquire potentially acquire. It's not guaranteed of course but potentially acquired greater recognition as opposed to writing in a regional language. And she mentions the two questions that many writers are normally asked. Writers who have switched languages from let's say regional or regional language to English.

The first question that she says she's been asked by her readers is that after having written in Kannada all your life why did you choose to write in English all of a sudden. Do you see

yourself as a Kannada writer or as an English writer? What audience you write for? And variations on that theme. And then she says --- she replies saying that she had foreseen how many people should be upset by writing in English. Many of the intellectuals, her peers, her writers, have accused her of betraying Kannada by writing in English. And she then responds saying to these charges she responds saying that writing in a particular language does not necessarily mean that one is actually expressing one's true self, one's authentic self.

There is no correspondence between language and the authentic sense of selfhood. So she says that it came to her spontaneously. She claims that she learned English because all ideas her thoughts and feelings spontaneously burst out in English she says. And then she also defends herself by saying that she's not abashed, she's not ashamed for writing in English because even though despite the fact that she knows that writing in English may guarantee her greater fame and money so she is not – she doesn't seem a shamed of that even though people have accused her of being of not being true to the cause of Kannada that of being corrupt and greedy but then she feels that she is honest about it. She's honest about the fact that she has she noted also for the money not just for creativity but also for money. So she also says later on about – she talks about the institutionalization of Indian literature institutions like the Sahitya Academy and what they have to say about the politics of language and form. So while her British publishers appreciate a novel because they think it is so Indian, it captures the Indian self really well, there are other Indian writers who feel that English is a medium of dishonesty. That's what Manjula Naik quote saying that for many Indian writers English is a medium of dishonesty. Of course one could also ask how many Kannada writers are honest in what they write in Kannada but if you did that you'd be immediately condemned as a traitor. You can't win.

So writing in Kannada doesn't necessarily mean that you're being authentic and sincere just like how writing in English does not necessarily mean that you're being inauthentic and lacking in sincerity. Recently the president of the central Sahitya Academy the National Academy of the letters who shall remain nameless declared that Indians who write in English do so in order to make money that by writing in English they confess their complicity in the global consumer market economy. He of course spoken English. Speaking in English as you know gives you the authority to make oracular pronouncements on Indian literature's and languages but my response to the charge that I write in English for money would be why not, isn't that a good enough reason. Would you like to see what royalties I earned when I wrote in Kannada? Yet the accusation hides or perhaps reveals a grim anxiety.

As is clear from the dictum of the president of the Academy or whatever is issue is not creativity but money. What hits everyone in the eye is the money a writer in English can earn. The advance I received my novel the advance only mind you helped me resign my job and concentrate on writing. Of course it is a cause for jealousy. Having struggle in Kannada I can understand that a Kannada proverb says the response is good but a meaningful response is better. Meaningful. Artha Purna. The Kannada word for meaning is Artha which also means money and of course fame, publicity, glamour power. So she is not abashed. She's not ashamed and she does not defend herself at this charge of intellectual prostitution. She says that I'm perfectly fine writing for the money and the money the royalties I have received as opposed the petty royalties I received for writing in Kannada have enabled me to resign my job and concentrate -- be a full-time writer.

The second question that she is asked about is the book itself and the second question is more about the question of representation because she represents, she claims to have represented the life of her sister Malini who is disabled and so her [00:20:59] often ask her how is it possible that she is able to represent the life of a disabled woman with such fidelity, with such accuracy. I mean they're quite amazed by the intimacy, the familiarity with which is able to recount the life of a sister as if she were herself disabled.

So the whole question of experience and fiction that is thus is fiction a direct unmediated representation of social reality or is it a mediated relationship. So the novel I mean the play itself is really about the status of fiction and the kinds of truth claims that fiction makes. What is the status of fiction. Is fiction true or is fiction false or is fiction neither. And what's the register of fiction? Then she also talks about -- she describes her sister's life and she says she was physically challenged, suffered from what is technically called [00:21:58], the upper part of her body was perfectly normal. Below the waist the nervous system was damaged, completely dysfunctional and there were series of operations that Malini had to undergo which reduced her existence to being an invalid, spending an entire life confined to a wheelchair. Six years ago Manjula says my parents died. She came to stay with us in our house in Jaynagar and I nursed her. During the last few months it was quite clear she didn't have much time left. I am childless and she became my child. Truly the book is about her. I have dedicated it to her memory. She died last year just a few months before the book came out. I have tried to relive what I learned about her emotional life as I nursed her, tended to her, watch helplessly as she floated into death. I miss her. I miss my beautiful gentle sister.

So she portrays herself as a caregiver who has witnessed her sister dying and she says that she's the only character. Her sister is the only character the novel drawn from life while the other characters are entirely fictional. So she she makes a claim that her representation of Malini is the only true representation in the novel while everything else has been invented. So the monologue talks about this whole idea of fiction and fictional representation of reality which will always be an oblique representation. So even if if we were to know from the very beginning that the novel was written by Malini and Malini was the real author of the novel would we then be able to say that this is a true and authentic representation of the reality of what it means to be disabled. So these are questions, they're open open questions that what counts as an authentic and real representation of life and what isn't or what doesn't or does the very variety, the very truth value of fiction does that matter in the first place. I mean this is not to condone works of fiction that are blatantly distort history and distort the experiences of people but to then say that fiction is a true and accurate representation of reality would also not then be accurate because fiction has certain liberties, can take certain liberties, can take certain flights of imagination which may not necessarily be direct or probably never is a direct representation of reality and in fact it's precisely the unmediated metaphorical relationship that fiction has to reality which makes reality perhaps seem a lot more real than it is in in reality. And of course that's this is just a theoretical category but then we also then consider the fact that reality is always already mediated by language and by our perceptions of it.

And then the image comes on the plasma screen and the screen and the camera never seems to go off. So the camera the whole idea of exposing oneself to the camera becomes self-conscious exercise in self-dramatization because Manjula is now exposing herself. She's exposing what she has done and she's exposing her vulnerabilities or insecurities before the camera and there is no escape for. Everything she says, every expression of hers is recorded and telecast to on the wider audience whom she cannot see. So it's the gaze of the camera that's fixed on her and she is the object of the gaze and she finds it very hard to shrug off the power of the gaze. And the image also comes across as probably and images very ironic and self-conscious because the image describes itself as perhaps the subconscious, the unconscious, the repressed in Manjula own psyche. And the image says it I'm after all just – I'm after all only you. I am you and so it becomes this interesting self-dramatization of the character of Manjula Naik through her conversations that she has with herself with the plasma, with the virtual image on the screen.

They're about to show a Kannada telefilm about [00:26:30] in the novel but that's not shown and instead it's Manjula's own image that appears on screen and there is the image constantly interrogate, dissects and interrogates Manjula's life and her relationship with her sister and her husband. And again this whole interrogation is again questioning probing the the truth value, the veracity of the novel and the image seems to be ridiculing her at some level. She says the image says if one had to comment in the extreme case at one had to that bit about his sister Malini that the tears that could have been played down. So they are wondering-- the image is wondering if Manjula exaggerated her exhibition of sorrow at the loss of her sister. So what is being recorded in camera again it doesn't necessarily have to be authentic. They can also be a lot of pretense. A lot of hypocrisy that is recorded on camera and but then we, the audience attaches a certain sense of veracity to the camera just as one attaches a certain veracity to the photograph, one attaches a certain veracity to the camera and what one sees through the camera. So that she cried for the camera, seems to capture her genuine sorrow at the loss of a sister.

So Manjula is obviously playing with the gaze of the camera that now the camera captures me as someone who was genuinely bereaved at the loss of her sister. Manjula says a novel doesn't really do her justice. She was attractive more attractive than me. Intelligent, more intelligent than me. And vivacious which I never was. I accepted that. She radiated life from the wheelchair to which she was confined I have always been reconciled to be in the second best. So the status of the camera of what the camera records and the status of fiction are similar because they're both simulating a particular reality and one can never say whether that simulation is real or not, that's true or not and Manjula here slowly reveals her insecurity, her sense of jealousy towards her sister. The image how illness was unfortunate but because of it she got the best of everything. Manjula who's now defensive says, she never asked for anything soon after her birth the moment the gravity of her situation was realized. My parents moved to Bangalore. Took a house in the Koramangala extension. She became the apple of their eye. When she was old enough to go to school our teacher came home to teach her English and mathematics. Everything else she read up for herself; history, philosophy, anatomy. She was hungry, hungry for life and gobbled it all up. So when her parents discovered that Malini has a disability or debilitating one they divert all the attention to her which makes Manjula feel neglected and left out and then she wonders whether she would have been as bright if she'd received all that love and attention. So she feels jealous and insecure. Manjula says they left me with my grandparents in [00:29:45] an affectionate couple. They first owned me but no substitute for parents. When vacations approached I could

barely wait to get to Bangalore and once I finished college I found a job in Bangalore and came and lived with them. Those were the happiest days of my life. Halcyon but then I met Pramod. We got married and settled down in Jaynagar. Her father helped with the house but he left most of his money in her name for our care. She was always the focus naturally. And they moved to a locality in Bangalore which is largely non-Kannada. So Koramangala and Bangalore being rather cosmopolitan city. She finds herself rather estranged in a locality which is largely non-Kannada and she then here expresses a certain side to herself which is provincial, which is proud of being Kannada which wants to breathe the language she says.

And she wants to live in the heart of Kannada culture. So this is one aspect one side to the writer who revels in the presence of the language and in the presence of Kannada speakers and literature but then she seems to also give that up for the larger glamour and prestige that is attached to writing in English. She says that let me say I could have written about my sister in Kannada. She breathed, laughed, dreamt in English. Her friends spoke only English having her in the house for six years helped improve my English. So she also reveals the fact that her sister had greater access to English and do English speaking friends and liked her and through the interrogation the conversation that she has with the image she slowly reveals, unravels and those aspects of herself which are insecure, which feel that she's competing with her sister for her intellect and for her English language and writing skills. She also depicts of course the novel is not hers but then the novel itself being written by Malini suggests is a reflection of Manjula. So Manjula appears in the novel as a negative character, as the first cousin of the writer and not her own sister.

So it's a fairly negative character. Pramod himself comes across as someone who Pramod is Manjula's husband who has an intimate relationship with Malini as someone who's not very good-looking and striking but an intelligent warm and lovable person. Fun-loving fond of practical jokes, noble and simple almost simple minded and then Manjula describes her early years of her relationship with Pramod when Pramod quoted her and played a prank on her by writing a letter about her close friend Lucy. So he addressed a letter to Manjula and wrote about her his feelings for her close friend Lucy and he wrote a similar letter addressed to Lucy confessing his love for Manjula and so they both receive letters about Pramod's love for the other woman and that again is an instance of how her initial relationship with Pramod is mediated through her close friend Lucy.

So that in some sense evokes perhaps her desire and longing for the man and that love and romance even if it is just a prank even if it's a joke is developed, is triggered, is developed and intensifies when it is mediated through a third person and then of course the ruse worked she says, [00:33:32] says the ruse worked, the prank worked and they ended up getting married and she of course loses her friendship with Lucy who stops talking to her and then of course Pramod continues his friendship with Lucy but then the image wonders whether of course if you think of the image as an extension of Manjula herself whether Manjula probably wonders whether aside to her aside of her I mean wonders if they hadn't affair but there's another side to her which believes that Pramod is a sincere husband and is too much in love with her to be to have an affair with another woman. There's also a insinuation to the possibility that promote had a very close relationship with Malini because promote spent most of his time at home with Malini who could not move out of the house. So the image asks Manjula whether she'd not mind that her husband was spending a lot of time with her sister and she says mind thank God for it. You see he's in software development works from home. So he has a work from home job. She was confined in



her chair can you imagine what would have happened if they hadn't got on. He's basically a two woman man. I used to call him Tirupati [00:34:51].

So she almost seems to desire her husband because there are other women who desire him but so even her love and a desire for husband are mediated by other women in his life and then suddenly Manjula is very upset at the image which is constantly interrogating her relationship and her marriage and her private life and then she is on the verge of trying to switch off the image by pulling off the wire and the plug but then she's unable to do it and then they continue the conversation and the image says that it is trapped in an existential angst in an existential situation in the camera. It's almost like as Manjula is unable to escape from her own gaze. Her own self gaze. She's trapped in her own consent, in her own psyche because her psyche is torn apart by these contradictions of on the one hand wanting to be an autonomous, independent, well-known, famous, acclaimed writer in English and on the other hand being attached having a loyalties towards Kannada culture, Kannada literature and the whole image of the double of a sister who seems to have greater access to English has grown up with English-speaking friends and is the actual author of the English novel that she has plagiarized. And the insecurity of being married to a man who was attractive and who has drawn the attention of many other women.

So nothing that belongs to her she can actually call her own. So Manjula is constantly trying to, constantly feel estranged and alienated from her life from everything that she thinks belongs to her. So she's always estranged from her writing partly because by virtue of being an author she is concealed by language. She is displaced by the very novel that she writes and the readers relationship is with the novel and not necessarily with the author. So the author may not necessarily write for a specific readership or an audience when she is writing the novel. So there's that.

So there's everything out here is the relationship of the author to her own name, to literature, to her own writing, to the readers she writes for write, to her husband in this case or to a sister everything is mediated by language and by representation. And this is when the image parodies itself anticipates the interpretations that one may have a psychoanalyst may have of the image. There was a time when critics would have said I was your conscience like in the good old Hindi films. The hero reaches out for the money and suddenly a shadow to start speaking.

Don't that money is meant for your father's medicines do you want to break your mother's heart or it would be - it could be his image in the mirror but those simple days are gone. Today I would have to be a Freudian unconscious. Everything you said sir repressed material, forbidden impulses, taboo in the recollections a dream bad dream actually I could be an interpretation of a bad dream. The image giggles sorry about that. Look you asked me who I am. Does one ever know who one is it's the ultimate question, isn't it? Where did I come from? Where am I going? You are the English Lit person Hamlet started at all. You should know no he was asking me. We could go back to narcissus of course. He loved his image which is more than can be said about you. What about the romantic period, the doppelganger Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. The Picture of Dorian Gray and if you are willing to go beyond Ingot and consider Russian literature does the excuse the double. Jacques Liqueur would have embraced me if he were here. I'd be quite happy to be essential transcendental signified. You could deconstruct me out of existence. So this is of course echoing the potential psychoanalytic interpretations of what it means to have an image as

an extension of oneself as a double as a doppelganger. Then there's the instance of Sita which the imagery of Sita. Yes take Sita as her other there was a Maya Sita, the illusory Sita. According to some versions of the Ramayana it was actually the illusory Sita that Ravana carried off and then in the later sections of the epic Rama replaces the absent Sita with a golden image. It seems as the men in the Ramayana never got to the real Sita. So the whole question really is about the ontology. What is the ontology and what is the epistemology of the self? So who is the real self? How does one arrive at the real authentic self through language, through representation, through relationships. So who is the perception. Who who is the real self? How does one determine the reality of the self? Is it possible to capture a real self that is not always already mediated by language and structure and the image tries to convince Manjula to actually confess that she has plagiarized the novel.

And then Manjula confesses that Pramod wanted to move to United States because he gets a job in Los Angeles for being a software wizard. So it says to move she claims that she was invited to New York after the novel was released and was much fanfare in the opening inauguration of the release of the novel and she gets an email from her husband from Los Angeles congratulating her on the novel and all this happened soon after Malini dies Pramod moves to Los Angeles and Malini is awarded for the release of the novel and she also recounts her Malini was really upset when remote got an offer from the U.S. and then she died and then she claims to have sent the typescript through the literary agent in Britain and within a couple of weeks received an email from the agent accepting the normal for public and suddenly she feels extremely insecure because she had emotionally and financially dependent on her husband and now that he is away she feels lost and abandoned and then she realizes that her husband knows that she is responsible for having plagiarized the novel and that she has plagiarized her sister's novel by stealing the typescript soon after she died and submitting it to a British literary agent. She finally confesses that her marriage broke down because of the fact that she plagiarized her novel from Malini and that she allowed herself to get insecure to compete with Malini and she's constantly trying to convince herself that her husband didn't have an affair with her sister but then it remains ambiguous. Perhaps they did have an intimate relationship although the nature of the relationship remains uncertain but then that became a cause for great insecurity and jealousy in Manjula.

Manjula confesses towards the end I did not steal it. She tells the image. Malini liked to sign herself M Naik. My letter accompany the manuscript was signed Manjula Naik. The agent obviously thought we were the same person. His reply arrived at Pramod's email address. We shared a computer you see why does a Kannada right writer need a computer anyway. He printed off a copy of the reply and left it for me on the kitchen table. As I read the email I could sense him watching me from his corner I decided to face him. How can you accuse me of plagiarism I wanted to demand. Are you implying I knowingly stole my sister's novel? I knew he would deny any such insinuation. I was ready to pitch in to him bring the truth out of him. Why don't you say what is in your mind I wanted to go on. You know it was a genuine mistake. The agent is an Englishman I'm familiar with Indian names. She tries to pass off the novel. She very well knows that she is plagiarizing the novel but she tries to pass it off as a mere accident. Instead I hurt myself asking why did you leave the email message on the kitchen table. He looked nonplussed and it wasn't what had I meant to ask. But I had to plunge on you know I have a study of my own, a desk at which I work. Oh I'm sorry he said picked up the message from the kitchen table

took it into my study and plunked it down on my writing desk. Here the message, that was it. He pretended he didn't know what I was getting at but he did know you could see it in his anger. He had never been so angry before not with me. The subject was never mentioned again. So the husband of course realizes much later after the novel has been published that Manjula is responsible for plagiarizing the novel and so he is furious with her.

So you know it's interesting that Manjula realizes that the very novel that she's plagiarized from Malini portrays her Manjula as a very shallow woman, as a shallow jealous insecure woman and that she should publish it as it is in some sense works against her. So it becomes another instance where she begins to support herself. She ends up fighting with herself with her own by being shot in her own sense of self. And as she's trying to destroy the image the screen towards the end the screen emerges as a resurrection of Malini Naik herself and the image says I'm Malini Naik, the English novelist. Manjula Naik the Kannada short story writer was decimated the moment she read my novel. She thus obliterated all differences of ink and blood and language between us and at one full stroke morphed into me. Of course I shall continue with the name of Manjula Naik as Manjula Naik I have been invited as visiting professor to seven prestigious American universities. I use it nomenclature for my passport, my bank accounts, property and financial investments. However, I am in truth Malini. My genius of a sister who loved my husband and knew Kannada and wrote in English.

So you see how this authorship becomes here of course literally speaking a question of identity theft but it's also the fact if you looked at the play in more post-structuralist fashion you would get a sense that you're talking about how the author the figure of the author itself is a pseudonym, a false name a signifier, an empty signifier under which one writes one produces and the way in which the author dies and is replaced by the text by the novel itself which reaches out to people to very often very unintended audiences. So that in some sense presents the two layers of the play of how the play becomes a literal metaphor for plagiarism but for the way language takes the place of the author and the author becomes a mere empty signifier that doesn't signify anything as such. There's no essential self to be revealed behind the persona of the author and that meaning in some sense is also being deferred. So you don't really get a sense of who the real Manjula is until towards the end when she is morphed into one to both the sisters become one but then to say but then there is no essential identity to Malini Naik either. So it's just a claim that one makes towards one's own sense of identity which remains illusory. There's the sense of self, the active identifying oneself as one self remains fragile and illusory towards the very end.

Okay thank you.