

**Real Love from Animals Amidst Inhumane Politics:
Sa. Kandasamy's *Visaranai Commission*
A Validation of Humanity Through Animals**

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Humanity is a term which portrays the quality of love and compassion. People lose their basic quality of mercy and love for his fellow human being in today's context. This loss of humanity is evident in the novel *Visaranai Commission*. The author has tried his best to bring out the loss of humanity through the plot to the audience.

An animal will always be an animal. They are controlled by emotional behaviour. Whereas humans are controlled by emotional and intellectual behaviours, which at times result in double standard in life. Humans are not like that; they are manipulative. They will be humans even when they wear a mask. They are more inhumane when compared with animals at times. Usually, humans associate certain qualities with the characteristics of animals (for example, being loyal to the dog, repetition to parrot, etc). The fact is that animals and birds are far better than humans. With the advent of modernity, everything in our lives has changed. Face to face interactions have been replaced by texting and video calls. People have no time for friends and are running behind a fake and materialistic life. The actual meaning of humanity is lost; people have lost the pride of calling themselves humans. This is because people have lost the very essence of humanity which makes them human.

It is an unnamed rule in the countryside of Tamil Nadu that any dog must be named as Tiger, Mani or Raja. Likewise, Rukmini teacher of the story follows the rule by naming the dog, tiger. The story of tiger begins very earlier than its actual arrival. Rukmini has been asking permission to rear a pet at home, from the very beginning of her married life but Thangarasu has been denying her by giving various reasons "we do not have time, we cannot go on long travels, our neighbors may get disturbed or the pet may mess up things at home etc." Later, on seeing the pathetic machine life that Rukmini leads, he agrees to let her rear a pet. It is given to Rukmini by a student. Mostly people say that women must distance herself from rearing pets, especially

dogs. The reasons are that the dogs are unpredictable, it may turn violent at anytime and she must be careful with the dog during the menstrual cycles.

The arrival of Tiger into their life brings a lot of happiness. Though Thangarasu does not like it in the beginning, he starts to accept and adjust, because of the happiness Tiger has brought into Rukimini's life. He accepts Tiger in order to keep his wife happy. As days pass, he starts to like Tiger a lot, because he remembers his childhood days when he sees Tiger. Here Tiger becomes a symbol or memory that reminds Thangarasu of the past, in which there is not even a tinge of sadness. Thus, Tiger can be representative of young Thangarasu. Here, the author also criticizes young Thangarasu, by comparing him to a dog because dogs represent unnatural randomness and roams around without any reason and its behavior cannot be understood. During his young age, Thangarasu remained aimless, useless as well as jobless for several days. His mother criticized him for not being useful for home, because he was in touch with a local political personality and he does small petty works told by that local politician. Here, the mother's brain is very cunning at weaving plots; she plans on getting a job for her useless son with the help of the local politician. She asks him to go and seek his help. Here also he symbolizes a pet which cannot think or act on its own. The pet obeys only if the master orders. Without the instigation from his mother, Thangarasu would not have thought of it.

As far as Rukmini is considered, as a wife she feels insecure because Thangarasu's duty timings are not regular and she is unable to spend enough time with her husband. Secondly, she longs for a child. In order to give away her motherly care, she brings home a pet and grooms tiger as her own child. At times in the novel, we can read that tiger does not respond to Thangarasu, but responds to whatever Rukmini asks it to do. Though the authoritative master of the dog is Thangarasu, the dog obeys the orders of the caretaker instead of the master. It knows the differences between a master and the caretaker. Being a teacher Rukmini sees many children in school every day; this aggravates her longing for a child intensely that she terribly wants to have a child. Thus, when she cannot do so, she wants to fill the emptiness created by the absence of a child of her own by bringing up a dog.

Here, Rukmini does not make a wrong decision, but she could have made a better decision by caring Thangarasu as her child. This might have resulted in a better understanding between the couple and enabled her to refine him and make him a better person. Only the mother can be held responsible for the character of her child. This is the reason why people in villages say that a child who grows without the affection and love of a mother is more susceptible to go astray in life. Rukmini herself holds her mother-in-law responsible for Thangarasu's irresponsibility and indecency.

Tiger, the dog can also be considered as a main character of the novel and the third place can be given to Thangarasu and Rukmini. The author dedicates certain pages of the novel for the dog in order to emphasize the amount of importance that is given to the dog by its owners and the importance he, as an author, wants to give the dog. From the beginning chapters to the final chapters, the author shows that only the dog accompanies her when Thangarasu leaves Rukmini in the house in charge of the dog. The author never forgets to mention the whereabouts of the dog while narrating each and every event that happen in and around the household. For example, during the fated final day of the couple, a murder takes place in the morning during which the dog struggles to go inside the house.

Even when she is bedridden, Rukmini worries much about the dog. She does not give importance to her career or physical condition. She constantly worries about her inability to feed tiger properly which shows the true nature of Rukmini's heart. No one understands the couple like tiger, not even the readers. Even though Thangarasu and Rukmini are married and live in the same house, they are extremely opposite in character, attitude and behaviour. In the beginning, he addresses Rukmini as 'amma' (mother) but gradually we her sense her position being downgraded to that of a slut and a maid. Later in the final chapters, she regains her position of a mother. On the other hand, we cannot say that Rukmini is blameless and pure.

Rukmini knows well that she is married but her loyalty to her husband is questioned when Bharathivaanan flirts with her and she never tries to stop his flirtatious talks. This shows that she secretly enjoys it and silently approves his flirtatious ways and encourages him to continue. Rukmini on the other hand expects Thangarasu to be romantic to her but he fails to do so. Whereas, Bharathivaanan attacks her with romantic gestures like reciting poems about her beauty, showing his write ups and asks about her opinions which are the things expected by a woman like Rukmini. Here, this is another characteristic attitude of dogs.

Here, the reader can bring in the image of the media which is the watchdog of the society; when politics turns the state into chaotic place, the media tries to support the electoral candidates, and no one has the intention to bring out the truth. Media fails in doing its duty of being a watch dog. There is an irony in naming the dog as tiger. The name and the animal do not match. 'Tiger' is wild and ferocious where as 'Dog' is soft and can be tamed, but at times a dog can be as ferocious as a tiger, for example, hunting dogs. This hints at humans as they are good at changing their character and nature but even animal do it. By naming it as tiger, the author expects it to be ferocious like a tiger, safeguard both the masters and the house and attack its enemies. Throughout the novel, whether the author mentions about it or not, we can omniscient presence of the pet 'tiger'.

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Work Cited

Kanthasami, Sa. *Visaranai Commission*. Kavitha Publications, 2014. Print.
