

Intergenerational Trauma and the Politics of Silence in Paro Anand's Short Story "Hearing My Own Story"

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines domestic violence not merely as an isolated act of physical abuse but as a cyclical structure of suffering transmitted across generations. Through the parallel experiences of the child protagonist and her teacher, the story reveals how trauma is internalised, suppressed, and normalised within the domestic sphere. The culture of secrecy surrounding 'family matters' functions as a mechanism of control that protects the perpetrator while deepening the victim's isolation. Silence becomes both a survival strategy and a site of psychological fragmentation. The classroom discussion serves as a catalytic space where suppressed memories surface, transforming private pain into shared testimony. The moment of recognition between teacher and student disrupts the inherited cycle of fear and muteness, opening the possibility of change and intervention. Drawing on trauma theory and feminist perspectives on domestic violence, this paper argues that Anand represents storytelling as an ethical and political act. By portraying the child witness as someone who gradually develops strength and awareness rather than remaining a

passive sufferer, the story reshapes trauma as not only a burden but also a possible ground for resistance and change. Ultimately, the text underscores the urgent need to confront domestic violence through acknowledgment, solidarity, and institutional support.

Keywords: Intergenerational trauma, Domestic violence, Child witness, Trauma, Narrative healing.
