

# **Family, Community, and Survival in Contemporary Indian Fiction: A Study of Djinn Patrol on the Purple Line and The Mysterious Ailment of Rupi Baskey**

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## **Abstract**

This paper explores the themes of family bonds, community relationships, and everyday survival in *Djinn Patrol on the Purple Line* (2020) by Deepa Anappara and *The Mysterious Ailment of Rupi Baskey* (2022) by Hansda Sowvendra Shekhar. Set respectively in an urban slum in Delhi and a Santhal tribal village in Jharkhand, the two novels portray socially vulnerable communities facing crisis—child disappearances in one text and unexplained illness in the other. While both narratives expose institutional neglect, including the failure of

police systems, media structures, and medical authorities, they simultaneously foreground the resilience of ordinary people sustained by family ties and collective living. In Anappara's novel, the fear generated by the disappearance of children destabilizes the urban settlement, yet parental care, friendship, and neighborhood solidarity provide psychological strength to the characters. In Shekhar's novel, the mysterious illness of Rupi Baskey reveals both the limitations of modern medical intervention and the importance of familial responsibility and community engagement. The Santhal village emerges as an interconnected space where collective concern, shared rituals, and women's informal care networks sustain the social fabric. Rather than focusing on grand political ideologies or abstract theoretical constructs, this paper emphasizes the everyday dimensions of resilience—caregiving, shared grief, friendship, and moral responsibility. Both novels demonstrate that survival in marginalized contexts depends less on institutional structures and more on relational bonds. Through intimate portrayals of domestic life and communal interaction, Anappara and Shekhar suggest that family and community are not merely background settings but active forces that shape endurance, identity, and hope. Ultimately, the paper argues that contemporary Indian fiction continues to reaffirm the enduring value of human connection. In depicting crisis alongside compassion, these novels present survival not as heroic triumph but as collective persistence rooted in love, obligation, and shared humanity.

**Keywords:** Family, Community, Survival, Contemporary Indian Fiction, Social Reality

## **Introduction**

Contemporary Indian English fiction increasingly turns its attention to the lived realities of marginalized communities, not merely to expose hardship but to examine how

individuals negotiate survival within fragile social structures. Rather than presenting grand political revolutions or heroic transformations, many recent novels focus on the quiet endurance of ordinary people. In this context, *Djinn Patrol on the Purple Line* (2020) by Deepa Anappara and *The Mysterious Ailment of Rupi Baskey* (2022) by Hansda Sowvendra Shekhar offer compelling portrayals of communities confronting crisis while relying deeply on familial and communal bonds.

Both novels are set in socially vulnerable spaces: one in a Delhi basti marked by poverty and invisibility, and the other in a Santhal tribal village shaped by tradition and limited institutional access. The central conflicts—disappearing children in the urban settlement and the unexplained illness of a village woman—generate fear, uncertainty, and instability. However, the narrative focus does not remain solely on crisis. Instead, both authors highlight the structures of care that continue functioning despite institutional inadequacies.

In Anappara's novel, the disappearance of children exposes class inequality and state indifference. Yet the story is told through the voice of a child, Jai, whose understanding of the world is shaped by family influence, friendship, and local culture. His parents' anxiety, his mother's protective instincts, and his father's practical concerns illustrate how family becomes the primary unit of security when larger systems fail. Similarly, Jai's friendships with Pari and Faiz demonstrate that childhood solidarity becomes an emotional refuge amid social neglect.

In Shekhar's novel, the mysterious ailment of Rupi Baskey creates confusion within her family and community. Medical explanations remain inadequate, and her suffering cannot

be easily categorized. However, the narrative emphasizes how kinship ties, village relationships, and traditional practices sustain her during illness. The Santhal community does not treat Rupi's condition as an isolated event; instead, her illness becomes a collective concern. This collective involvement reflects a worldview in which individual well-being is inseparable from communal harmony.

The significance of studying these novels together lies in their shared thematic emphasis on relational survival. Although the urban slum and tribal village differ culturally and geographically, both settings reveal similar truths: when formal institutions such as police departments, hospitals, or media outlets fail to provide protection or clarity, families and communities step in as primary support systems. These networks may be imperfect and sometimes conflicted, but they remain vital.

This paper therefore examines how family and community operate as sustaining forces in times of crisis. By focusing on emotional bonds, everyday interactions, and shared responsibility, the study shifts attention from institutional critique alone to the human capacity for resilience. Through detailed comparison, it argues that contemporary Indian fiction foregrounds not only social problems but also the quiet strength embedded in collective living.

### **Family Bonds in *Djinn Patrol on the Purple Line***

In *Djinn Patrol on the Purple Line*, family functions as the most immediate and reliable structure of security within an environment marked by poverty, uncertainty, and fear. Set in a Delhi basti where several children mysteriously disappear, the novel presents domestic life as both fragile and resilient. Through Jai's perspective, readers witness how

parental anxiety, discipline, affection, and everyday routines shape a child's understanding of danger and protection.

### **The Household as a Space of Emotional Stability**

Jai's family is economically vulnerable. His father works long hours, and his mother manages the home with limited resources. Despite financial hardship, the household maintains order through routine—meals, school attendance, conversations, and rules. These daily practices create a sense of normalcy even as fear spreads across the community.

When children begin to disappear, Jai's mother becomes increasingly protective. She restricts his movements, scolds him for wandering, and insists on caution. Although Jai sometimes interprets her behavior as overbearing, the narrative reveals it as an expression of deep maternal fear. Her protectiveness reflects a broader reality in marginalized communities where parents cannot rely on state protection and must assume complete responsibility for their children's safety.

The father, while less openly emotional, also expresses concern through practical warnings and quiet vigilance. His authority within the household represents an attempt to maintain control in a situation that feels uncontrollable. Together, both parents embody different modes of care—emotional and practical—demonstrating how family structures respond dynamically to crisis.

### **Fear and Parental Vulnerability**

The disappearance of children disrupts the illusion of security within the basti. Parents who previously allowed their children to play freely begin to impose strict boundaries. This shift marks a transformation in family dynamics: childhood innocence collides with adult

anxiety.

The novel portrays how fear circulates within domestic spaces. Conversations at home revolve around missing children, rumors, and suspicion. Television news intensifies panic. Jai observes the tension in his parents' faces, absorbing emotional cues that shape his own perception of reality.

Importantly, the narrative does not romanticize family life. Arguments occur. Stress leads to frustration. Yet these moments reveal vulnerability rather than dysfunction. The family becomes a site where fear is processed collectively, where silence and speech alternate as coping mechanisms.

### **Friendship as Extended Family**

Beyond biological kinship, the novel presents friendship as a parallel structure of support. Jai's close companions—Pari and Faiz—form a small investigative team determined to uncover the truth behind the disappearances. Their collaboration reflects curiosity, bravery, and solidarity.

In the absence of adult solutions, the children create their own system of meaning. They interpret events through crime shows, imagination, and shared speculation. Although their conclusions are sometimes naïve, their partnership offers emotional stability. They reassure one another, share secrets, and confront fear together.

This child-centered solidarity suggests that family in the novel extends beyond blood relations. The basti's social fabric encourages collective interaction; children grow up in shared spaces, forming bonds that resemble sibling relationships. In times of crisis, these friendships become crucial psychological anchors.

## **Grief and Collective Parenting**

When a child goes missing, the entire community feels the impact. Parents grieve not only for their own children but for their neighbors' losses. This shared grief strengthens inter-family connections. Mothers gather to discuss safety measures; fathers debate possible solutions.

The novel subtly portrays a form of "collective parenting" within the basti. Adults watch over multiple children, and responsibility is distributed informally. However, when institutional systems fail to respond effectively, this collective structure is strained. Fear leads to suspicion, and unity is tested.

Even so, the narrative suggests that familial and communal bonds persist. They may weaken under pressure, but they do not collapse entirely. Instead, they adapt to new circumstances.

## **The Limits and Strength of Family**

While family provides emotional refuge, it cannot eliminate structural vulnerability. Jai's parents cannot guarantee his safety. Economic hardship restricts their choices. The novel thus acknowledges the limitations of domestic protection.

Yet, despite these constraints, the family remains a space of resilience. Love, discipline, shared meals, and nightly conversations continue. These small acts become powerful in their consistency. Survival is not portrayed as heroic defiance but as the continuation of everyday life.

In this way, *Djinn Patrol on the Purple Line* demonstrates that in marginalized urban settings, family bonds operate as primary survival mechanisms. They offer emotional

grounding when public institutions fail. Through Jai's experiences, the novel reveals that even amid fear and loss, domestic relationships sustain hope and identity.

### **Family, Illness, and Responsibility in The Mysterious Ailment of Rupi Baskey**

While *Djinn Patrol on the Purple Line* explores fear through the disappearance of children, *The Mysterious Ailment of Rupi Baskey* examines crisis through the lens of illness. In this novel, the central concern is not sudden loss but prolonged suffering. Rupi Baskey's unexplained ailment becomes the focal point around which family relationships, marital responsibilities, and community expectations revolve. Through her condition, the narrative reveals how care, duty, and emotional endurance shape survival in a Santhal village.

### **Illness as a Domestic Disruption**

Rupi's illness does not arrive with dramatic intensity; instead, it slowly unsettles the rhythm of domestic life. Household routines are interrupted. Physical weakness affects her ability to fulfill daily responsibilities. In a rural setting where domestic labor is closely tied to identity and social value, illness carries both physical and psychological consequences.

Her condition creates anxiety within the family. Unlike sudden tragedy, a lingering illness generates uncertainty. There is no clear diagnosis, no definite cure, and no predictable timeline. This ambiguity increases emotional strain. Family members struggle to interpret her symptoms, oscillating between hope and frustration.

The novel portrays illness not merely as a medical issue but as a relational experience. Rupi's suffering affects the emotional atmosphere of the household. Conversations change. Silence grows heavier. Care becomes a constant presence.

## **Marriage and Emotional Complexity**

Rupi's marriage is central to understanding how family operates during crisis. Her husband's response is neither perfectly supportive nor entirely neglectful. Instead, it reflects confusion, social conditioning, and emotional limitation. At times, he appears impatient; at other moments, he shows concern. This complexity makes the relationship realistic rather than idealized.

The novel suggests that marital bonds are shaped by both affection and expectation. In a traditional setting, a wife's role is often associated with physical strength and domestic contribution. Rupi's illness challenges these expectations. Her husband must adjust to a new reality in which care replaces dependence.

This shift highlights a subtle transformation: caregiving becomes an expression of responsibility. Even when emotional communication is imperfect, the bond remains intact. The marriage does not collapse under pressure, indicating the durability of familial ties.

## **Women's Informal Care Networks**

Beyond the immediate family, women in the village play a crucial role in responding to Rupi's illness. Female neighbors share advice, discuss possible remedies, and offer companionship. These interactions demonstrate how women's networks operate as informal healthcare systems.

In many rural communities, knowledge about health circulates through conversation rather than formal medical channels. Herbal remedies, ritual practices, and shared experiences create a collective understanding of illness. The novel presents this system without ridicule, acknowledging its cultural coherence.

Women's involvement also reflects emotional solidarity. They recognize Rupi's vulnerability not only as a medical problem but as a shared female experience. Their presence reduces isolation and affirms belonging.

### **Community Involvement and Collective Identity**

In the Santhal village, individual life is closely connected to communal identity. When Rupi falls ill, the concern extends beyond her household. Elders discuss possible spiritual causes. Rituals are considered. Community members express curiosity and sympathy.

This collective engagement contrasts with the anonymity of urban life. Illness here is not private; it becomes part of the village's shared narrative. The involvement may include gossip, but it also signals interdependence.

The novel emphasizes that survival in such a setting depends on collective awareness. The community's participation reinforces the idea that well-being is interconnected. Even when solutions remain uncertain, shared concern creates emotional strength.

### **The Endurance of Everyday Life**

Despite Rupi's suffering, life in the village continues. Festivals are celebrated. Fields are cultivated. Children play. This continuation does not diminish the seriousness of her illness; rather, it demonstrates resilience embedded in routine.

The novel presents survival not as dramatic victory but as persistence. Family members adjust responsibilities. Emotional tension becomes part of daily life. Care is woven into ordinary actions—preparing food, sitting together, discussing possibilities.

Through these details, *The Mysterious Ailment of Rupi Baskey* illustrates that family functions as both emotional anchor and practical support system. The absence of reliable

medical answers does not destroy relational bonds. Instead, it tests and ultimately strengthens them.

### **Urban Community: Anxiety and Fragmentation**

In the basti depicted in *Djinn Patrol on the Purple Line*, community life is intense but unstable. Houses are closely built, public spaces are shared, and daily interactions are frequent. Water lines, narrow lanes, and neighborhood shops create constant social contact. This proximity fosters familiarity but also spreads fear rapidly.

When children begin to disappear, anxiety circulates quickly through gossip, rumors, and media influence. The community initially unites in grief and protest. Parents gather to demand answers, and neighbors exchange information. However, as uncertainty continues, suspicion replaces solidarity. People begin to question one another. Class differences within the settlement become visible.

Thus, the urban community appears dynamic but fragile. It responds strongly in moments of shock but struggles to maintain unity over time. The absence of effective institutional support intensifies frustration, leading to internal tension. Nevertheless, even amid fragmentation, collective awareness persists. The loss of one child affects the entire basti, reinforcing a shared vulnerability.

### **Rural Community: Continuity and Interdependence**

In contrast, the Santhal village in *The Mysterious Ailment of Rupi Baskey* presents a slower and more deeply rooted form of community life. Social relations are shaped by tradition, kinship networks, and shared rituals. Unlike the rapidly shifting urban environment, the village operates through continuity.

When Rupi falls ill, the response is not panic but consultation. Elders discuss spiritual causes; women share experiences; family members deliberate over treatment options. The process reflects collective reasoning rather than chaotic reaction.

The rural community's strength lies in its interdependence. Agricultural labor, festivals, and social gatherings reinforce belonging. Illness becomes a shared concern not because of media attention or public protest but because community identity is collective by nature.

However, this closeness also has limitations. Gossip spreads. Privacy is minimal. Individual struggles become public knowledge. Yet even these aspects signal involvement rather than indifference.

### **Shared Patterns of Collective Responsibility**

Despite contextual differences, both novels reveal important similarities:

- Crisis triggers collective awareness.
- Emotional responses extend beyond the nuclear family.
- Community interaction shapes individual resilience.

In the urban basti, survival depends on shared vigilance and protest. In the village, survival depends on tradition and cooperation. Both models demonstrate that isolation is not an option for marginalized populations. Social bonds, whether tense or harmonious, remain essential.

### **Community and the Limits of Protection**

Neither community is portrayed as entirely successful in solving the central crisis. The basti cannot prevent further disappearances. The village cannot immediately cure Rupi's

illness. This limitation is significant. It prevents idealization.

Community support offers emotional strength but does not replace structural solutions. The novels therefore maintain realism. Survival is partial and ongoing rather than complete resolution.

### **Emotional Climate and Collective Identity**

The emotional atmosphere differs between the two settings. The basti is characterized by urgency, suspicion, and rapid change. The village is marked by continuity, ritual, and gradual adaptation. Yet both spaces generate a strong sense of belonging.

In both novels, identity is shaped through communal relationships. Jai's sense of self is tied to his neighborhood and friends. Rupi's identity is inseparable from her village and kinship ties. Community thus becomes not merely a background but a defining structure of existence.

Through this comparison, it becomes evident that whether urban or rural, community operates as a collective survival mechanism. It provides emotional reinforcement, shared responsibility, and a framework for interpreting crisis. Although imperfect, it remains central to the endurance of marginalized lives.

### **Survival Beyond Institutions: The Limits of Police, Media, and Medical Systems**

Both *Djinn Patrol on the Purple Line* and *The Mysterious Ailment of Rupi Baskey* present crisis situations in which formal institutions fail to provide effective protection or resolution. Police authorities, media structures, and medical systems appear present but insufficient. Against this backdrop of institutional inadequacy, survival shifts from public systems to private and communal networks. The novels therefore raise an important question:

what happens when the structures meant to safeguard citizens prove unreliable?

### **Institutional Failure in the Urban Context**

In *Djinn Patrol on the Purple Line*, the disappearance of children reveals deep inequalities within urban governance. Although the police conduct investigations, their response lacks urgency. The lives of slum children are treated as less valuable than those of middle-class citizens. Media attention is selective and sensational, often focusing on stories that generate higher visibility and sympathy.

The basti residents recognize this neglect. Protests are organized, voices are raised, and frustration grows. Yet the system does not respond proportionately. This institutional distance intensifies fear within families. Parents cannot depend on law enforcement for assurance; they must increase vigilance themselves.

The novel suggests that survival in such contexts depends less on formal justice and more on community alertness and familial caution. Institutions appear as distant authorities, whereas family members remain immediate protectors.

### **Media Representation and Social Hierarchy**

Media plays a complex role in the urban narrative. Television shapes Jai's imagination and informs his understanding of crime. However, media coverage also reflects class bias. Certain disappearances receive more attention than others. Visibility becomes a measure of value.

This uneven representation reinforces feelings of marginalization within the basti. The community's suffering is real, yet it does not command sustained national concern. As a result, emotional resilience becomes more important than institutional recognition. Families

learn to rely on one another rather than waiting for external validation.

### **Medical Uncertainty in the Rural Setting**

In *The Mysterious Ailment of Rupi Baskey*, institutional limitation appears in the form of medical uncertainty. Rupi's illness resists clear diagnosis. Doctors provide examinations but fail to offer definitive answers. Biomedical systems, often associated with authority and expertise, appear incomplete.

This uncertainty does not entirely discredit modern medicine, but it exposes its boundaries. The family must navigate between clinical advice and traditional belief. When medical explanations fall short, the community turns toward local knowledge systems.

The novel portrays this shift without presenting it as irrational. Rather, it reflects practical adaptation. In the absence of clear institutional solutions, families integrate multiple approaches in their attempt to protect loved ones.

### **Negotiating Between Systems**

Both novels depict characters negotiating between institutional and informal systems. *Jai's* community protests but continues daily life. *Rupi's* family consults doctors while also engaging in traditional practices. This negotiation highlights realism: marginalized communities cannot completely reject institutions, yet they cannot depend solely upon them.

Survival therefore becomes layered:

- Institutional engagement when possible
- Familial protection as immediate defense
- Community support as emotional reinforcement

This layered survival reflects adaptability rather than rebellion.

### **The Emotional Consequences of Institutional Gaps**

Institutional failure produces psychological effects. In the urban basti, parents experience heightened anxiety. Trust erodes. Children sense adult fear. In the village, uncertainty about diagnosis creates emotional exhaustion and quiet worry.

Yet these emotional consequences also strengthen internal bonds. Families become more attentive. Communities become more communicative. The absence of reliable systems intensifies relational interdependence.

### **Survival as Everyday Persistence**

Importantly, neither novel presents dramatic victory over institutional failure. There is no grand reform or sudden justice. Instead, survival is depicted as persistence—continuing to cook meals, attend school, participate in rituals, and sustain conversation.

This emphasis on everyday continuity suggests that marginalized communities endure not through institutional empowerment but through relational endurance. Care, routine, and shared responsibility become forms of resistance against invisibility.

### **Narrative Techniques and the Representation of Everyday Life**

An important reason why both novels powerfully communicate themes of family, community, and survival lies in their narrative techniques. The authors do not rely on dramatic speeches or overt moral commentary. Instead, they focus on ordinary details, simple conversations, and daily routines. Through these techniques, the novels create realism and emotional depth. The representation of everyday life becomes central to understanding resilience.

### **Child Narration and Limited Perspective in Djinn Patrol on the Purple Line**

One of the most striking features of *Djinn Patrol on the Purple Line* is its child narrator, Jai. The story unfolds through his limited understanding of complex social realities. This narrative choice shapes how readers perceive both crisis and community.

Jai interprets events through television crime shows, overheard adult conversations, and his own imagination. His language is straightforward, curious, and sometimes humorous. This simplicity creates contrast with the seriousness of the events. The disappearance of children is tragic, yet the narration remains filtered through childhood innocence.

This technique achieves several effects:

- It humanizes the crisis by showing how children emotionally process fear.
- It avoids heavy political explanation while still exposing inequality.
- It highlights the gap between adult knowledge and child perception.

By centering a child's voice, the novel emphasizes vulnerability. At the same time, it shows children as active observers rather than passive victims. Jai's investigation reflects curiosity and courage. Through everyday observations—walking through lanes, talking to neighbors, watching television—the narrative builds a realistic picture of basti life.

### **Use of Everyday Detail**

Anappara frequently describes daily activities: fetching water, attending school, cooking meals, and gossiping. These details create a textured social environment. Even during crisis, life continues. The ordinary does not disappear.

This focus on routine reinforces the theme of survival. The basti is not defined only by tragedy; it is also defined by shared meals, jokes, and friendships. The everyday becomes

a form of resistance against despair.

### **Multi-Perspective and Oral Rhythm in The Mysterious Ailment of Rupi Baskey**

In contrast, *The Mysterious Ailment of Rupi Baskey* employs a broader narrative style that reflects oral storytelling traditions. The prose often moves between characters, capturing village gossip, shared memory, and communal interpretation.

This shifting perspective mirrors the collective nature of rural life. Rupi's illness is not told from a single, isolated viewpoint. Instead, multiple voices contribute to the understanding of events. This technique reinforces the idea that identity in the village is interconnected.

The narrative pace is slower compared to the urban urgency of *Djinn Patrol*. Descriptions of fields, seasons, rituals, and domestic spaces create a sense of continuity. Illness unfolds gradually, matching the rhythm of rural existence.

### **Representation of Silence**

Both novels skillfully use silence. In the urban setting, silence appears in tense family conversations, unspoken fears, and unanswered questions. In the rural setting, silence reflects emotional restraint and uncertainty about diagnosis.

Silence becomes meaningful. It communicates anxiety, confusion, and endurance. By not over-explaining emotions, the authors allow readers to sense vulnerability indirectly.

### **Realism Without Idealization**

Importantly, neither novel idealizes community or family life. Arguments occur. Frustration is visible. Gossip spreads. Fear divides neighbors. These imperfections enhance realism.

Through simple language and grounded description, the authors avoid romanticizing marginalized life. Instead, they present it with honesty and empathy. Survival emerges not as heroic transformation but as steady continuation.

### **The Power of Ordinary Storytelling**

Ultimately, both novels demonstrate that powerful social commentary can emerge from ordinary storytelling. There are no exaggerated dramatic twists; instead, emotional intensity arises from recognizable human experiences—worrying about a child, caring for a sick spouse, sharing food, participating in festivals.

By centering everyday life, both authors highlight that resilience exists in small acts of care and communication. The narrative techniques therefore reinforce the paper's central argument: survival in marginalized contexts depends primarily on relational bonds sustained through daily interaction.

### **Conclusion**

This comparative study of *Djinn Patrol on the Purple Line* and *The Mysterious Ailment of Rupi Baskey* has examined how family bonds and community structures function as essential mechanisms of survival in marginalized contexts. Although the two novels are set in different socio-cultural environments—an urban Delhi basti and a Santhal tribal village—they converge in their portrayal of crisis managed through relational endurance rather than institutional assurance.

In *Djinn Patrol on the Purple Line*, the disappearance of children exposes the vulnerability of slum communities within unequal urban systems. Police investigations remain limited, media attention is selective, and systemic neglect deepens fear. Yet the novel

does not end with institutional critique alone. Instead, it foregrounds the emotional resilience of families and friendships. Jai's household, despite financial strain and rising anxiety, continues to function through care, discipline, and shared concern. The children's friendships create an additional support structure, reflecting solidarity in the face of uncertainty. The basti community, though fragmented by suspicion, demonstrates collective awareness and shared grief.

Similarly, *The Mysterious Ailment of Rupi Baskey* presents illness as a destabilizing force within a rural setting. Medical systems fail to provide definitive answers, and uncertainty challenges domestic stability. However, Rupi's family does not withdraw into isolation. Her husband, despite moments of confusion, remains connected through responsibility. Women's informal networks offer advice and companionship. The broader village engages in discussion and ritual, reinforcing the interconnectedness of individual and collective well-being.

Across both texts, survival emerges not as dramatic triumph but as persistence. Daily routines continue. Meals are prepared. Conversations unfold. Festivals are observed. Even under the shadow of fear or illness, ordinary life moves forward. This emphasis on routine underscores a central insight: resilience often operates quietly, through small and consistent acts of care.

The comparative dimension of this study reveals both difference and similarity. The urban community in *Djinn Patrol* appears more volatile, shaped by rapid information flow, media influence, and socioeconomic pressure. The rural community in *Rupi Baskey* reflects continuity, tradition, and gradual adaptation. Yet in both settings, relational bonds remain

indispensable. Neither police authority nor medical expertise alone ensures safety. Instead, families and communities absorb emotional shock and sustain psychological balance.

Importantly, these novels resist romanticization. Family life is not portrayed as perfect; tensions and misunderstandings exist. Communities are not entirely unified; gossip and suspicion arise. Such complexities strengthen the realism of the narratives. The authors acknowledge limitations while affirming endurance.

Ultimately, these works contribute significantly to contemporary Indian fiction by centering everyday resilience. They shift focus from large political rhetoric to intimate human experience. In doing so, they suggest that the true strength of marginalized communities lies in relational continuity. Love, obligation, shared memory, and collective responsibility become the foundation of survival.

By foregrounding ordinary lives, both novels remind readers that endurance is not always loud or visible. It often exists in kitchens, narrow lanes, village courtyards, and quiet conversations. Through careful depiction of domestic and communal life, the authors affirm that even in conditions of neglect and uncertainty, human connection remains a sustaining force.

**Conflict of Interest:** The corresponding author, on behalf of second author, confirms that there are no conflicts of interest to disclose.

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