



DECEPTION AND DOWNFALL IN THE SELECT PLAYS OF LORCA AND KARNAD

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ABSTRACT

The concepts like deception and downfall are defined and explained. The deception and downfall in Lorca's *Blood Wedding* and the same theme in Karnad's *Hayavadana* are studied. The comparative study of the select plays in the perspectives of deception and downfall is made. At the end, the conclusion and reference list are provided

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INTRODUCTION

One can define deception as a state of mind or behavioral pattern in which one inclines to deceive one and others for self-interest. For selfishness, personal pleasure and to make personal profit, one becomes ready to bury his/her principles and ethics. In the process of deception, one gets pleasure for some time but himself or herself or the other or others get hurt for longer time. The deception can be defined in various ways but some definitions given on web are presented below.

"Some thing that deceives or is intended to deceive; fraud; artifice."

"Deception is a trick or scheme used to get what you want."

Deception and downfall are correlated. Deception brings downfall. Suddenly, it is seen with the person who is deceived but soon or later, it affects the deceiver. Downfall is degradation or degeneration. Downfall is defined as to go down from the current position, status and prestige. It harms person, personality and his/her family. The forms of it varies, i.e., death, madness, frustration, suicide, fighting,

quarrel, destruction, disturbance, defame, being widow and orphan, etc. The definition of it can be as following:

"A loss of power, wealth, or status."
(Hawker 2006: 205)

"A sudden fall from a high position."
(Sohoni 2009: 196)

The playwright Federica Garcia Lorca (1898-1936, Spanish Playwright) published his play *Blood Wedding* in the year (1933) and the playwright Girish Karnad (1938, Indian Playwright) published his play *Hayavadana* in the year (1971). Though both the playwrights belong to the same century, belong to two different nations and socio-cultural variations but the common theme of deception and downfall is delineated in both the plays. The theme of deception and downfall in both the plays and the comparative study of the select plays in the perspectives of the same theme with the end of the conclusion is presented hereunder.

Deception and Downfall in *Blood Wedding*

Leonardo Felix, though married man having child, courts Bride. Mother-in-law and Wife, though

they know little about Leonardo's misbehavior, they never strongly oppose him. Mother-in-law and wife suspects him riding horse near the house of Bride but he denies. When the Mother-in-law says:

"I don't think the mother's too satisfied with the marriage."

On this statement, Leonardo remarks:

"And perhaps she's right. The girl's a worry."(Ibid: 17)

The Wife asks Leonardo for some money to buy a dress for herself and a bonnet for baby but he avoids direct answer and goes away. A girl comes in Leonardo's house and starts telling some news about Mother, Bridegroom and their preparation for marriage, but he scolds and makes her weep. Mother-in-law finds his behavior doubtful. But is it not a married man's deception to his own mother, wife and baby?

Though Mother knows Bride's illicit love with Leonardo and Leonardo's forefathers killed her husband and elder son, why did she not take a strong stand to oppose marriage? Is it not deception? After the settlement of marriage, Mother gives Bride present and asks:

"Are you happy?"(Ibid: 24)

She replies positively. She could have resisted here, if she had intense love for Leonardo but purposely, she kept all in darkness and deceived. The maidservant asks:

"Did you hear a horse in the night?"(Ibid: 27)

Bride denies. The maidservant informs about her former lover that:

"He stopped by your window."(Ibid: 27)

Bride calls her:

"Liar! Liar! Liar! What would he come here for?"(Ibid: 28)

But again when the sound of the riding horse comes, both Bride and maidservant peeps and finds Leonardo, then Bride admits, it is Leonardo. All she knows but she tries to hide their love in front of other people. Is it not deception?

Bride flings on the ground Orange Blossom, a symbol of happy married life, sent by Bridegroom. She denies wearing it. It is a regular custom there to wear it on wedding day but she denies even to try it. Is it not a deception? Why she then becomes ready

to marry Bridegroom. The question instigates one to think about her self-motives.

She tells her maidservant that she is happy in the marriage with Bridegroom as she is going to marry a wealthy person but her words and actions do not match. She pretends happiness. All where and to all, she tries to deceive.

On the very day, when the Bridegroom is on the way to invite Bride for nuptial ceremony, Leonardo Felix surprisingly is the first guest to arrive and that too alone to meet Bride in private and revives his love for Bride. He tells that:

"To be silent and consumed by fire is the worst punishment on earth, of those we inflict on ourselves. What use was pride to me, not seeing you, and you alone, lying there night after night? None at all! It served to stoke the flames higher!

Because one thinks time is a cure, and the walls will shut things out, and it's not true, it's not true. When flames reach the heart, they can't be quenched!" (Ibid: 34)

How one married man having child says so. Is he not deceiving his wife and child?

Though Bride does not allow Leonardo to come close to her, still she has love for him and it is seen in the instance that instead of wearing white wedding gown, she wears black dress on the very day of marriage. After marriage, Bridegroom goes ahead to remove her pins but she does not allow him as the people are around. The same reason, she gives him when he tries to accompany her in bedroom. She is not only deceiving herself but also to others. In the meantime, the Leonardo is seen twice in the background crossing the place. It is obvious that something wrong is going to happen.

After a moment of marriage, Bride and Leonardo elope. Father is shocked by his daughter's unexpected behavior and act. Mother with anger and sorrow shouts and blames Father and his wife for ill-upbringing of their daughter. She also uses harsh words for Leonardo Felix and Felix family. Two groups, Mother and relatives, and Father and relatives, are formed and go in search of both fugitives. Did the fugitives not deceive their family members? If they wanted to live together, then they should have not married with others. Why did they

play an emotional game with others? It is plainly deception.

Both of them, one is rightful husband and another is former lover who is married man and has a child, fight for woman, Bride and meet a tragic death, leaving Bride, Mother, Wife, Mother-in-law and Father in lamentation. It is destruction and degradation. Is it not a downfall of three families of Bride, Bridegroom and Leonardo Felix? What is responsible for it? Is not the personality trait like deception responsible for downfall? Absolutely yes.

Deception and Downfall in *Hayavadana*

The father of Hayavadana's mother has confidence about his daughter. Therefore, he allows her to choose her own husband by way of *swayamvara* so that she will choose a right husband but she brings despair by deciding to marry a horse instead of prince and that way, deceives her father. Initially, her decision to marry horse takes her to happy journey but later brings her downfall. She has to become mare by the curse of her own husband and against her wish, she has to go in heaven leaving back her only son 'Hayavadana' with horses heard.

Devadatta is the son of revered Brahmin in Dharmapura. He is very intelligent. He knows well, he failed fifteen times in love within last two years. Again he falls in love with a beautiful girl in Dharmapura. If so, he does not know the name of the girl. He praises her beauty. He is eager to marry and live with her. He says Kapila:

"In one appearance, she became my guru in the poetry of love. If only she would consent to be my Muse, I could outshine Kalidasa. I'd always wanted to do that – but I thought it was impossible.... But now I see it isn't at all impossible." (Karnad 1998: 14)

Then the question arises, though he is so called intelligent; though he is deep in love with the girl, why he swears goddess Kali and lord Rudra that if his intense desire to marry the girl is fulfilled:

"I'll sacrifice my two arms to the goddess Kali, I'll sacrifice my head to Lord Rudra..." (Ibid: 14)

It is surprising and something like deception that at one hand, he will marry girl and at the second hand, he will make her widow. Is it not deception? Will it not bring sorrow and despair in the life of that girl?

After achieving her, if he wants to die then why he wants to marry her. The question remains unanswerable. And as per his swear, he dies, deceives girl and brings further downfall not only to him but also to others like that girl, Padmini and Kapila.

After six months of the marriage, Devadatta, Kapila and Padmini decide to go on trip at Ujjain. Kapila goes to bring cart. A little delay of Kapila makes Padmini restless. Several times, she goes in window to see his arrival. She likes the company of Kapila, even against the resistance of Devadatta. Is it not deception to husband? They blame each other for mistrust. They cancel trip. Knowing it, Kapila becomes sad and tells the same to the cart man. But is it ethically right, against the wish of the husband, to go there and tell that:

"What's wrong with me? I'm perfect. I had a headache this morning. But a layer of ginger-paste took care of that. Why should we cancel our trip for a little thing like that? I don't have a headache now!" (Ibid: 24)

She packs all necessary things. Devadatta becomes unhappy and shocks for sudden change in Padmini's mind. She takes care of Kapila's mood and mind but not of Devadatta. She pays all her attention to Kapila. Is it not deception? In trip all the way, she praises Kapila which makes Devadatta angry and unhappy. Kapila brings flower for her. When he climbs up tree, she likes his body and says:

"He is like a Celestial Being reborn as a hunter. No woman could resist him." (Ibid: 26)

Devadatta realizes that Padmini is in love with Kapila and Padmini senses her husband's suspicion about her attraction towards Kapila. Is it not faithlessness in husband – wife relationship? Fairly, it is deception. Devadatta expresses his wish to resume the journey but Padmini does not listen him. Devadatta wants to go to the temple of Kali but Padmini supports Kapila's idea to visit first the temple of Rudra. Devadatta does not go and stays at the spot and guards the cart. Padmini realizes her husband's doubt but she does not care for that. This leads to the cut up off Devadatta's head and death. Means, it is not only the downfall of Devadatta but also of Padmini and Kapila.

When Kapila and Padmini find Devadatta's missing. Kapila shouts but Padmini is not seen anxious. After finding Devadatta's dead body, Kapila drowns deep in agony and cuts off his head and dies for the sake of his friend without thinking about Padmini and her survival. Both of them do not think even for a moment about that woman. Devadatta is her husband and Kapila is her lover but they die for each other's friendship, leaving Padmini alone in agony. Is it not a deception of a husband and lover to a woman?

After finding the dead bodies of both, she cries and instead of facing the path of defame, she decides to die. Is it not her downfall? Doubt, suspicion, fulfillment of oath, etc. brought downfall to Devadatta; love brought downfall to Kapila and attraction and illicit love to Padmini.

Padmini gets an opportunity to make both the dead bodies alive with the blessings of goddess but she seems little selfish to make the mistransposition of heads: Kapila's head to Devadatta's body and Devadatta's head to Kapila's body.

On this act, even goddess murmurs that:

"My dear daughter, there should be a limit even to honesty." (Ibid: 33)

Is it not deception of Padmini to goddess Kali to attach wrong heads to wrong bodies? This further adds to the downfall of all.

After mistransposition of heads, a hot debate starts for who will be the rightful husband of Padmini, either Devadatta with Kapila's body or Kapila with Devadatta's body. Both of them claim for Padmini as wife. Here, are they not motivated by self-interest and selfishness? Are they not looking to deceive each other? Where do their true principles of close friendship disappear? Or do they forget their friendship for a woman? The questions are answerless. Still Padmini stands firm to go with Devadatta with Kapila's body. Is she not motivated by self-interest? She prefers to live with Devadatta's intellectual head and Kapila's strong body. Why is it so? She does not think about the one who has to live under the shadow of injustice. When the Rishi announces his verdict:

"As the heavenly KalpaVriksha is supreme among trees, so is the head among human limbs.

Therefore the man with Devadatta's head is indeed Devadatta and he is the rightful husband of Padmini." (Ibid: 40)

Devadatta becomes happy as he is gifted with the powerful body of Kapila. Is it not a deception in friendship? When the disappointed Kapila starts to leave the place, Padmini tells him that they will meet again and reminds the fact that she is going with his body. The question strikes the mind – will she remain faithful to the man to whom she preferred to go with?

Devadatta brings dolls from Ujjain fair for child. In Ujjain fair, he wrestles with wrestler from Gandharva and wins. After return, he tells the fact to Padmini and it is also possible due to Kapila's strong body but Padmini doubts that the people will come to know about the exchange of heads. Devadatta removes her fear by saying:

"Of course they won't. I was standing there bare-bodied and not a sole suspected." (Ibid: 43)

The dolls have been brought by Devadatta from Ujjain fair but the dolls seem to break apart Devadatta and Padmini from each other. They stay at Devadatta's home but they curse Devadatta; they dislike Devadatta's new born baby; they always complain about treatment; they appear in the dream of Padmini and try to create interest for Kapila. Is it not deception of dolls to their owners like Devadatta and Padmini? Are they loyal to Devadatta and Padmini? No. It is deception.

Devadatta and Kapila come to their former state of mental and physical abilities. Is it not downfall? After Devadatta going to Ujjain to bring new dolls, Padmini goes in forest; meets Kapila; becomes happy to see him in his former state and says about her son that:

"Your body gave him to me." (Ibid: 54)

"He has the same mole on his shoulder." (Ibid: 55)

She holds his hand and gently says about body that:

"When this went to you, it was so soft, like a prince's." (Ibid: 55)

He requests her to go back and says:

"I am Kapila now." (Ibid: 56)

But she replies:

"Be quiet, stupid. Your body bathed in a river, swam and danced in it.

Shouldn't your head know what river it was, what swim? Your head too must submerge in that river – the flow must rumple your hair, run its tongue in your ears and press your head to its bosom. Until that's done, you'll continue to be incomplete.”

(Ibid: 58)

She starts caressing his face and leans on him. Kapila also does not stop him to take her in his arms. She stays there for four to five days. Is it not a deception to one husband and a friend? Will it not bring destruction and downfall? Devadatta reaches Kapila's hut in forest with anger. After a discussion, he asks Kapila:

“Do you really love Padmini?” (Ibid: 60)

Kapila says:

“Yes.” (Ibid: 60)

And suggests that:

“Devadatta, couldn't we all three live together – the Pandavas and Draupadi.”
(Ibid: 60)

The love triangle seems here which results in fighting and terrible death. Padmini goes sati. What they achieved in life. The attraction and deception take them to the ultimate downfall, destruction and death. They leave alone the unfortunate child back without father and mother to face the challenges in life.

Hayavadana is suffering from horse's head and to get rid of that and become complete man, with Bhagvata's suggestion, he goes to Kali temple. Goddess listens his half wish and makes him complete horse with human voice. How is it? Goddess should know and realize the wish of the devotee. But not. Is it not deception? The devotee, Hayavadana, now leaves the hopes to become a complete man and tries to get rid of human voice and in the end, he starts neighing. Is it not downfall?

Comparative Study of the Select Plays in the Perspectives of Deception and Downfall

The plays, *Blood Wedding* and *Hayavadana*, are written by Federica Garcia Lorca and Girish Karnad respectively. Though the playwrights belong to two different nations, socio-cultural variations, the select plays depict the common theme of deception and downfall.

The Father has confidence about his daughter, Bride. Same way, the father of Hayavadana's mother has confidence about his daughter. But both of them deceive their fathers by eloping with her former lover and another by choosing horse as her husband. Initially, the Bride's decision to elope with Leonardo makes her happy and content but later brings her downfall. The same happens in *Hayavadana*. Hayavadana's mother's decision to marry horse takes her to happy journey but later bring her downfall.

Bridegroom is from wealthy family as well Devadatta is the son of revered Brahmin in Dharmapura. Both of them fall in love with girl named Bride and Padmini respectively and are eager to marry them.

Leonardo rides the horse near the house of Bride but he denies the fact conveniently. He avoids giving money to wife to buy dress for herself and bonnet for baby. He scolds girl and makes her weep as she was telling Wife and Mother-in-law about marriage preparation of Bride and Bridegroom. Though he is married man, his behavior and action tell us something about black and dirt in mind. Same way, Padmini, though married woman, becomes suddenly ready to go at the temple of Rudra with Kapila against the wish of Devadatta. Equally same with Leonardo, Padmini's behavior and action tell us something fraud in her mind.

In *Blood Wedding*, Mother asks Bride if she is happy with this marriage. Bride replies positively. She could have rejected the proposal, if she had intense love for Leonardo. But not. She kept all in darkness and deceived. The same in *Hayavadana*, if Padmini is impressed with Kapila's appearance and strength, she could have rejected Devadatta's proposal. But she kept all in darkness and deceived.

In *Blood Wedding*, Mother-in-law finds Leonardo's behavior doubtful but it is of no use. Same way in *Hayavadana*, Devadatta finds Padmini's behavior doubtful but also it is of no use. Both of them, Mother-in-law and Devadatta, are found helpless to correct Leonardo and Padmini respectively.

In *Blood Wedding*, Leonardo, on the day of the marriage goes alone to meet Bride and revives their love and that way, he deceives his wife and

child. Similarly, Padmini in *Hayavadana* goes in forest and revives her love for Kapila and that way, she deceives her husband and child.

In both the plays, love triangle seems which results in fighting and terrible death. In *Blood Wedding*, Bride arouses her constant flame of love for Leonardo, though married with Bridegroom. The same thing happens in *Hayavadana* in case of Padmini as she arouses her constant flame of love for Kapila, though married with Devadatta. It is faithlessness in husband – wife relationship.

In *Blood Wedding*, Bride deceives Bridegroom, Mother, Father, Wife and Mother-in-law and the same people are deceived by Leonardo Felix. The motif behind deception is self-interest and selfishness. But the end is tragic. The Bridegroom and Leonardo die in fight. The bride becomes widow and all others including Mother, Father, Wife, child and Mother-in-law drown in lamentation. The deception merely results in downfall. In *Hayavadana*, Padmini deceives Devadatta. The motif behind deception is self-interest and selfishness. As equal, the end is tragic. Devadatta and Kapila die in fight and Padmini goes sati leaving alone their son to drown in lamentation. *Hayavadana* too faces the deception and downfall. Similar with *Blood Wedding*, the deception results in downfall.

Bridegroom and Leonardo die for love but they do not think even for a moment about Bride. They die and leave her alone to face the challenges in life. Is it a true love of true men towards woman? The same happens in *Hayavadana*, both Devadatta and Kapila fight for a woman Padmini and die but they do not think for her and her survival. They left her alone.

Illicit love, attraction and deception bring downfall to Leonardo and Bride. Similarly, it brings downfall to Kapila and Padmini.

Conclusion

One should be loyal to one. In the initial stage, deception looks profit worthy, good and favorable but ultimately, no doubt, it brings downfall, displeasure, discomfort, defame and in worst case, death.

In *Blood Wedding*, Bride and Leonard deceive Bridegroom, Mother, Father, Wife, Mother-in-law and child by their misbehavior and

act which ultimately result in the death of two young men and death in life of all the other remaining till the last moment of their life. If Leonardo had intense love for Bride and Bride too, they could have waited for some time and married each other but not. Being a married man and too having child, he should have understood the welfare of his onetime beloved but not. He arouses his passion for Bride continuously which results in their elopement and tragic death of young and making Bride, widow. Now, she has neither husband nor lover. What she achieved by her misdeed. Nothing but downfall to herself and others.

In *Hayavadana*, Padmini, Devadatta and Kapila deceive each other and bring tragic downfall and death to each other, leaving child alone. They achieved nothing but defame. In case of *Hayavadana*, he is deceived by his mother, father and also by goddess Kali. His desire to become complete man is failed and becomes complete horse. It is his downfall.

In both the plays, love triangle, deception, fighting, downfall, death and lamentation are common. To conclude, in a nutshell, it can be said that in the select plays, the personality trait like deception is responsible for downfall.

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