

Marginalised femininity and Gaslighting: The Marginalization of Women in the selected fiction of Alice Munro

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Abstract

Alice Munro is the first Canadian woman to win the Nobel Prize in 2013. A prolific writer she has garnered three of Canada's Governor General's Literary Awards. Munro was awarded the Man Booker International Prize in 2009 for her overall contribution to fiction. She has established herself as one of Canada's major authors and the world's finest fiction writers. Her fiction vividly describes ordinary people and captures the essence of their lives in her stories. She has published eighteen volumes of short stories as well as a novel, *Lives of Girls and Women*. Marginalised Femininity which is defined as a type of femininity, which is determined not by biology but because of position. In it women have been pushed to the edge of society by blocking them from various rights, opportunities and resources that are normally available to members of dominant group. Marginalization is the exclusion or removal of some people by the tendencies or overt actions of human societies. It is a process that leads to sidelining of an individual to the verge of the social negotiations, economic bargaining and political space. It also means to relegate to powerless position within a society or group. It also portrays that to be marginalized is to be placed in the margins and thus excluded from the privilege and power found at the centre. It is because of marginalisation of women that they become victims of gaslighting which is a form of psychological abuse. Marginalised femininity and gaslighting goes hand in hand. Gaslighting is a form of psychological abuse where a person or group makes someone question their sanity, perception of reality or memories. The present paper reveals how women are oppressed and marginalized in Alice Munro's selected fiction. The works selected for analysis are *Queenie* and *Dimensions*. In these short fiction women are placed at the margin of society. They are brutally treated and deprived of their rights. They are considering as inferior beings in family and society. They are abused, exploited and are the victims of violence. This paper is a research on the selected writings of Alice Munro's Short Fiction. She talks about the lives of women who struggle to live under the oppressive system. The protagonists in *Dimensions* and *Queenie* long to lead their lives filled with love for their loved ones and experiencing gaslighting often feel confused, anxious and unable to trust themselves. This abuse was well depicted through the characters of Doree and Queenie.

Keywords: Marginalisation, Coercive control, Domestic violence, Gaslighting, Oppression and Marginalised femininity.

Introduction

The concept of marginalization has been the important theme in the selected short stories. Alice Munro is a keen observer of the different issues of society. She writes to spread awareness among people about the marginal, downtrodden section of society. These short stories unfolds unbearable bitter truths of society such as the condition of the marginalized groups of society especially women who are victims of inequality, injustice and prejudice. Marginalization of women is seen in both the works selected for analysis. Women are marginalized and remain at the periphery of the social order and are neither fully inside nor outside. Men remain at the centre of society having power and control while women remain at the margin of social order. They have no access to power or to control or to dominate position. They are treated unequally with men and are thwarted from finding space in the centre of the social order. Hence they become the victims of oppression and gendered violence. The term gendered violence refers to the violent acts committed against women, primarily because of their socially constructed subordinate gender role. It is the most extreme expression of unequal gender relations in society in which the female is usually the victim. It arises from the unequal power relations between men and women in patriarchal society; that attributes power to men to subordinate women. In it men is given the superior status, is powerful and possess power to control and violate woman in all social relations. The term gendered violence states that violence is rooted in the inequality between men and women. Violence against women is an indication of the tendency of dominating and discriminating women by men who hinders the growth of women and forced them to become meek and subordinate when compared to men. Patriarchal power structures and social construction has mainly affected the lives of women reducing them to subordinate status. Susan Hekman says that: "The cause of women subordination is not the political/economic/legal/structures or even biology, but the meaning conferred on the identity 'woman' in all aspects of cultural life" (99). Women bear silently this indirect violence of social construction. Women's body and their emotional nature both are responsible for marginalising their role in society. The functioning of violence is apparent with a number of social institutions. The first and the foremost is family which has been functioning as a violent site encompassing conflicts, hostile and aggressive behaviours and differences in opinion. Linda Gordon says that: "family violence is not an expression of one person's violent temperament; it is the result of joint activities by several individuals of the family" (247). In a man-dominated world, violence is

considered a tool to socialize family members according to prescribed norms of behaviours set by male members of the family. Marginalised Femininity is defined as a type of femininity, which is determined not by biology but because of position. In it women have been pushed to the edge of society by blocking them from various rights, opportunities and resources that are normally available to members of dominant group. Peter Leonard described marginalised as: “outside the mainstream of productive activity and /or social reproductive activity” (180). Women bear marginalisation at gender level as Bell Hooks in the article “Sisterhood: Political Solidarity between Women” articulates: “Women are the group most victimised by sexist oppression” (485). This gender disparity hinders the growth and development of women as it keeps them away from main stream. It is because of social positions females and males become different. Women are marginalised in the world dominated by men. They are treated as ‘Other’ and are marginalised because of structural and systematic discrimination prevalent in the society. Therefore, it may be said that women are oppressed and marginalised in almost every society and more specifically in patriarchal society. In patriarchal society, power is commonly equated with domination and control over people or things. Like men, women too are taught from childhood that dominating and controlling others is the basic expression of power. Violence against women is the consequence of inequalities in the power distribution between men and women within society. Women have been reduced to status of marginalised or they have been relegated to margins due to systemic and structural discrimination within society. Women, irrespective of their hierarchical status, ranking or background, face violence within public or private spaces. They are often oppressed by norms, culture and customs in male dominated world where they are objectified and denied of the basic rights.

Men have been identified with attributes of dominance, masculinity and independence where as women have been objectified and treated as fragile, sensitive and totally dependent. This notion becomes applicable in both western and eastern cultures. The different attributes of hyper masculinity and marginalised femininity play a significant role in enhancing gendered violence in the form of domestic violence, child abuse, wife battering and violence against women. It is in fact, against the weak, fragile and powerless members of the family.

Marginalised femininity is seen in the female characters of Alice Munro possessing attributes such as tenderness, innocence, powerlessness, dependence, domestication, under coercive

control, gas lighting and at the margins. They have no access to power or to control or to dominant positions. Alice Munro's stories show a cruel and bitter relationship between the men and women.

Innocence and Powerlessness

One of the prominent features of marginalised femininity is women's innocence, powerlessness and their position at the margins. Alice Munro's female protagonists are full of innocence, powerlessness and are timid in nature. They do not wish to harm anyone and the female characters believe in values like commitment, love and family bond. In the dreadful story, "Dimension" which depicts the tragic and depressed life of a twenty-three year old woman Doree. The short story, "Dimension" was written by Alice Munro and it tells us a miserable family story between the husband Lloyd and the wife Doree, in which domestic violence resulted in the family tragedy. Their three children were murdered by their father Lloyd when Doree left her house to her female friend Maggie to escape abuse at home. She is the protagonist of this story and is a victim of a patriarchal tyrant, Lloyd, her husband. She is an innocent and emotional young girl who passes through many struggles owing to death of her parents and has married her mother's friend for a secured life. Doree was sixteen when her mother died of an embolism; and was sheltered and helped by Lloyd. She finds herself first: "pregnant, then married" (*Too Much* 4). She was living the life that her husband has imposed on her. She was helpless and powerless and her views and her beliefs have no importance when being with Lloyd. Everything was governed by Lloyd, it rather seems as if she was adapting to everything he determines: "His philosophy of life had changed as he got older- he believed in marriage, constancy and no birth control. And he found the Sechelt Peninsula, where he and Doree lived, too full of people these days- old friends, old ways of life, old lovers" (*Too Much* 4). It is this innocence and powerlessness that made her a victim of domestic violence and abuse. Lloyd, her husband not only isolates her from her own thoughts, but also from her old friends and old life: "Soon he and Doree moved across the country to a town they picked from a name on the map: Mildmay" (*Too Much* 4). When it comes to domestic violence, Stets argues: "that social isolation leads to weakened social support and social control . . . women who cannot identify anyone besides their partners to whom they turn for help are considered isolated" (669-680). By marrying Doree, Lloyd seems to have gained a certain power over her and by isolating her from

her family and friends he found it easier to control her. She was prevented from going to work and was domesticated.

Dependence and Domestication

Doree was sixteen when her mother died of an embolism; and was sheltered to certain point, by Lloyd. They both fell in love and they married. However, after that, Lloyd changed and became cruel and rude to Doree. The story commences with Doree who is travelling in a bus from Blue Spruce Inn to visit her husband, Lloyd in prison. The story reflects the role assigned to women in a patriarchal society and lays out the life of Doree, a housewife and mother of three children. Alice Munro painted a lively picture of how is the life of some housewives through the story of Doree and her suffering. The protagonist was domesticated by her husband and the space which was given to her was home and kitchen. As it is clear when Doree and Maggie went for shopping for groceries together both of them: “talked mostly about the children and things they cooked” (*Too Much* 2). For most of the part, the relationship between the husband and the wife was more of a dominant and submissive relationship than a marriage. She was a girl who had to leave her adolescence behind at an early age to become a wife, mother and a woman. Due to lack of experience she had to depend on her husband, Lloyd, who in fact is a hyper masculine man and has power over her. Lloyd had been the only man behind Doree’s pitiful plight as he tells her that she was not allowed to wear make-up: “She had got out of the way of wearing makeup because he hadn’t allowed it” (*Too Much* 3). She was completely at the mercy of Lloyd and she became everything he wanted her to be: “Her hair had been long and wavy and brown then, natural in curl and colour, as he liked it, and her face bashful and soft . . . the way he wanted to see her” (*Too Much* 2). Doree who was without family was fully dependent on Lloyd and he isolates her from her remaining friends by moving away: “They did not live in town; they rented a place in the country” (*Too Much* 4). Wilson explains social isolation: “as the lack of contact or sustained interaction with individuals and institutions that represent mainstream society” (69). Doree’s life has been the biggest example of isolation and domestication. Firstly she moved to a rural area with Lloyd, but he also thought: “that their children should be educated at home” (*Too Much* 9). Doree does not feel comfortable with his decision, but when suggesting otherwise he argues: “I just happen to think they are my kids . . . they are our kids, not the Department of Education’s kids” (*Too Much* 9). As a result of Lloyd’s decision, Doree then was forced by her

condition to stay put and remain inside the house and has to home school their children. In this way he limits her territory and forced isolation on her. Doree was not financially independent and she was more dependent on Lloyd not only for food, cloth, but to rear her children as she would not be able to raise them on her own. Already at the very beginning of "Dimension," Munro sets up: "a binary opposition between the older, experienced Lloyd, who at times seems to fulfil a parental role. Albeit an increasingly harsh and unreasonable one, and the naive Doree, A parentless teenager. As subject, Lloyd decides they will move; they will not use birth control; Doree will not use makeup; she will not work outside the home; and the children should be home schooled" (Fetherston 276). Doree depended on her husband too much financially and emotionally. She was depended on Lloyd: "No matter how worn out she got with him, he was still the closet person in the world to her, and she felt that everything would collapse if she were to bring herself to tell someone exactly how he was, if she were to be entirely disloyal" (*Too Much* 14).

At the Margins and Under Coercive Control

Doree was a weak and timid woman. It was her meekness as well as her too much dependence on Lloyd which made her a victim of domestic violence. She was timid and did not dare to raise her voice in front of her husband. This was clearly visible when Maggie asked Doree: "Is everything all right with you? I mean in your marriage . . . Doree said yes, without hesitation" (*Too Much* 11). After that Doree became more careful about what she said. She saw that there were: "things that she was used to that another person might not understand. Lloyd had a certain way of looking at things: that was just how he was" (*Too Much* 11). Another example of her meekness was when Lloyd ransacked her dresser drawers, she thought: "it's just kind of a joke when he goes looking for them" (*Too Much* 11). She did not think that her husband was invading her privacy but just let her husband ransacked her drawers. On the other hand Lloyd was a hyper masculine man with exaggerated dominance. Doree was not allowed to interact with any other person than Lloyd. She was always under coercive control which is a form of domestic abuse or intimate partner violence. Her dream of a happy marital life fail because of her abusive husband and his distorted mind was understood by Doree when she had stopped breastfeeding their youngest son. He does not allow Doree to stop breastfeed and her fear of being neglected by the husband was clearly visible when she told him: "that her milk had dried up, and she'd had to

start supplementing. Lloyd squeezed her breast after the other with frantic determination succeeded in getting a couple of drops of miserable-looking milk out. He called her a liar. They fought. He said that she was a whore like her mother" (*Too Much* 7). Even her laughter was controlled by Lloyd and she was allowed only to laugh on his jokes: "She was even allowed to laugh with him, as long as she was n't the one who started the laughing" (*Too Much* 11). Doree was under coercive control as she was no longer allowed to control her own body. This can be seen when Lloyd commands her not to take birth control pills, as he does not believe in it anymore. When asked by Maggie, whether she was using birth control, she was shocked and quickly replied: "she wouldn't dare . . . that was awful to do, without telling him" (*Too Much* 10-11). Lloyd being the head of family was always in the centre of society having power and control while Doree remain at the margins of social order. It was clearly visible when Doree gets her first child at the age of sixteen, rapidly followed by two other babies. Lloyd sees himself as head of the family, as the decision taker. He wants his children to be home educated and does not seem willing to share them with other people. On the other hand Doree is not allowed to meet anybody especially Maggie as Lloyd sees Maggie as a threat, probably because he was afraid that she will help Doree to realize that she has to stand up for herself. She is a prisoner in her own house. She was not allowed to have a job, to have friends and even to drive a car. He does not take into account the feelings of his wife, he only thinks about the health of his children and this preoccupation will eventually lead to their death. He over reacts after Doree has bought a tin of spaghetti that was on sale because there was: "a very slight dent in it. Because of that it had been on sale, and she had been pleased with her thriftiness" (*Too Much* 17). Being the head of the family Lloyd became extremely angry and accuses Doree of trying to poison her family. He forbids her to go to Maggie, but she does it any way. As a result, Lloyd feels obliged to punish her for her disobedience, and kills their children: "to save them the misery . . . of knowing that their mother had walked out on them" (*Too Much* 17). By behaving in this manner Lloyd tries to gain control and power by eroding Doree's self- esteem and autonomy.

Gaslighting

It is a form of emotional abuse that makes a person questions his beliefs and perception of reality. The Oxford Dictionary defines gaslighting as: "to manipulate (a person) by psychological means into questioning his or her own sanity" ("gaslight"). In addition, gas lighting happens in

personal relationships and it usually happens in a power dynamic. Stern explains: “The manipulator holds enough power that the target of the gaslighting is terrified to change up [the relationship] or step out of the gaslighting dynamic because the threat of losing that relationship- or the threat of being seen as less than who you want to be seen as to them-is quite a threat”(Fuchsman74-78). In the story “Dimension” Doree is a victim of gaslighting which is a form of emotional or psychological abuse that is seen in abusive relationships. Lloyd manipulates Doree by forcing her to question her thoughts, memories and the events occurring around her. Lloyd abusive behaviour has previously led to physical actions from Doree’s side in order to calm Lloyd down. She finds herself recalling a situation where she tries to scare Lloyd out of his own craziness: “Other times she had been able to scare him out of it herself, by weeping and howling and even banging her head on the floor, chanting, “It’s not true, it’s not true, it’s not true” over and over. Finally he would back down. He would say, “Okay, okay. I’ll believe you. Honey, be quiet. Think of the kids. I’ll believe you, honest. Just stop” (*Too Much* 13). She no longer feels like the person she used to be and was more anxious and less confident and finds herself guilty of everything. Lloyd made her believe that she was the source of their problems: “Even when she was partly settled down, Doree didn’t want to blurt out the whole truth and let Maggie know that she herself was at the heart of problem. More than that, she didn’t want to have to explain Lloyd. No matter how worn out she got with him, he was still the closet person in the world to her, and she felt that everything would collapse if she were to bring herself to tell someone exactly how he was, if she were to be entirely disloyal” (*Too Much* 14). Doree sometimes feels pressured by her intrusive husband as once he demands her to tell him what she talked about with Maggie. Knowing his temper, she is even afraid of making slightest mistake:

“I don’t know. Nothing really.”

“That’s funny. Two women riding in a car. First I heard of it.

Two women talking about nothing. She is out to break us up.” (*Too Much* 11)

She no longer feels like the person she used to be and was more anxious and less confident and finds herself guilty of everything. She made excuses for Lloyd behaviour and avoids talking about him. She continues protecting him by saying that: “Lloyd had a certain way of looking at

things: that was just how he was" (*Too Much* 11). Doree is a typical abused house wife. She is physically, emotionally, economically and verbally abused. The killing of her three children was a big blow to her. Doree: "had run out of the house and was stumbling around the yard, holding her arms tight across her stomach as if she had been sliced open and was trying to keep herself together" (*Too Much* 16). This heinous act of killing her children by their own father shattered her completely and destroyed her last line of defence. After that: "Doree kept stuffing whatever she could grab into her mouth . . . it was sheets or towels or her own clothing. As if she were trying to stifle not just the howls that rose up but the scene in her head. She was given a shot of something, regularly, to quiet her down, and this worked" (*Too Much* 16). The death of her three children shows the emotional abuse which hurt Doree very bitterly and which lead her to believe that she was responsible for the death of her children. Throughout the story, the feeling emerges that Doree becomes utterly dazed after the murder. Disney even described her as: "a numbed and affectless protagonist" who is "struggling in the present moment to manage in the aftermath of some as-yet-unnamed blight" (34). On the other hand in Lloyd all the attributes of hyper masculinity are clearly evident.

In another story, "Queenie", Queenie, is the protagonist who is also known as Lena, in the story. She is a weak, subservient woman and is always under the control of her husband. Her pitiable condition and her miserable life are told by her step sister's point of view.

Innocence, Powerlessness and Oppression

Queenie is an innocent girl who eloped, with Stan Vorguilla her older neighbour only after a week of his wife's funeral and is not in a happy marriage. She wrote a note to her family before eloping with Stan: "I am going to marry Mr Vorguilla, it said" (*Hateship, Friendship* 250). She is unhappy, lonely and friendless. She is estranged with her family and is isolated. She never speaks to them and her father after her elopement had announced: "I don't want her back. Not if she comes crawling" (*Hateship, Friendship* 250). Queenie is an oppressed soul and is completely powerless. At a Christmas party, Queenie forgets where she had kept the cake. Stan accuses Quieene of getting drunk and losing a Christmas cake. It triggers a fight between the husband and the wife, But Queenie apologies to Mr Vorguilla even though he is wrong. He insists she gave the Christmas cake to Andrew, a dental student who had come to their holiday party. He moves to hit her: "He got up and came at her with his hand raised, saying not to tell

him that he'd been drunk, never to tell him that. Quieene cried out, "I won't. . . . I'm sorry" (*Hateship, Friendship* 261). This shows Mr Vorguilla dominance and his male chauvinism and also the powerlessness and subjugation of Quieene. It is clearly unfortunate that Quieene married this man.

Gaslighting

Quieene is a victim of emotional abuse and is manipulated by Stan who is a manipulator and is trying to manipulate Queenie by trying to question her reality and memory. Stan is excessive dominant man and he uses his power to have control over her. He manipulates his wife to make her think she is actually losing her sense of reality. The emotional abuse starts from the Christmas party. Queenie had arranged a Christmas party: "They held the party on a Sunday evening, because all other evenings were taken up with Stan's work at the restaurant and Queenie's at the theatre" (*Hateship, Friendship* 258). Queenie made sausage rolls and gingerbread and everything was good. The party was a success and Queenie danced with a Chinese boy named Andrew, who had brought a record which she loved. The apple of discord, the cake baked by Queenie was not as yet eaten by the guests: "They did not eat much of that, but Queenie wasn't offended. It was very rich, and by the time they got to it they were filled up" (*Hateship, Friendship* 259). Queenie wrapped up the cake: "in a wine-soaked cloth and put it in a cool place. She was either thinking of doing that or she was actually doing it, and in the morning she saw that the cake was not on the table, so she thought she had done it. She thought, Good, the cake was put away" (*Hateship, Friendship* 259). A day after Stan asked Queenie to give a piece of cake to him and insisted and forced her to bring the cake to him: "She went to the cupboard and then to the refrigerator, but it was not there. She looked high and low and she could not find it" (*Hateship, Friendship* 260). She went blank and was not able to figure out whether she had baked the cake in reality or had done it in dreams. She went everywhere looking for the cake, but the cake was not found. Queenie was under the coercive control of Stan who exerts power over her and humiliated her. As a result, Queenie, the victim started feeling more dependent on the abuser, Stan who become more like a oppressor who oppresses the victim. Due to this coercive control Queenie started doubting herself as the nature of coercive control enforces self-doubt. She was not only isolated from her family, but from her friends and from the other support

system. Stan in order to achieve total power wanted Queenie alone and saw Andrew as a threat and started monitoring Queenie:

That was the beginning of Queenie's long, miserable struggle. All she could say was no. No, no, I did not give the cake to anybody. I did not give the cake to Andrew. I am not lying. No. No. (*Hateship, Friendship* 261).

Stan started controlling Queenie by denying her freedom and gaslighting her. He uses many gaslighting techniques to make Queenie feel like it is all her fault and she is the one responsible for the missing of the cake. Stan constantly criticises her and blames her that: "Probably you were drunk . . . and you are not remembering very well" (*Hateship, Friendship* 261). Queenie was left feeling confused, ashamed, terrified, hurt and lost. She was shocked to hear this. She said that she did not give the cake to anybody or to Andrew, But Stan did not accept it: "He got up and came at her with his hand raised, saying not to tell him that he'd been drunk, never to tell him that. Queenie cried out, "I won't. I won't. I'm sorry" (*Hateship, Friendship* 261). Stan thought that she was lying. She began to cry. She kept crying and begged him to believe her, but Stan did not pay any heed instead he says: "Everybody lies. . . . And the more she cried and begged him to believe her, the more cool and sarcastic he became" (*Hateship, Friendship* 261). Stan forces Queenie to live by his rules and came closer to her again in such calm, half smiling way that she thought for a moment he was going to kiss her: "Instead he closed his hands around her throat and just for a second cut off her breath. He did n't even leave any marks.... Now –are you going to teach me about logic?" (*Hateship, Friendship* 261). Stan become very angry and left the house. He stopped speaking to her and she was crying all over the Christmas:

When Stan came home that night and pretended she didn't exist. . . . She thought that if she had to go on in this way she would die. Just as if he really had choked off her breath, she would die. So she said, Forgive me. I did what you said. I'm sorry. Please. Please. I'm sorry.

(*Hateship, Friendship* 261).

Stan did not say that he had forgiven her, but "he got warm washcloth and wiped her face and lay down beside her and cuddled her and pretty soon he wanted to do everything else. "No more

music lessons for Mr Moonlight Sonata” (*Hateship, Friendship* 262-3). Stan was gaslighting Queenie because of jealous and jealousy stems from power and control. Stan had always thought of himself as the owner of Queenie and because of this ownership he own Queenie and he never liked the thought that she was paying more attention to Andrew alias Mr Moonlight Sonata. He wanted to have control over everything in Queenie’s life and thus sexually exploits her. Thus, it does not matter to Stan whether his victim Queenie is consenting or not; he believed that he had the right to do whatever pleases him. He never hesitated to go into any extreme lengths to get what he wants. Queenie as a wife was expected to be docile, obedient and passive. She was always treated as an object by her husband to satisfy his lust and services. The submissive silence of Queenie made her victim of verbal and physical abuse. On the other hand Stan had all the attributes of a hyper masculine man and is a staunch representative of hyper masculinity. Stan is a hyper masculine man and is excessively dominant personality. In the beginning of the story his controlling and dominating nature is revealed to us. In the opening of the story we come to know that Stan insists on using Queenie’s birth name: “May be you better stop calling me that,” Queenie said, when she met me at Union Station. I said, “What Queenie?” “Stan doesn’t like it,” she said. “He says it reminds him of a horse” (*Hateship, Friendship* 243). He is a coercively controlling man who has full power on Queenie’s life and has taken charge of her life in his hands. Queenie is afraid of Stan and when she is taking her step sister Chrissy to her house she instructs her about the tough nature of Stan. Chrissy is surprised and is in shock: “to hear her say “Stan” than it was to have her let me know she wasn’t Queenie anymore, she was Lena. But I could hardly have expected that she would still be calling her husband Mr. Vorgullia after a year and a half of marriage” (*Hateship, Friendship* 243). Stan is known for his angry nature and he even cannot tolerate the sound of the kettle, At one time when Queenie and Chrissy were having a word at that moment: “the kettle on the stove began to shriek. “Oh, get the kettle. Chrissy, quick. quick! Get the kettle or he’ll be out here, he can’t stand the sound” (*Hateship, Friendship* 268). Neither has he liked radio: “One thing Stan can’t stand . . . that radio” (*Hateship, Friendship* 244). Nor the sound of door with a crash as Chrissy closed the “door with a crash” (*Hateship, Friendship* 267). Stan, we learn was a neighbour, the piano teacher and he was known as Mr Vorguilla when he taught music at school. He had a quarrelsome nature. He had an excessive dominance and when he came into the classroom: “with the step of a man who had not a minute to lose and he rapped the pointer once and it was time to start. Up and down the aisles

he strutted with his ears cocked, his bulgy blue eyes alert, his expression tense and quarrelsome” (*Hateship, Friendship* 252-3). He is controlling and abusive and treats Queenie as a property: “he hates being reminded” (*Hateship, Friendship* 244). Stan is an oppressed and controlling man as it is clear to us the way he behaves with Queenie. He not only mocks at her, but gas-lighting her and giving her the silent emotional torture. Queenie had done a mistake, as she runs away at eighteen with him thinking of a bright future. She is at the margins and believes that her only way to have a happy life is to get a husband and perform household chores. Stan always wanted Queenie to dress well and Queenie in order to please him dresses in a hyper feminine way. She wears skimpy dress, full make-up and lots of jewellery. Chrissy finds out that: “Queenie was in the kitchen, wearing another of her skimpy dresses, and all her makeup. She had bangles on her arms” (*Hateship, Friendship* 267). His controlling nature becomes visible when at Christmas party they played musical chairs. Everybody was boisterous by that time. Even Stan and he pulled: “Queenie down into his lap when she was running past, and he wouldn’t let her go. And then when everybody had gone he wouldn’t let her clean up. He just wanted her to come to bed” (*Hateship, Friendship* 259). His suspicious and controlling nature becomes evident when Stan goes through Queenie’s private belongings, checking up on her things like her purse. She said: “Sometimes he goes through my purse” (*Hateship, Friendship* 268). He controls every aspect of her life and continues to do so obsessively, sending Chrissy Christmas cards: “He always included a return address-reminding me of his existence and letting me know where he was, in case of any news” (*Hateship, Friendship* 272). He was hoping to reconnect with Queenie long after she has escaped. His attitude with other women was of callous nature. When Chrissy was being introduced to him he sounded very cruel to her and asked her: “Do you have qualifications for finding a job in Toronto” (*Hateship, Friendship* 252). Every time he behaved very badly with Chrissy. She was never treated in a good way by Stan; when she took the tray in she saw: “annoyance on Mr Vorguilla’s face, that I wasn’t Queenie” (*Hateship, Friendship* 269). Chrissy tries to be comfortable in the house of Queenie, but she is very uncomfortable and feels unwanted. Stan is abusive and violent in nature. At the Christmas party Stan behaved very strangely and when he was inquiring about the lost cake, he became violent and blamed her that she had given cake to Andrew. He forced her to speak the truth as he suspected that she was lying to him Stan said: “Lena. Don’t lie” (*Hateship, Friendship* 261). Queenie tried to prove her innocence but he: “for a second cut off her breath. He didn’t even leave any marks” (*Hateship,*

Friendship 261). He forbids her to make friend with Andrew who is a Chinese boy and who was dancing with Queenie and had brought a record she loved. It becomes clear that he was jealous of him and was intimidated by their closeness. He causes pain and suffering to Queenie. He is short tempered and easily loses his self-control: "He got up and came at her with his hand raised. . . . She kept crying while she tried to persuade him" (*Hateship, Friendship* 261).

To conclude, Alice Munro used marginalization as a tool to show the miserable plight of women in Canadian society. Through the marginalized characters like Doree and Queenie Munro has presented suffering, pain, physical and sexual violence of women in male dominated society. Even the social institutions like family and marriage are responsible factors for marginalization of women in these short fictions. Both the short fictions portray how women are marginalized at the hands of patriarchy and society.

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