

:: STRUCTURE ::**15.0 Objectives****15.1 Introduction to the Author****15.2 A Brief Overview of Girish Karnad's plays****15.3 Summary of *Hayavadana* by Girish Karnad****15.3.1. Act 1****15.3.2. Act 2****15.4 Conclusion****15.5 Check Your Progress**

15.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, we shall

- Give an introduction to the author of the play *Hayavadana*
- Provide a brief overview of the plays of Girish Karnad
- Provide a detailed and act-wise summary of the play *Hayavadana*.

15.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR

Girish Karnad was a multidimensional personality who earned international praise as a dramatist, director, critic, actor, translator and cultural administrator and thus was all rolled into one. He was an acclaimed playwright who is said to have greatly influenced the Indian dramatic writing and tradition. He was undoubtedly one of the best dramatists and a leading practitioner of performing arts in India. Karnad was born on 19 May 1938 in Matheran, in present-day Maharashtra. He was initially schooled in Marathi as he was born in the Marathi region of present-day Maharashtra. But later, when his father, who was a doctor, was transferred to Sirsi, the Kannada speaking region, he was exposed to the local theatre troupes. It was during these early years of his life in Sirsi that laid the foundation for his dramatic vision. He began to take interest in *natak mandalis* (theatre troupes) and these years had a tremendous impact on his sense of *natak* or theatre.

Girish Karnad has scripted, directed and acted in several plays, feature films, documentaries and television serials in Kannada, Hindi and English. Although he was highly active in directing, acting and

translation, it was as a dramatist that he left a lasting impact. He is most remembered for his contributions to the canon of Indian literature. He was to the Kannada theatre what Badal Sarkar was to the Bengali, Vijay Tendulkar to the Marathi and Mohan Rakesh to the Hindi. Although he originally wrote all of his plays in Kannada, it was he himself who translated them into English. It was this body of translation of his plays from Kannada into English that was amongst the main forces that laid the foundation for Indian Drama in English. His translated plays are as good as the ones written originally in Kannada because he himself has said, “My translation must therefore be seen as approximation to the original”. It was because of his dramatic genius that he emerged as one of the leading playwrights of the Post-Independence Indian Literature. Both theatre and drama critics have heaped praises on him appreciating many aspects his plays including plot construction, characterization, song, spectacle, symbolism, reinterpretation of history, use of myths and folktales, highlighting on contemporary social and psychological problems, especially those of women and children etc. His translated plays have brought him national and international recognition over the years. Karnad was conferred the Jnanpith Award, the highest literary honour conferred in India, in the year 1998. His journey from *Yayati* to *The Fire and the Rain* and *The Wedding Album* holds a mirror to the very evolution of Indian theatre during a period of more than four decades. Though most of Karnad’s plays have their origins in Indian mythology, folklore and history, he was still praised internationally because of the overall appeal his plays had. It can be said that his plays had a larger appeal and that they were not limited to just Indian readers and theatres. K. Chandrashekhara writes of him saying, “The likes of Girish Karnad enable us to pretend that there is such a thing as a truly “Indian” theatre which can be true to its traditions and at the same time responsive to contemporary concerns.” Karnad’s plays have also been translated into many Indian languages. His plays have also been directed by various acclaimed directors like Ebrahim Alkazi, B. V. Karanth, Alyque Padamsee, Prasanna, Arvind Gaur, Satyadev Dubey, Vijaya Mehta, Shyamanand Jalan, Amal Allana and Zafer Mohiuddin. He was also conferred Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan by the Government of India for his outstanding contribution to the world of drama, writing, acting, directing and translating. He died on 10 June 2019 at the age of 81. He was so remarkable that his plays continue to be performed and read even today after his death. He was certainly one of the most significant playwrights of Indian literature and Indian literature in English.

15.2 A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF GIRISH KARNAD’S PLAYS

Girish Karnad, along with Mahesh Dattani and Vijay Tendulkar, revolutionized modern Indian theatre. As mentioned earlier, his plays were originally written in Kannada but he himself translated them into English which brought him national and international recognition. Girish Karnad’s fame rests on eight path breaking plays which include one

written originally in English and the rest in Kannada which were later translated into English. Most of his plays are based on mythological tales and are rooted in Indian culture. He was a well-known playwright who infused contemporary issues with the myths and legends in his plays, and present urban problems and conflicts. In this section, we shall take a brief look at all of his plays.

Girish Karnad's plays (both written in English and translated from Kannada into English) are: *Yayati* (1961), *Tughlaq* (1972), *Hayavadana* (1975), *Nagamandala* (1990), *Tale-Danda* (1990), *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan* (1997), *The Fire and the Rain* (1998), *A Heap of Broken Images, Flowers, Wedding Album* (2009), *Boiled Beans on Toast* (2014).

Yayati, the first play of Girish Karnad, was written in the year 1960 and was originally published in the book form in 1961. It won the Mysore State Award in 1962. *Yayati* is based on an episode from the Indian epic Mahabharata. Yayati was one of the ancestors of the Pandavas in Mahabharata. The play *Yayati* narrates the age-old myth of this mythological king named Yayati. The play revolves around the character of Yayati who is given the curse of premature old age by Shukracharya, his father-in-law. Shukracharya cursed Yayati because of Yayati's infidelity towards his wife, Shukracharya's daughter. But he was told that he could redeem this curse only if someone was willing to exchange his youth with him. Yayati, yearning for eternal youth, wished to obtain the vitality of his own son, Pooru, and exchange his son's youth with him. It was finally his son who offers to do this for his father. The play examines the dilemma that it presents for Yayati, Pooru and Pooru's young wife. *Yayati* is highly remarkable because Karnad introduces the *Sutradhara* (the anchor) in the play who comes on the stage and introduces the characters as well as informs the audience that the play is mythical in nature. The play explores the famous 'Yayati complex', that is, parents hoping for sacrifices on the part of their children to fulfil their own selfish ambitions.

Tughlaq was written when Karnad was studying at Magdalen College, Oxford. The play opens in 1327 A.D. *Tughlaq* was a historical play unlike *Yayati*. The play was written in Kannada in the year 1964. It is divided into thirteen scenes and portrays the life of Muhammad bin Tughlaq about whom Karnad said, "Certainly the most brilliant individual ever to ascend on the throne of Delhi and also one of the biggest failures." The play *Tughlaq* is a historical play and it is also considered a commentary on the contemporary politics of the 1960s. The Times of India comments: "In the play, the protagonist, Tughlaq, is portrayed as having great ideas and a grand vision, but his reign was an abject of failure. He started his rule with great ideals of a unified India, but it degenerated into anarchy and his kingdom." Thus, *Tughlaq* was one of the most significant plays of Girish Karnad since it commented on the political environment of contemporary India.

Hayavadana was another of Girish Karnad's play that was based on Indian myth. The main plot is inspired from a folktale in Somadeva's Kathasaritsagar as well as Thomas Mann's play 'The Transposed Head'. Devadutta, a scholar and Kapil, a healthy young man, are very close friends. Kapil helps Devadutta and Padmini to get married but she is drawn towards Kapil. Soon their affair becomes known to Devadutta and he cuts off his head in shock and despair. Filled with guilt and remorse, Kapil also severs off his own head. Padmini then prays to Goddess Kali to get back the two men. But in her excitement and hurry, she transposes the two heads, that is, she places Devadutta's head on Kapil's body and Kapil's head on Devadutta's body. Padmini chooses to live with the body which has Devadutta's head. But not long after, she goes to the other man. A fight ensues and both men kill each other. Padmini commits Sati. The subplot of the play is a horseman's search for completeness.

Nagamandala was originally written in Kannada and later translated into English, like most of Karnad's plays. *Nagamandala* is based on two oral tales from the region of Karnataka. It deals with the issue of gender bias and oppression of women in the patriarchal society. The plot revolves around Rani who wants to earn the affection of her husband Apanna. Apanna is indifferent and spends most of his time with a concubine. Rani decides to drug her husband with a love root which she mixes in the curry in order to win her husband's love. However, she spills the curry on an anthill and Naga, a King Cobra, consumes it. Naga can assume the form of any human being. He is struck by her beauty and transforms himself into the form of her husband and visits her every night. Soon she becomes pregnant and she is accused of adultery by Apanna. The news reaches the Village Panchayat and she is asked to prove her fidelity by putting her hand inside a snake's hole. She is ordered by the Village Panchayat to prove her chastity like Sita did in Ramayana. Rani puts her hand in the hole and nothing happens to her and she is declared to be innocent. But her husband Apanna is not satisfied and spies on her at night and discovers that Naga was assuming his form and visiting his wife. He gets very angry and pursues the snake to kill it. Rani gets to know the truth by Naga. Apanna realizes his mistake and is reformed.

Tale-Danda again takes to history. The play is about the various prevalent social issues that had the nation in its grip. The plot of the play revolves around Basavanna, a social reformer of the 12th century, who speaks against caste system, gender discrimination and many other social evils. But because of his revolutionary ideas, Basavanna was resented by the higher class people and soon dies a very mysterious death. The play is highly remarkable because it was written during the time when the Mandir-Mandal conflict was in news.

A Heap of Broken Images was highly remarkable because of its subject matter. The play has contemporary relevance because it talks about English language in the contemporary setup. *A Heap of Broken Images* (2005) takes up the subject of writers preferring English over their mother

tongue as it is their ticket to instant success and fame. The play also focuses on technology taking a major part of our lives. *The Dreams of Tipu Sultan* (1997) is a not so popular political play which was written to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Indian Independence. The playwright has brilliantly recreated the life of Tipu Sultan and all the characters are well drawn. It examines the inner life of the warrior and his dreams.

The Fire and the Rain, just like *Yayati*, is based on an episode from the Indian epic Mahabharata. Yavakrita, son of Sage Bharadwaj, performs penance in order to gain knowledge. However, he commits evil deeds and falls prey to lust. Here Karnad points out the perils of being knowledgeable without wisdom. The scene of drought in the entire land due to Yavakrita's sin is his own invention. *Bali: The Sacrifice* (2004) is another of his lesser known plays and again has its source in an ancient Kannada epic. It revolves around four characters - the Queen, who is a Jain, the Hindu King, the Queen Mother and the Mahout. It is the study in the viability of Ahimsa. *Flowers* was performed in 2007 and here again Karnad returns to the familiar world of folk tales. The play revisits as well as reinvents a popular folktale of Karnataka. It is a break from his other plays as it focuses on the male sexual desire rather than the female. One of the most popular and read play of Girish Karnad is *Wedding Album* which appeared in 2008. The play is similar to *A Heap of Broken Images* as it too makes use of technology. *Wedding Album* deals with women and their two different worlds, i.e., the traditional and the modern cyber world. Every character leads a respectable life but each one of them has skeletons in his/her closet. The episodes are spread over nine scenes and the entire plot is built around a Saraswat Brahmin girl's wedding to an NRI boy, whom she has never met before. The play is a hilarious and moving spectacle that is deeply revelatory about the India that we are living today in. *Boiled Beans on Toast* is a more recent play which is set in contemporary Bangalore.

Thus, based on this brief study of his plays, we can see that most of Karnad's plays have their origins in Indian mythology, folklore and history. His three plays—*Yayati*, *Hayavadana*, *Nagamandala*—can be grouped together as they contain thematic similarities—that of myth and folktale. *Tale-Danda* and *Tughlaq* are two of his historical plays because they are highly based on history. Thus, Karnad has carved a place for himself in the canon of Indian literature through his dramatic genius. He is still remembered worldwide for the genius he was.

15.3 SUMMARY OF HAYAVADANA BY GIRISH KARNAD

Hayavadana is the third play written by Girish Karnad. It is a two-act play. It was originally composed in Kannada like Karnad's two previous plays—*Yayati* and *Tughlaq* and was later translated into English by him. Karnad received Homi Bhabha Fellowship Council's award for the composition of this play. Karnad translated *Hayavadana* into English because he was persuaded to do so by Mr. Rajinder Paul. The translated

version of the play (English version) was first published in *Enact*, the journal published by Mr. Rajinder Paul. Regarding the title of the play, it is said: “Hayavadana is a man with the head of a horse: “*haya*” means horse and “*vadana*” means face.” The play is said to have been based on *Kathasaritsagara* because it has the story of Devadatta and Kapila. But Karnad intended to reworking of the tale in *The Transposed Heads* by Thomas Mann. Karnad himself admits: “...but I have drawn heavily on Thomas Mann’s reworking of the tale in *The Transposed Heads* and am grateful to Mr. Mann for permission to do so.” However, it is Somadeva’s *Kathasaritsagara* on which the main plot of the play is based. The twin play of *Hayavadana* is *Nagamandala*. In this section, we shall look at the summary of the play *Hayavadana* and see how it proceeds.

15.3.1. Act 1

Hayavadana (meaning horse-face) opens with worship to Lord Ganesha, a prayer ritual performed by Hindus. Bhagavata, the narrator, appears on the stage and asks that Ganesha bless the performance that he and the company are about to perform. Bhagavata tells the audience about the play that they are going to perform. He says that the play is set in the city of Dharmapura which is ruled by King Dharmasheeka. He also introduces the characters to the audience. He introduces the two protagonists: Devadatta and Kapila. Devadatta is handsome, slight, fair, intelligent, son of a Brahmin, poet, and witty. Kapila on the other hand is dark, plain, muscular, strong and physically impressive. The two men are very different from each other and yet they are the best of friends.

After the small introduction given by Bhagavata, a scream comes from offstage. It is the scream of an actor (Actor I), Nata, who runs on screaming that he has seen something fearful. The actor has seen a man with the head of a horse and a human voice. He saw and heard this talking horse when he was coming along the road and stopped to pee. Bhagavata is amused to hear something of this sort and the actor insists he is not drunk and that whatever he saw is true. Bhagavata asks the actor to reassure himself that the horse does not talk. As Bhagavata continues his talk about the two best friends, there comes another scream from the actor who runs yelling that “he” is coming and rushes back out. Bhagavata is confused hearing this from the actor and believes that the actor has seen *something* really frightening. He also hopes that the audience does not get frightened.

After the second scream from the actor, Bhagavata orders to pull up the curtain which reveals the presence of Hayavadana. Bhagavata finds that there is a horse head that is attached to a man’s body and realizes that the actor was true. Bhagavata discovers that the horse head is crying. Bhagavata is stunned to see what is there right in front of him. Bhagavata calls the horse-man (the man with the head of a horse) over and asks him to remove his mask since it is frightening people and bothering the audience who have come to enjoy the performance. Bhagavata believes that it is the mask that the man is wearing on his head and that there is

nothing like a horse-head on a man's body in real. He orders Hayavadana to take off his mask but when Hayavadana does not do so, Bhagavata tries to pull it off himself. But soon he realises that the horse-head is real and that it is not a mask. He realises that it is the real head of a horse on a man's body. Bhagavata asks Hayavadana several times who is he but Hayavadana chooses to remain silent.

Regarding having the head of a horse on his body, Bhagavata asks Hayavadana why he is so. He asks if it the result of a curse, or an insult or if he desecrated a holy place. Hayavadana finally speaks and says that this is his fate and also let Bhagavata pull of his head because he himself cannot get rid of it. All Hayavadana wants is to become a full *man*. Continuing his story to Bhagavata, Hayavadana says that his mother was the princess of Karnataka and that she was able to choose her own husband. It was during the time when the Prince of Araby came on his white stallion that she fell in love with the white stallion, the horse. The Princess then decided to marry the horse. The marriage eventually happened because no one could oppose the decision of the Princess. One morning after the marriage when she woke up, the horse was gone. The horse was replaced by a Celestial Being who had been cursed as a horse for fifteen years for misbehaviour. The Celestial Being was told that the love of a human being would rescue him, and thus he asked the Princess to come with him to the Heavenly Abode. The Princess, however, refused which resulted in the Celestial Being cursing her because of which she became a horse. The Princess was elated and ran away, and Hayavadana who was the only offspring of the Princess and the Celestial Being remained with his human body and horse head. Hayavadana tells Bhagavata that the only thing he wants is to become a "complete man". Hearing the story of Hayavadana, Bhagavata tries to suggest some holy places that can help Hayavadana become a complete man. Bhagavata suggests Banaras but Hayavadana has already visited it. Bhagavata suggests some others as well but at last he suggests that Hayavadana should go to the temple of Goddess Kali of Mount Chitrakoot and Hayavadana decides to do so. Bhagavata decides that Hayavadana will be accompanied by Nata, the Actor, on his visit to the temple of Goddess Kali. After the two depart for the temple, Bhagavata continues his story to the audience.

Bhagavata, the narrator, continues his story to the audience and narrates the story of the two friends, Devadatta and Kapila. Devadatta enters and is followed by Kapila. Kapila finds that Devadatta is not being attentive to what he says and asks him who is it this time, implying a girl. Devadatta blushes and asks how he knew to which Kapila says that he has seen him fall in love fifteen times before which proves that the two young men are best of friends and know each other very well. Devadatta describes the woman and says that her "beauty is as the magic lake". Devadatta says she has become "my guru in the poetry of love" and that he wants her in real life as well. When Kapila asks the name of the girl,

Devadatta says that she does not know her name but tells him that she lives in the street called Pavana Veethi. Kapila immediately decides that he will go there and find out her name and woo her for his friend Devadatta. Kapila goes to that street to find the girl and Devadatta thinks how good friend Kapila is. But he also thinks that he is not the right man to send there. Meanwhile in Pavana Veethi, Kapila is not his search for the girl. He knocks at the door of one house which is answered by a girl named Padmini. She is startingly beautiful and Kapila realises that Padmini must be the girl Devadatta has fallen for. Kapila wants to know her name and begins by asking if she knows the Revered Brahmin Vidyasagara who has a son named Devadatta. Hearing the name of Devadatta, Padmini blushes and calls for her mother and runs inside.

Padmini is the daughter of the leading merchant in Dharmapura. It is a wealthy and educated house. Kapila somehow manages to persuade Padmini into marrying Devadatta and Padmini does so. Devadatta and Padmini marries each other and she moves into his home. Devadatta owes Kapila a debt and the bond of their friendship strengthens as never before. But over time Devadatta finds that Padmini was chattering and drooling over Kapila all day. He also chides her for her propensity to do this. He begins to believe that Padmini is taking interest in Kapila. To this, Padmini asks if he is jealous of Kapila. But she later comforts Devadatta by saying he is her everything and that Kapila is just an innocent and a baby.

The three of them, Padmini, Devadatta and Kapila, are going on a trip somewhere now and Padmini praises Kapila for his driving abilities and compares him with Devadatta. Padmini and Kapila are in a jovial mood and are laughing but Devadatta sulks seeing this. Devadatta cannot accept the fact that Padmini is being nice and friendly to Kapila. Padmini asks about various things to Kapila and she loves to see what Kapila says and does. Padmini marvels at the way Kapila moves, walks, climbs and runs. He looks like a Celestial Being to Padmini. Padmini also marvels at the muscles of Kapila and secretly desires of him. Bhagavata says that no woman can resist Kapila and his muscular looks and that Padmini too falls for him. There was a time when Kapila tells Padmini about a nearby temple (Goddess Kali's temple) and says that the three of them should visit it but Devadatta refuses and asks Kapila to move ahead. But Kapila and Padmini walk off to the temple and Devadatta stays behind. Devadatta later walks to the temple, and finding a sword there, strike off his own head in anguish. When Kapila and Padmini returns to the cart, they do not find Devadatta there. Kapila seems very worried knowing that Devadatta is not there and he rushes off to find him while Padmini stays there. When Kapila reaches the Kali temple, he finds the decapitated body of his dear friend Devadatta and moans that he does not know why Devadatta was so angry, and how he could forget that Kapila loved him and would do anything for him. Kapila is so disheartened seeing the decapitated body of Devadatta that he picks up the sword and strikes off his own head claiming they can be brothers in the next world.

Padmini was still waiting for the two men at the cart and got tired waiting. She decides to go and find the two men. She walks to temple in dark and stumbles over the two bodies in front of the Kali temple. She is shocked to see that the two men are dead and does not know what to do. She worries what she will tell people about the death of the two men. She seems totally perplexed and disheartened and decides she must die as well. As she picks up the sword to kill herself, the voice of the goddess comes and tells her to put down the sword. Padmini is scared seeing the goddess in front of her. She falls to the feet of Goddess Kali. Kali is pleased with Padmini and asks her what she wants. She tells Padmini to put the heads back on the bodies of the two men to bring them back to life again. Padmini gets very excited hearing from the Goddess Kali that the two men can be brought back to life again. Because of her excitement and the darkness of the night, she puts the heads on the bodies but accidentally mixes them up. She puts the head of Devadatta on Kapila's body and Kapila's on Devadatta's. The goddess disappears and two dead bodies begin to sit up and get back to life. They realize that their heads are on wrong bodies but they do not care and happily decide to return back to home. But it is unclear with whom Padmini should go home. Devadatta (Devadatta's head on Kapila's body) says the head is the "sign of a man" but Kapila (Kapila's head on Devadatta's body) says this hand or body married her, and this body lived with her. Devadatta says a person marries a person, not a body, and that "Of all the human limbs the topmost—in position as well as importance—is the head". Padmini is convinced by Devadatta's arguments and decides to go with him. Kapila angrily tells Padmini he knows she wants Devadatta's head and Kapila's body because she married Devadatta and was attracted towards Kapila because of his muscular looks. Devadatta himself agrees to what Kapila has to say. Kapila tells Devadatta that they must get rid of Kapila but Kapila says they will have to kill him to get rid of him. The three are still in a confusion what they should do get rid of this situation. Bhagavata interrupts the three people on the stage and says this is indeed a dilemma, and a deep and perplexing problem whose "answer must be sought with the greatest caution". He tells the audience to take a ten-minute break and ponder this, and then come back with solutions.

15.3.2. Act 2

The second act of the play begins with Bhagavata asking the audience about the solution to the problem. The problem of whose wife is Padmini still persists. Devadatta, Kapila and Padmini go to a great *rishi* in anticipation of a valid solution to the problem. The *rishi* suggests that the head is supreme among human limbs and thus Devadatta's head on Kapila's body gets to be with Padmini. Devadatta and Padmini jump with joy hearing this from the *rishi* but Kapila is mournful. As Devadatta and Padmini prepare to leave, Padmini tells Kapila not to despair and whispers that she is going to be with his body, after all. Bhagavata also tells Kapila not to grieve since this is fate. Kapila goes to live in the

woods after this and Devadatta and Padmini goes to Dharmapura to enjoy their married life.

Padmini is expecting a child as she is pregnant. Devadatta brings two dolls for their child. She sees that Devadatta's new body has acquired a new characteristic in the sense that the new body simply acts and does not wait for thoughts. The child is born and the two dolls which Devadatta brought starts to talk to each other. The dolls also begin to address the audience and tell them what happens next. Devadatta and Padmini fights over the best ways to raise their son. But Padmini does not forget to think about Kapila. She constantly thinks of him and wonders where he is and what he is doing. The two dolls also sense this inclination of Padmini towards another man. Padmini also secretly wants to go and meet Kapila. She also expressed her desire to her son that she would take him to the forest, which he has never seen before.

Kapila appears on the stage again after he left for the forest. He tells Bhagavata that he will never return to the city again since he wants to spend the rest of his life in the forest owing to the fact that Padmini now belongs to Devadatta. Bhagavata also tells Kapila that his (Kapila's) mother has died and that Padmini has given birth to a son. Kapila is expressionless to this and simply walks away and starts to cut a tree. It was after this Padmini appears in the forest with her son since she had promised her son that she would take him to the forest. Padmini sees Kapila there and both of them are transfixed seeing each other. Padmini tells Kapila that she has brought her son to the forest because he has never seen it before, that he had never felt the wind on his cheeks or a thorn in his foot or seen the river. Kapila looks at the son and asks if it is her son, to which Padmini says that it is his too, as his body (Kapila's head is on Devadatta's body) created it. Padmini also tells him that her son has the same mole on his shoulder that he (Kapila) does. She also tells Kapila that it was her fault that she mixed the heads up, and she has suffered for it. She wishes she could stay and look at him and fill up for the rest of her life. Kapila tells her that he has buried all the memories of his past and that Padmini is unearthing them now. She is sorry but he does not want her pity. Finally, she caresses him and lays her head on his chest. Both of them embrace and go inside his home.

When Devadatta returns from the fair (he had gone there to bring the new dolls), he asks Bhagavata if Kapila lives here. The scene is still in the forest. Devadatta comes to forest and asks Bhagavata if Kapila is here but Bhagavata is reluctant to answer his question since he knows that he lives here and that Padmini is with him (Kapila). Devadatta is very angry and has come here with a sword and two new dolls in his hands. He also asks Bhagavata for how long she has been here in the forest, to which Bhagavata says four or five days. Kapila comes out of his hut and says that he was eagerly waiting for Devadatta. Both of them have a conversation and Devadatta asks if he loves Padmini, to which Kapila says yes, he does. To this, Devadatta tells him that he also loves Padmini.

Seeing the sword of Devadatta, Kapila also goes in to fetch his own. The two men confront each other and start fighting with their swords. Padmini also comes out to watch the fight. Bhagavata sings as the two men fight. Both the men finally die in the battle. Padmini leans down to them and says they've "burned, lived, fought, embraced and died". She wishes if there was any other solution to this or they could have lived together. But this was the only ending that was possible, that of killing each other and dying. Padmini finally tells Bhagavata about her desire. She wants to give away her son to the hunters of the forest to raise him as Kapila's son, and after he is five years old, he is to be sent to Dharmapura to be raised as the son of Devadatta. She asks Bhagavata to help her in doing so. She announces to Bhagavata that she would commit *sati* and die. Padmini finally commits *sati* and is consumed by the flames. Bhagavata tells the audience that they are totally unaware of where did she carry out this act of committing a *sati*.

After the death of Devadatta, Kapila and Padmini, the scene shifts to the subplot of Hayavadana, a man with the head of a horse. Bhagavata is addressing the audience and he sees Actor II (Actor I is Nata, who saw Hayavadana in Act One) rushing towards him. He is scared and tells Bhagavata that he almost died seeing something. He tells bhagavata that he heard someone singing the National Anthem. When he went to see who he was, he was shocked to see that it was a horse that was singing the National Anthem. Actor I also appear on the stage with a serious, sulky little boy of about five years old. Bhagavata asks who the boy is but the boy does not reply. Actor explains that he was passing through a hunter's village when the hunters gave him the boy, saying he no longer belongs here. Bhagavata gets a little idea as to who the child is as he was told by Padmini about her desire to give away her son to the hunters first and later to the city of Dharmapura. He asks the child to show his shoulder, and seeing the mole on his shoulder, Bhagavata announces that he is the son of Padmini.

It was after this that Actor II says that he saw a full horse and not the one Bhagavata thought of, i.e., the horse-headed man. It was after this that Hayavadana appears on the stage. He is a full horse now and he thank Bhagavata and Actor I for suggesting him to go to the temple of Goddess Kali. But Bhagavata is astonished to see the transformation of Hayavadana and wants to know how he became the full horse. Hayavadana explains to Bhagavata and says that he went to the goddess and proclaimed he would chop off his head. But Kali stopped him and asked what he wanted, to which he said he wanted to become complete. Hayavadana had not even finished speaking to the goddess when Kali granted him his wish. She made him a complete *horse* and not a complete *man*. Hayavadana says he wish he could get rid of his human voice and says that he was singing because it is believed that people who sing ruin their voices. So, he was trying to get rid of his human voice by ruining it through singing. Hayavadana also begins to cry narrating his story

because his fate is still following him and he is still not complete as he is having the body of a horse and the voice of a human. The little boy (Padmini's son) asks Hayavadana not to cry. The boy sits on the back of Hayavadana, the horse and asks Hayavadana to laugh, and surprisingly as the horse does so, he begins to lose his human voice and can only neigh. Realizing that he has gotten rid of the human voice, Hayavadana leaps with joy and the boy enjoys bouncing up and down on his back. The play ends with Bhagavata being happy that Hayavadana has become complete. He tells the Actors to tell the Brahmin his grandson is coming on a large white horse. The boy is being taken to Dharmapura on the back of the horse. Bhagavata thanks Lord Ganesha for the smooth completion of the performance of their play.

15.4 CONCLUSION

Hayavadana is one of the most widely known plays of Girish Karnad. Though the play is divided into two acts, it can also be said that the play has two subplots: the plot of Hayavadana, the man with the head of a horse and the plot of the love triangle between Devadatta, Kapila and Padmini. Though the two plots are very different from each other, they meet at the end when the child goes to Dharmapura sitting on the back of the white stallion, Hayavadana. Thus, *Hayavadana* is an interesting play that deals with the story of Devadatta, Kapila, Padmini and Hayavadana.

15.5 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Girish Karnad was conferred the Jnanpith Award in the year _____.
2. Karnad's *Yayati* is based on an episode from _____.
3. *Wedding Album* was published in the year _____.
4. Who is the narrator of the play *Hayavadana*?
5. Which of the following plays of Girish Karnad is based on the oral tales from Karnataka?

a) Yayati	b) Tughlaq
c) Nagamandala	d) Tale-Danda
6. Who persuaded Girish Karnad to translate *Hayavadana* into English?

a) Anita Myles	b) Mr. Rajinder Paul
c) K. Chandrashekhar	d) Mahesh Dattani
7. Who of the following is singing the National Anthem in *Hayavadana*?

a) Bhagavata	b) the boy
c) Actor II	d) Hayavadana

Answers:

- 1) 1998
- 2) Mahabharata
- 3) 2009
- 4) Bhagavata
- 5) c) Nagamandala
- 6) b) Mr. Rajinder Paul
- 7) d) Hayavadana