

ANOTHER GIRL

Kavita has decided to give birth to her child in an abandoned hut, not far from her home.

« No one heard my prayers ». Kavita closes her eyes and her body shudders.

5 She leans forward, seizes the midwife's¹ hand, and whispers², « Don't tell anyone. Go quickly, fetch Rupa³, and bring her here. »

« Yes my child. Blessings to you and your baby. Rest, now, please ! I'll bring you some food ». The midwife steps outside into the night.

A few moments later, Kavita awakens⁴ and feels throbbing⁵ ache in her
10 pelvis. She shifts her body, and her gaze falls upon the newborn sleeping peacefully beside her.

Then, Jasu enters, his eyes gleaming⁶ « Where is he ? Where's my little prince ? Come, come... let me see him ! » He walks toward Kavita, arms outstretched.

15 Kavita stiffens⁷. « She is here. Your little princess is right here ». Her arms tremble as she wraps them tightly around the baby, shielding⁸ her small baby.

« Another girl ? What's the matter with you ? Let me see ! » He shouts.

« No, I will not ! You're not taking her ! Not again ! This is my baby, our baby, and I will not let you take her. »

20 He takes a few steps toward with anger, then his face softens⁹ and he falls to his knees next to her. « Look, Kavita, you know we can't keep this baby. We need a boy to help us in the fields. We can hardly afford¹⁰ one child, how can we have two ? My cousin's daughter is twenty-three and still not married, because he can't come up with the dowry. We're not a rich family.

25 Kavita cries, her eyes are full of tears. « Give me one night. Just one night with my child. You can fetch her tomorrow. »

Jasu remains silent, looking down at this feet.

« Please. »

30 Adapted from Shilpi SOMAYA GOWDA, *Secret Daughter* (2010)

¹sage-femme

²murmurer

³Kavita's sister

⁴Se réveiller

⁵lancinant

⁶étincelant

⁷Se raidir

⁸protégeant

⁹s'adoucir

¹⁰Se permettre (financièrement)