Narrative Authority: The Intersection of Mass Media, White Saviors, Corporate Interests, and the Subaltern Voice

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Abstract

The narratives that are disseminated by various parties who are members and tools of the dominant culture serve to conceal not only the voices of the marginalized but also the treachery of those who take advantage of them while inflating the conscience of those who hope to satisfy a moral obligation to help the poor. This essay will explore the different voices in Indra Sinha's *Animal's People.* This novel utilizes the narrative voice in a unique manner, allowing a disabled, impoverished young boy named Animal to tell the story of his life of oppression, suffering, and marginalization through a series of tapes addressed to what he refers to as "the Eyes." Sinha allows Animal to speak for himself, but, in doing so, Animal highlights other dominant narrative trends, including the visual and auditory power of the mass media in communicating the position of the poor, the white saviors' interpretation of and response to what they see and hear of the poor, and how these contribute to the corporate interests' ability to remain invisible and thus avoid responsibility for their actions. Sinha uses characters such as Elli, a white American doctor, who comes to Khaufpur to open a clinic, Jarnalis, an Australian journalist, who leaves a set of tapes for Animal to record his story on his own time, and the big Kampani lawyers, who hide the parties actually responsible for the disaster the novel describes. I will postulate that the connections between mass media representations, white savior responses, and the resulting benefits to corporate interests are the narratives that should be scrutinized so that the narrative authority can be given back to those with lived experience.

The problems that arise when attempting to convey the stories that describe the experiences of the marginalized, particularly those marginalized by their extreme poverty due to limits placed upon their access to resources, are complicated problems that are often dispelled with far too simple solutions. The poor are typically viewed and expressed as helpless, hopeless, and in need of intervention whether by institutions or individual persons who occupy positions of privilege. This directed attitude is particularly prevalent in areas occupied by people who possess a wealth of natural resources, yet practice lax safety and labor laws, making them easily exploited by dominant systems.

An exploration into the various narrative tactics employed by those in positions of privilege is a topic that has been addressed by various schools of literary criticism, yet very little scholarship connects the various voices together to create a complete picture of how the stories of the subaltern are told by the institutionalized systems that subdue them. Throughout this essay, the marginalized will be referred to frequently as the "subaltern" or the "subaltern voice," the definition of which is drawn from the arguments postulated by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak in her essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in which she defines subaltern as follows: "Where social lines of mobility, being elsewhere, do not permit the formation of a recognizable basis of action" (Spivak 476). Essentially, Spivak defines the subaltern as those whose identity is consumed only by their status as "less than." The narratives that are created and disseminated by various parties who are members and tools of the dominant culture serve to conceal the voices and humanity of the subaltern and also the treachery of those who take advantage of the subaltern while inflating the consciences of those who hope to satisfy a moral obligation to help the poor that they have, at some point, adopted.

I find that the dominant narrative voice that speaks for the wider culture consists of three prongs: the mass media, which claims to give accurate depictions of the conditions of the marginalized; the white saviors, who respond to the atrocities they witness through mass media consumption by going to marginalized areas and offering the assistance they believe to be best for the people there; and the corporate interests, who fuel the media representations, prop up the white saviors as distractions from actual conditions, and utilize the muddled narrative to create for themselves a level of invisibility that allows them to exploit in anonymity. This three-pronged approach is highlighted and challenged by *Animal's People* as Indra Sinha not only demonstrates these narrative tendencies through his novel's character representations of each prong, but also takes the narrative authority away from these characters, instead giving it to the most subaltern character in the story. This narrative technique seeks to illuminate the flaws in the mass representations of subaltern people and to shift the authority of the story back to those who have

actually experienced the suffering rather than those who seek to exploit it.

Animal's People by Indra Sinha contains characters who represent each prong of the dominant narrative, but what makes the novel unique is that Sinha does not allow any of these actors to speak for themselves; he instead gives the narrative authority to one of the lowest members of the society, a young boy named Animal. This boy, as a result of a poison gas disaster, is left with a twisted back, orphaned, and forced to walk on all fours, earning him the name and assumed identity of Animal. Animal is crass and unrefined, and fully owns his status as more animal than man. He agrees to tell his story to an Australian journalist, called Jarnalis, via a series of tapes, but insists that the stories be told how he wants with no rules from the journalist.

Chunaram, who brokers the deal between Jarnalis and Animal, tells Animal how Jarnalis responded to hearing the first of Animal's tapes: "Last night he had your tape translated. Today he comes saying he has never found such honesty as that filth of yours… I told him you are an orphan of that night, you grew up in a crazy franci situation, you used to live on the streets like a dog, you are a unique case" (Sinha 7). Animal is wary of the journalist and wary of those who will hear the tapes, but he attempts to speak directly to those who would usually not only consume the dominant narratives but also have historically controlled the narrative and, therefore, the responses and treatment of the subaltern. With this understanding of his listeners, he states: "You are reading my words, you are that person (encouraged by Jarnalis). I've no name for you so I will call you Eyes. My job is to talk, yours is to listen. So now listen" (14). Animal is reluctant to work with Jarnalis and speak to these Eyes as he finds that most who come to write about his city, and then those who read about his city, do nothing to actually help the people there. Yet, Animal eventually decides that working with Jarnalis is important not because it might change his situation, but because by taking the narrator position, he can at least hold some authority over his own story: "This story has been locked up in me, it's struggling to be free, I can feel it coming, words want to fly out from between my teeth like a flock of birds making a break for it… There are many versions going round, every newspaper has a different story, not one knows the truth" (11, 12). Animal recognizes the role that Jarnalis and other members of the media such as himself play in taking ownership of Animal's story. He has no illusion of being able to change the way in which they respond to him, but he craves the freedom of allowing his voice to become a part of the narrative, in an attempt to convey a different truth.

The Bhopal Disaster of 1984, which is the backdrop for *Animal's People,* was a tremendous gas explosion that occurred between December 2 and December 3 in the early morning hours, while most of the plant's management and safety officers were at home

asleep. The plant, which was an American owned pesticide plant, was located in Bhopal Madhya Pradesh India, and was operated by Union Carbide, which was eventually bought out by Dow Jones Industrial ("Bhopal Disaster"). This gas leak exposed over 500,000 people to methyl isocyanate, a chemical used in World War I for chemical warfare commonly known as MIC ("Bhopal Disaster"). This particular chemical was not as stable as the chemicals generally used in common pesticide plants, but a recent drought had caused farming in the area to suffer, thus impacting pesticide sales. Taking advantage of low regulatory power in the Indian government, and more lax safety laws, the company decided to use the less stable chemical and, thus, put the surrounding areas at risk to the highly unstable compound of chemicals ("Bhopal Disaster"). Though not intentional, the disaster was also no accident, but rather was the result of negligence on the part of the corporation that had located itself in a particular area merely for access to cheap land and materials with a lack of adequate oversight from local government. The aftermath of the disaster was devastating; the immediate death toll was counted as 2,259, though that number is somewhat disputed and difficult to prove. Within two weeks, the death toll rose from the reported over 2,000 to over 8,000, with the chronic effects of the gas on those who survived being largely immeasurable ("Bhopal Disaster"). Union Carbide was largely believed responsible, but they faced few repercussions. In 1989, Union Carbide paid $470 million to settle litigation, but the site itself was not cleaned until 1998, following a merger with McLeod Russel LTD (razorfoundation). The CEO of Union Carbide, Warren Anderson suffered no consequences for his leadership role, and in 2010 seven Indian officials were sentenced to two years in prison as well as $2,000 fines for their negligence in enforcing regulatory oversight (razorfoundation).

Such a mass event led to swift coverage from the media; not only was the explosion one of the worst industrial disasters in history, but it also occurred during the month of December, which is, generally, a particularly "slow" month for news (Wilkins 18). Much of the resulting coverage highlights Animal's indication that the media tells these stories from positions of power and, in their telling, dis-empower those who are the actual victims.

The first prong of the dominant narrative moved swiftly in response to the disaster. It was heavily covered by the media in places like the United States and was predominantly propped up as a cautionary tale about the dangers of industrialization, chemicals, and corporate neglect, and an emotive tale about the plight of the poor, the helplessness of the "third world," and the overall sense of hopelessness in any attempt to modernize the worlds of the marginalized without the intervention of large, often irresponsible, corporate interests from the West. In his article, "Media Coverage of the Bhopal Disaster:

a Cultural Myth in the Making," Lee Wilkins explores the ways in which this disaster was covered by the mass media as a case study for the way in which mass media rarely succeeds in telling the stories of the subaltern in an ethical manner. Wilkins highlights, particularly, the way in which the media coverage so heavily covered the presence of gas rather than people, as if gas is an autonomous evil separate of the corporations, which are run by individuals, who failed in containing the gas and protecting the people within its path: "Of the forty-one stories analyzed, only thirteen did not include some sort of visual image of gas, either as an actual gas cloud or something like a smoke stack which the average person would probably associate with gas. In the remaining stories, there were 115 separate images of gas" (22).

Wilkins's extensive research on the media portrayals of the Bhopal disaster focused heavily on what the media actually portrayed and how it not only impacted responses, but also allowed the actual players to conceal themselves. His algorithm filtered through the stories and generated the following statistics:

> Union Carbide as a corporation (11%) and American business executives, including Union Carbide corporate officials (11%) were the two entities that were most frequently portrayed as powerful actors in media reports. In 44% of the stories, Americans, either as lawyers, corporate executives or corporations, were portrayed as the single most powerful actors on the scene. Indians were portrayed as powerful actors only 28% of the time and the bulk of that coverage was provided to Indian government officials… Individuals, particularly Indians, who were not officials of their own government were not portrayed as capable of influencing events. Instead they became masses of victims. (18)

The trend of the media coverage was to depict frightening images of uncontrollable gas and smoke as well as to conceal the individuals profiting from the plant by referring to them merely as executives or officials, by referencing their lawyers, and by constantly resorting back to the idea of corporate rather than individual power—all while portraying the victims as merely helpless bystanders worthy only of pity. Wilkins ultimately concludes:

> The message of theory seems to be that we might better regard media content as a unique cultural form, a 'media culture' fashioned according to its own conventions and codes and forming a more or less independent element in the social reality rather than a message about that social security. Thus, even where media acts as a carrier for other institutions, they tend to alter substance, to conform to the demands of 'media culture'. (4)

Essentially, Wilkins finds that the mass media crafts and delivers its own ver-

sions of reality that ultimately benefit the corporate interests that it claims to be illuminating. Media representations of the Bhopal disaster certainly depicted the corporations as being at fault, but they refused to engage with the humanity of the situation instead allowing the corporations to hide behind the gas. Again, Animal recognizes this in Jarnalis, and it is what motivates him to seize control of the narrative. When he learns that Jarnalis has already decided what sort of book he will write before even hearing Animal's actual story, he raves:

> Jarnalis should not be allowed to tell my story. Comes here struttintouchg like some sisterfuck movie star. What? Does he think he's the first outsider ever to visit this fucking city? People bend to touch his feet, sir, please sir, your help sir, sir my son, sir my wife, sir my wretched life. Oh how the prick loves this! Sultan among slaves he's, listens with what lofty pity, pretends to give a fuck but the truth is he'll go away and forget them, every last one. For his sort we are not really people. We don't have names. We flit in crowds at the corner of his eye. Extras we're, in his movie. (Sinha 9)

Jarnalis represents the media tendency to craft the stories of the subaltern in ways that benefit themselves or their viewers. These journalists, creators of the media, believe themselves to be above the victims of tragedy, benevolent sympathizers who ultimately profit off the sensational stories of suffering. Though the journalists tell their stories with feigned pity, Animal understands and highlights the ineffectiveness of pity by demanding the Eyes listen to him, rather than Jarnalis and his proposed book.

The mass media is often the primary transmitter of subaltern stories in terms of great events that impact them. There is, however, a closer representation. The second prong of the three-prong narrative belongs to the white saviors who respond to such media representations and then disseminate the emotive version of events. White saviors can be driven by a variety of intentions, some of which are seemingly pure, others of which are blatantly for their own benefit. In his article "Humanitarianism, Testimony, and the White Savior Industrial Complex: *What is the What* versus *Kony 2012,*" Sean Bex explores the idea of narrative authority in reference to subaltern stories through the voice of a white savior who communicates through a video, *Kony 2012,* that claims to seek justice for the subaltern in Uganda. Bex cautions both authors and readers creating and consuming media that depicts narratives of the subaltern to ensure that they understand the narrative voice and the effects that it has upon the reading and understanding of any representation. *Kony 2012* is highly criticized by Bex, as it is the story of child soldiers in Uganda and their fight to escape the warlord Kony as he wages a devastating civil war by utilizing the poor children of Uganda. This video tells the story of an American activist,

Jason Russell, who visits and forms a relationship with recovering child soldier, Jacob Acaye. The purpose of the video is to mobilize activists in an effort to bring Joseph Kony to justice. However, though the intentions may be pure, Bex is wary of Russell's telling as it is focused predominantly on his own reactions to the atrocities that he sees, rather than allowing those who have actually experienced them firsthand to speak for themselves. Russell frequently compares himself to Acaye and weeps as he tries to imagine his own children experiencing what Acaye has experienced. Though a powerful narrative technique, Bex argues such depictions do not actually serve the subaltern but rather inflate the consciences of those who want to be helpers:

> *Kony 2012* portrays a Western activist who not only over identifies with the traumatic situation of a recovering child soldier but appropriates his victimhood in the portrayal of his plight in Invisible Children's humanitarian campaign. As a result, the video leads the viewer to establish an empathetic relationship with the Western humanitarian agent rather than the African victim, consigning the latter to the position of a silenced and ultimately unknown object of patronizing sympathy. (Bex 33)

The work, though potentially pure in intention, does not allow the subaltern to speak from a position of authority, but rather subjugates them to a position of helplessness, fortunate to be pitied by characters such as Russell.

Sinha created a character much like Russell in Elli, the American doctor who comes to Khaufpur to open a clinic with the intention of providing much needed, proper medical care to the people there, but who has little understanding of the actual people of Khaufpur. Elli, though pure in intention, is used by Sinha as an example of Western activists similar to Russell who respond to media representations of marginalized suffering and believe that they can offer some level of solution. However, unlike Russell in *Kony 2012*, Elli is not offered any platform to tell her own story, give her own motivations, or explain her true intentions for coming to Khaufpur. In fact, a large narrative arc throughout the novel centers on Animal and his friends merely trying to decide if they believe she works for the Kampani or not.

Elli possesses a deep sense of moral obligation and a need to make a difference in the world. She is uncomfortable with living a life that does not make some sort of impact, and she believes her skills as a doctor perfectly position her to be the most helpful in places like Khaufpur. The boycott of Elli's clinic is not merely confusing to her, but also infuriating. She grows increasingly angry through the text as the boycott continues and as she is prevented from offering the help she so desperately wants to give. She believes that because she can offer a service, she speaks the language, and she owns some traditional

dress that she should be accepted:

> 'Well you can tell me' Elli suddenly says in Hindi. Such a silence there's. Even old Hanif turns and sends his sightless eyes searching for her… 'I'm the doctor you were talking about,' says Elli. 'I'm the one who opened the clinic that everyone's afraid of. I'm not a monster, I'm not from the moon and I hate the Kampani as much as you do'. (Sinha 181)

In this exchange she is pleading with locals to accept her, to welcome her, and to utilize her services. The Eyes, or the unnamed and unknown readers to whom Animal dictates his story, are, no doubt, confused as to why the people will not accept her help and grow frustrated with the suspicion that Animal and his friends have of her. However, as the story continues, Animal begins to explain why Elli and those like her are not helpful, why they are of little, if any, benefit to the subaltern, and why they cannot be effective in their missions:

> 'What really disgusts me is that we people seem so wretched to you outsiders that you look at us with that so-soft expression, speak to us with that so-pious tone in your voice.' She asks very seriously, 'Don't people here deserve respect?' 'It is not respect, is it? I can read feelings. People like you are fascinated by places like this.' (184)

Animal and his people do not want the pity and soft, pious looks from the white saviors of privileged positions. They desire understanding and tangible change. Animal and Elli argue about what it will take for her to be effective in Khaufpur and what it will take for the people to accept and trust her. Elli states in comparing herself to local activist Zafar, "I too am there for them, they will get to know me" (185) which launches Animal into a rage:

> 'You haven't a hope. You are a good-hearted doctress but nothing do you fucking understand. Tell me please what is that?' I've pointed at her wrist. 'My watch?' 'Yes, your watch what do you need it for?' 'To tell the time of course'… Elli, I don't need a watch because I know what time it is. It's now o'clock… In the Kingdom of the Poor, time doesn't exist. Elli, if you had no watch, your stomach will churn and growl and say, hey Elli, it's food time, hey it's still food time, hey don't you hear me, it's food time. What happens if you can't afford food? When you can't remember the last time you ate something?… Hope dies in places like this, because hope lives in the future and there's no future here, how can you think about tomorrow when all your strength is used up trying to get through today?' (185)

For Elli, the people of Khaufpur are people just like her; they just need help, they need

resources. Elli fails to understand the universal differences between them. Even a concept as seemingly universal as time is not the same between the poor and the privileged. She is hopelessly confused by the way in which the subaltern think and exist.

Sinha uses Elli so aggressively to highlight this white savior trope, that it must play some role in the purpose of his allowing Animal to tell the story. Elli does not exist in the novel simply as just another character in the cast of interesting characters. She is Sinha's commentary on white savior figures. Animal exposes her directly for exactly what she is and how miserably she fails in her mission. The white saviors respond to media representations of these poor, helpless people and believe themselves capable of making some sort of difference in their stories, without ever considering the differences in their principles, concepts, and ideologies. White saviors such as Russell in *Kony 2012* and Elli both believe themselves above the subaltern and cannot understand how their intervention in their lives would not immediately be welcomed and applauded. Bandyopadhyay in the essay "Volunteer Tourism and "White Man's Burden': Globalization of Suffering, the White Savior Complex, Religion and Modernity" describes such characters in terms of "volunteer tourism," which is closely married to the idea of the white savior. Bandyopadhyay says "volunteer tourism" as:

> … a development strategy leading to sustainable development and centering the convergence of natural resource qualities, locals and the visitor that all benefit from tourism activity. Every year thousands of young adults from the Global North flock to the Global South in the name of "helping" the less fortunate by teaching in schools, building orphanages, saving turtles or nurturing street children… Charitable work helps young people assert their identity in a world of fragmenting meanings and semiotic confusion. (330)

The actions of such white saviors and activists may seem to cause minimal harm; many might argue that no harm is caused, merely no good is actually accomplished. But the implication from Bandyopadhyay is that these white saviors, humanitarian missions do in fact cause a subtle harm in that they allow the industries of the West to operate and create profit, largely unnoticed.

Elli does not necessarily bring any specific harm in the novel; however, I find it is critical to examine how Elli serves as a distraction and how the people of Khaufpur zero in on her as a potential enemy, not because she is, but because she has provided a visible, tangible face onto which they can direct their anger. The Kampani is unknown. The big bosses are never named, but are instead represented only by their lawyers. Elli, and white saviors like herself, detract from the visibility of the Kampani or corporate interests as they become the faces and voices of the privileged, rather than those who are

doing the most serious harm. They do this by allowing the focus to be removed from the exploitation and instead placed on the supposed good being done by the white saviors intervening. White saviors take the mass media's hazy representations of atrocities that cause helplessness and hopelessness and turn them into stories of hope and redemption. They twist the narrative to no longer focus on the suffering, but to instead focus on the good that they believe they can do. Again, the subalterns being helped are kept from any position of power as they passively accept the help forced upon them, and again, the individuals responsible for the suffering of the subalterns are removed from the narrative, as the white saviors fight no-name corporations, ideas like greed and negligence, rather than directly addressing the individuals responsible for the decisions that lead to the creation and maintaining of the subaltern groups. For Elli, the goal is to fix Animal's back, not to understand Animal, his place in his community, or his needs as a full person. She is focused only on the potential narrative of redeeming him from his position as Animal.

The third prong is somewhat unique compared to the first two. The narrative of the corporate interests is set apart from those of the white saviors and the mass media in that instead of operating out of a potentially well-intentioned but highly misguided desire to offer their own understanding of the subaltern as if they are speaking for them, corporate interests seek only to dis-empower, disenfranchise, and create for themselves a level of invisibility by which they can conceal their exploitation and continue to increase their profits. The metaphor of the Eyes comes most clearly into focus when discussing the Kampani bosses at which point the themes of invisibility that Sinha is addressing moves from a hint to a roar. When the lawyers finally arrive in Khaufpur to discuss the litigation, they arrive in secret:

> The Kampani lawyers arrive in Khaufpur with no warning. Timecheck sees them first. Four Amrikans, leaving the Collector's office, getting into a car. 'They met senior persons,' Timecheck tells us, 'Their leader is a big fellow dressed peculiar.' Well, no one knows what this might mean but alarming information is soon flying in thick and fast. This afternoon the Amrikans will meet Zahreel Khan, tomorrow the Cm… 'What kind of deal?' someone asks. 'What kind? With politicians there's only one kind. Out of court, into pocket. What else?' (Sinha 260)

While the lawyers are in Khaufpur, they stay in a hotel that does not allow access to the poor, they are seen only when entering and exiting buildings, and the people of the disaster are never granted access to their meetings. They are present, but they are not visible. The lack of transparency allows them to make deals in secret, shirk their responsibility, and continue their dis-empowerment of the people by making deals that appease officials

but ultimately benefit them and not the people of Khaufpur. They still control the events. Though Animal is still narrating the story, these particular events highlight his position of dis-empowerment by reminding the Eyes that despite his position as narrative authority, his authority does not extend to this realm. He cannot say what happens behind those closed doors because he is not allowed behind them. His authority as narrator is severely limited by the invisibility of the Kampani.

By allowing Animal to narrate the story, it would appear as if Sinha has given the subaltern back their power, but the invisibility of the Kampani reminds the Eyes that merely giving Animal narrative authority in no way creates for him a position of true power. Animal's telling of the story is simply an attempt to bring attention to the invisibility that the privileged enjoy, but it offers no actual solution; his position as narrator does not grant him access to the Kampani.

Most literary scholarship on Sinha's novel focuses heavily on the narrative technique of allowing Animal to speak for himself and his people. Some, though, disagree on whether or not Sinha is effective. For example, in his article "Animal's Eyes: Spectacular Invisibility and the Terms of Recognition in Indra Sinha's *Animal's People*," Andrew Mahlstedt argues in favor of Sinha's narrative techniques that "Dominant narratives of poverty in the global south exacerbate the invisibility of the marginalized poor, blinding observers to all but a spectacle of abject destitution. Paying attention to narrative and the question of visibility in the context of recent globalization, *Animal's People* represents dis-empowerment without dis-empowering" (Mahlstedt 60). By contrast, Brigitte Rath in her essay "'His Words Only?' Indra Sinha's Pseudotranslation Animal's People as Hallucinations of a Subaltern Voice" argues that Sinha's techniques are completely ineffective because she is unable to filter out the privileged author's words from Animal's own words. She postulates that Sinha's character ,Animal, cannot speak for the subaltern because he is a creation of Sinha and Sinha is not a subaltern. She references interviews that Sinha gave when explaining his narrative techniques, in which he states: "Animal came to life in my mind and immediately began talking to me. He insisted on taking over the narrative, and rather rudely told me to get out of the way. It took me a long time to learn to trust him, but gradually I came to love that beastly boy" (Sinha, "Interview"). Rath points out that Animal's voice is in no way consistent and therefore more reflective of Sinha's attempt at speaking in a genuine subaltern voice, rather than a true subaltern voice. She cites numerous examples of praise for Sinha's creation of Animal that serves as evidence for the heavy emphasis most scholarship has placed on the importance of giving the subaltern their own voice. But to what purpose? Neither Rath in her criticism nor Mahlstead in his praise offer a concrete purpose to either the effective or ineffective use of Animal's

voice or the interpretation of the Eyes. What tangible purpose is served by ensuring that Animal's voice is true and unadulterated? Animal's voice as a narrative technique is not Sinha's primary concern, but rather he uses his voice to let the Eyes see the more complicated institutionalized restrictions placed upon the subaltern that prevent them from ever gaining any sense of empowerment. Animal is only given the opportunity to tell his story because a journalist is interested. He creates for himself some position of respect within his own community by being the one to get to know the American white savior doctor whom they mistake for a face of the corporation responsible for their suffering.

Yet, despite his narrative authority, Animal never receives justice, and the Kampani bosses are never actually visible or held fully responsible, just as Union Carbide never faced the full weight of the law. Animal's final note to the Eyes makes it clear that his telling of his story is not a solution for suffering: "Eyes, I'm done. Khuda hafez. Go well. Remember me. All things pass, but the poor remain. We are the people of the Apokalis. Tomorrow there will be more of us" (Sinha 366). The purpose of Animal's control of the narrative is not to facilitate a resolution to the suffering, nor to reverse the damage done by the dominant narratives, but rather to draw attention to them. The purpose of allowing Animal, the subaltern narrator, to maintain his position of authority throughout the text is to make this invisible narrative of oppression visible and to allow the Eyes to see and understand the voices of the Subaltern.

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