



Individual Needs

Sheela Jaywant

Freelance writer

Corresponding Author:

Ms Sheela Jaywant

Sangolda, Goa 403511

email: cmjaywant at gmail dot com

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Patient One:

'When I was in standard nine, thirteen years old...' I could barely
Hear her. She looked down, awkwardly.
Then continued, (shyly) softly...

'My classmates called me Boobs; they teased me mercilessly.
I was already an oversize thirty-eight C.
Later, things only got 'bigger' for me.

Always kept my front covered with a thick dupatta. The weight on my chest,
The ache in my neck, the custom-stitched bra -- like a stiff vest.
I could not buy one readymade, like the rest.

After marriage, within a year I had my baby.
The whole family was happy
As was I. But that heavy

Pair did not lactate. People joked about it. (Tearfully) It was embarrassing.
And at night, with my husband (aka 'mister'), whilst sleeping,
I have a problem, whilst moving or turning.

I hate my breasts. Cut them off. Help me,' (sobbing) she said.
I assured her it could be done. Instead
Of 'cutting them off', I suggested

Liposuction. She and her 'mister' were relieved that
There was a method to get rid of the fat,
Whose distribution was, in fact,

A problem inherited, nothing to do with what she ate
Or to which god she prayed.
Or didn't. Fate

Had a role to play, no doubt. I described the surgical procedure,
Explained in detail what I would do; dispelled her fear
Of what was in store. The relief on her face was sheer.

Patient Two:

As hesitant as Patient One. This one was also in her late twenties.
But, flat-chested. Her husband, she said, sees
Her as 'all bones', no pleasure, no flesh to squeeze.

Me, the doctor: 'I can change your shape, make you round, so to say.
Cosmetic treatments change more than looks. They
Can for a better 'morrow pave the way.'

My take:

Plastic surgery worked (works!) for patients, who diffidence shared.
Who believed, true or false, no one cared
About how they felt or fared.

Cleft-palates, misshapen noses and jaws, burns cases,
That need restoration. Extra digits on hands, ugly patches on faces.
Deformations/distortions restructured in phases.

It's more than good looks. It's about functioning, well-being,
Holding one's head high, not constant cringing.
This medical branch converts existing to living.
