

‘A Study of Impact of Losses on Shaping People’s Destiny in Kiran Desai’s Book “The Inheritance of Loss”

Willys Sam¹, Dr Ruchi Mishra Tiwari²

¹Research Scholar, Rabindranath Tagore University, Bhopal (M.P.) India.

²Head School of Languages, Rabindranath Tagore University, Bhopal (M.P.) India.

ABSTRACT

Everyone on earth grapples with the inevitable process of losing in life. This Paper presents a Study of Impact of losses that each of the characters had had and their affect on their Personality and Destiny in the book “Inheritance of Loss” by the Booker Prize winner Kiran Desai. Losses in life play a significant role in shaping one’s personality in a negative or a positive way. The characters in the book had to deal with loss at one point or the other in their lives. As life is marked by a variety of losses, some were life changing, some intangible, some insignificant, some irrevocable but some subtle like in the life of Biju Sai, Nimmi, etc.

Key Words: Tangible, Intangible, Personality, Destiny, Suffer

I INTRODUCTION

The Author has managed to present effectively the losses in each of the chapter which gives the impression that almost everything and all the incidents about every individual in the Novel is dominated by some kind of losses in their lives throughout the book. The unfortunate negative vicious cycle of life seems to hover over and envelop each character in such a way that they tend to feel helpless and powerless to do anything about it.

Jemubhai Patel, the judge has the loss of his wife, his daughter & husband, his past glory, wealth, loss of significance, loses his dog Mutt. Sai, Judge’s granddaughter, a teenager loses her parents, schooling at the convent, friends, her 1st tutor Nomita and then Gyan, her lover. Biju, the son of Judge’s cook, keeps suffering from loss of jobs and also being an illegal immigrant had to return later that further resulted in the loss of money, hopes and dreams of prospering in US and was stripped and robbed on his return. The cook loses his wife whom he loved, had loss of innocence and suffered the loss of self dignity as a human being when dealt badly by the Gorkha fighters and later by the policemen. Lola loses her husband and her sense of security along with Noni her sister when their house was invaded. Father Booty lost his house, property and had to return to Europe and as a result of which uncle Potty who loses his friend.

KIRAN DESAI, the youngest Booker Prize winner in 2006, is an Indian American Author. She won this award for her novel “The Inheritance of Loss” and was honored with “The National Book Critics Circle Fiction Award”, too.

Kiran Desai was born in 1971. She studied in Cathedral and John Cannon School. At the age of fourteen, she left India and lived in England and then later moved to America. She studied creative writing at Bennington College Hollins University and Columbia University. Kiran had said “I’ve to break out of it to be sweet. But as a writer I’m trying to understand hate and anger.” Incorporating real life characters and incidents in her work is one of her

distinct ability in her writings. .She gives her reaction to the prize that she had received for her novel “The Inheritance of loss” in the following way-“It (The Booker Prize winning) had a really serious effect .You realize that to win a prize is basically childish. The pleasure you feel is childish which is nice too. But the frightening thing is that it has a serious effect.”-Kiran Desai

II STUDY OF DIFFERENT KINDS OF LOSSES

Loss can have so many meanings such as misfortune, deficit, something misplaced or lost, bad luck, accident, mishap, damage, defeat, disaster, failure, impairment etc. They are mainly categorized into Tangible and Intangible losses. Tangible losses are Materialistic, Relational, Physical, Financial and Professional whereas Intangible losses are Spiritual, Mental, Emotional, Cognitive and Psychological. Tangible losses, most of the time leads into Intangible losses. So far most of the researches have been found to be done in the area of Tangible losses and its effect on the individual lives. Some examples of Tangible losses that the characters in “The Inheritance of loss” had are like loss of loved ones (cook losses his wife and Sai her parents etc), friends (Biju losses Saeed and Jemubhai his friend Mr Bose), job or profession (Biju loses job after job), Money and Wealth (Biju loses money as he had to return to India and Jemubhai his wealth as they hardly has things at home to live by), Health (Jemubhai became old and so does his cook), Accident (cook’s wife fell from the tree), Documents and things (Jemubhai’s house ransacked and Noni & Lola lose their books etc) and Intangible ones are loss of identity (Jemubhai at Kalimpong and Biju in US), loss of Values (Sai Noni Loa etc had), sense of security (Felt by Sai, Biju and Father Booty), cultural & psychological identity ,loss of significance, past glory, self dignity, social adequacy, freedom, love, happiness, memory, peace, hope, trust, belief system etc. Every day we are either losing or winning. It decides our destiny, plays a role in the course of life that we would take, like Sai had to move down to the

remote Kalimpong from Dehradun convent school because of the loss of her parents. It has a great impact on our perception about the world and it changes our attitude and behavior. 'Could fulfillment ever be felt as deeply as losses?' (Kiran Desai). It's true that the losses are much deeply felt than fulfillment in life.

III IMPACT OF LOSSES IN SHAPING THE DESTINY

In spite of the fact that the characters in the book by Kiran Desai, go through various kinds of losses in life and have a significant influence of them on their lives, there are three groups that can be seen on the basis of their reaction to the losses. Firstly, the group that is optimistic, knows to tackle them and leverage from their losses like Mr. Bose, Father Booty. They bounce back, learn from their losses, make progress & seem to have a great life. Second group is the one that barely manages to go through their losses, struggle and have an average life like the Judge, cook, etc. And the third group is the one that goes through a number of losses and that too in the major part of their lives and are overpowered by them. They suffer a series of tragedy in their lives and a lot of pain and bereavement like Sai, Nimmi and Biju. Their perspective towards life and others changes. In case of a major loss the whole outlook changes.

IV CONCLUSION

There are number of factors involved in causing losses that are either External- like the turn of events in life (as in Sai's case), the changes in the surrounding (Judge's retirement life), the political situation around (as of Kalimpong,) etc and also the Internal - like the wrong decisions taken, changes in the outlook and behaviour that we make in ourselves.

The way we look at the losses that we suffer in our lives decides our reaction to them which in turn impacts our personality and plays a significant role in shaping our destiny. We should learn to minimize their negative impact by way we react to it and take definite action and maximize their impact by leveraging from them resulting in maturity, growth and stronger determination to press forward in order to pursue our dreams.

REFERENCES

- [1] SashikalaSunmugamSuzana, Hj.MuhammadAgnes, Liao WeiLin (2015), "Identity Dilemma in Mulk Raj Anand's Untouchable and Kiran Desai's The Inheritance of Loss: A Strategic Essentialist Reading", *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* Volume 208, 20 November 2015
- [2] T. Ranjula Pushpa(2015)," Cultural Encounter In Kiran Desai's The Inheritance Of Loss", *International Journal of Scientific & Engineering Research*, Volume 6, Issue 4
- [3] Umme Salma (2015)," Displacement of Desire in Kiran Desai's Inheritance of Loss", *ASIATIC*, VOLUME 9, NUMBER 1
- [4] Chandramani, 2Mr. G. Bala Krushna Reddy (2013)," "Kiran Desai's The Inheritance of Loss: Elements of American Dream and Globalization", *IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)* Volume 11, Issue 2 (May. - Jun. 2013), PP 79-81
- [5] Oana Sabo (2012), "Disjunctures and diaspora in Kiran Desai's The Inheritance of Loss", *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature*.