

FACETS OF LOVE IN JHUMPA LAHIRI'S *THE LOWLAND*

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Received: 05 Jan 2018

Accepted: 20 Jan 2018

Published: 29 Jan 2018

ABSTRACT

Jhumpa Lahiri originally named NilanjanaSudeshna, is a highly influential frontline writer of short stories and fictional opus. Lahiri established a renowned reputation as an efficacious conveyer of immigrant experience in an exotic land. Her debut work "The Interpreter of Maladies" (1999) raised her to the pinnacle of fame, as a prolific writer of Asian ethnicity. Lahiri's literary compositions stand as treasurable masterpieces in the chronicles of diasporic literature exploring identity and cultural collisions. She seamlessly paints her fiction with shades of intimacy reflecting events from her expatriate habituation. Her literary compositions emit the essence of human valour in an exotic land. Travelling beyond the confinement of one's own heritage to confront an alien convention is stunningly brought to revelation with devoted audacity in all her works. Lahiri's residence in the summit of critical laurels was established firmly with her luminous rendition of *The Lowland* (2013). Her steadfast commitment in enhancing human bonds is emphatic in this work. The novel spins the anecdote of human affinity with a special depiction of a familial story poignantly pervasive with love. The paper accentuates the varied phases of love dwelling exquisitely in the recondite depths of familial ties and glorifies the diverse facets of love, which demands complete sacrifice and commitment in the realm of relationships.

KEY WORDS: Love, Facets, Bond, Relationships

INTRODUCTION

Jhumpa Lahiri, as a renowned writer delineates her profound adhesion towards human relationships in *The Lowland* (2013). The novel stands in unique contrast to the works of Lahiri, which ruminates around the themes of identity crisis, assimilation and generational disparity between parents and children. Lahiri with her beaming distinctness draws the issues of immigration and its impact on the second generation with inseparable familiarity in all her compositions. *The Lowland* as an ambitious diversion from Lahiri's stereotypical themes brings to cynosure the significance of love and paramount's its diverse hue. She strings the symphonies of love and its significance in enriching human bonds around the novel with an ostentatious decoration of love and its diversity. *The Lowland* is a definite exaltation of love and its transfusion amid assorted relationships, deeply rooted in human life.

Facets of Love

Love is an essential ingredient, flavouring familial bonds. Family as a unit of love reflects its facets vibrantly. Love and its splendid shades are profusely scattered in the realm of relationships. Man's need in the world seeks fulfilment in love diminishing the conflict existing in life as Rabindranath Tagore opines:

In Love, the sense of difference is obliterated and the human soul fulfils its purpose in perfection, transcending the limits of it and reaching across the threshold of the infinite.

Therefore, love is the highest bliss that man can attain to, for through it alone he truly knows that he is more than himself, and that he is one with the All. (31)

The Lowland is a zealous exaltation of love. Lahiri in the novel perpetually engages in an attempt to ravel out the different facets of love shared between siblings, parents and children, husband and wife and reveals its ability to hover around one's life even after death. She ennobles the bond of brotherhood through Subhash and Udayan, the inseparable siblings until life unveiled diverse paths for them. The brotherly love took a new shape after the radical death of Udayan, summoning Subash to mend the fragments of Gauri's life shattered by Udayan.

The marital bond between Gauri and Subhash disintegrated by their loveless living as she vehemently accepted not to love her second husband, because of her ardent love for Udayan. The presence of Udayan and his memories drifted in close vicinity, and seized Gauri, to accept her affinity with Subhash. Lahiri records the admonishing invincibility of love which triumphantly conquered Gauri and furtively closed the doors of her heart by safely locking Udayan in its deep recess. Lahiri with her ingenious creativity demonstrates the might of unfeigned love and its firm abidance in the life of Gauri, as she remarks, "Even now part of Gauri continued to expect some news from Udayan. For him to acknowledge Bela, and the family they might have been" (184).

Gauri caught in the clutches of her harrowing past with Udayan and his unforeseen demise strived to diminish those moments by travelling far away to extinguish her excruciation. With her failed endeavours to smother the painful trails of Udayan she indulged in the negligence of her daughter Bela to catalyze her identity in an alien land. Gauri considered Bela as a shadow of her haunting past. Her insouciance towards her daughter lead to the breach of love between them and paved way for separation. The love between mother and daughter is portrayed with acridity, by registering its consequences in the life of Bela.

Lahiri vivaciously emblazed love in another phase with the depiction of fatherly love of Subhash for Udayan's daughter abandoned by Gauri. The deep seated brotherly love imprisoned in his bosom was excavated and lavishly showered with the abundance of sacrifice on Bela who according to Subhash was a diffused version of his brother Udayan. He sensed the existence of his intimate sibling in Bela, as he states, "Faster, she would insist and sometimes, if the aisle was empty, he obliged, sprinting forward, playing along. In this Udayan had marked her, leaving behind an exuberance replica of himself" (188).

Subash treasured Bela as a legacy of his bygone days with Udayan. His unadulterated love for Bela and his possession over her by concealing the truth about her biological father intensely comprehends the lasting profoundness of a father's love which shimmers with the exultation of victory against motherly love. Lahiri's insolent depiction of the emotional spasm undergone by Subhash with trepidation to acknowledge his daughter as an independent adult unlike his defenceless little Bela who crawled in his hands years back, evokes emotional pangs. She austere substantiates the effulgence of love with the return of Bela to the embraces of her father apprehending his sacrificial love for her. Bela's thirsty heart grooved by Gauri's separation was drenched only with the love of Subhash delicately unfolding the beautiful expression of fatherly love dribbling sacrificeto plangently proclaim the ability of a man to play the role of both the father and mother.

CONCLUSIONS

The Lowland among the works of Lahiri stands with dazzling sparkles emanating the sweet fragrance of love from the intimate bonds of relationships blooming in human life. Jhumpa Lahiri, viscerally exhilarates the earnestness of love and its impressive facets with expansive delineation in the novel. Amidst the diverse facets of love presented by Lahiri, she fervidly lands in aggrandizing the fatherly love of Subhash, which glistens brightly on Bela's life assuring her with the radiance of his love during all her cloudy days.

Jhumpa Lahiri startlingly captures and ceaselessly conveys the human need for love in its varied forms in *The Lowland*. The novel is an astounding expression of love in its distinct facets ceaselessly celebrating the glowing splendour of a foster father's love with admirable ascension.

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