

INSEARCH OF NEW VISTAS: RELATIONSHIP RENEWAL IN MANJU KAPUR'S THE IMMIGRANT

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ABSTRACT

Fiction writing has reached the pinnacle of its glory with the writings of established woman writers of fiction. Manju kapur is also a distinguished figure in the world of Indian novels. Manju kapur writings have been a delineation of inner life and subtle relationship. She is the author of five acclaimed novels, Difficult Daughters, A Married Woman, Home, The Immigrant and Custody. She received common wealth writer prize in 1999 for her novel Difficult Daughters; Home was shortlisted for the Hutch crossword book award in 2006. Forth novel of Manju kapur is The Immigrant. She receive Dsc prize for South Asia literature in 2011 for this. Forth novel of Manju Kapur the Immigrant is the story of Nina. After her marriage with A nanda, a dentist. She leaves her home and country and settles in Halifax, Canada. Nina lonely, isolated jobless, sexually frustrated and childless life is filled with great sadness. She got a part time job where she had a affair with Anton and indeed Nina has been unfaithful to A nanda. At one point Nina realized that she could no longer consider A nanda as her anchor or Anton her lover. Who had forced himself upon her, using her for his own pleasures? She deliberately pulled off all bonds that could have held her freed herself and moved on with the hope of find new place, new friends, and new family.

KEYWORDS: Fiction, Manju Kapur

INTRODUCTION

Manju Kapur is a professor of English at Miranda House, Delhi. She projects a new vision of Indian woman in her fiction. Her novel was also acknowledged and awarded. Her The Immigrant (2008) is her fourth novel. In subject matter and locale the focus is shifted from India to Canada but at the core of it, the novel deals with man-woman relationship. Manju Kapur putting her constant effort to make her woman independent and bold.

There is hardly any doubt in the fact that Kapur's women from Virmati to Nina strive hard to chalk out their own destiny through their independent course of action. Manju Kapur has emphasized on the issues in the context of patriarchy: inter-religious marriage, family bond, co-existence of past and present. She has narrated her woman protagonists as a victim of biology, gender, domestic violence and circumstances. Manju Kapur thinks that

“There is a man within every woman and a woman in every man. When manhood is questioned womanhood is fragmented.”(6).

The Immigrant is a novel in which the same theme recurs. It has nothing to do with the problem of immigrant; there is no east-west clash or the theme of alienation. Brinda Bose in India Today avers

“This has no longer a novel tale: Has no real novel take on Indian Immigrant existence: in North America”. (2)

Man-Woman relationship is discussed in *The Immigrant* of Manju Kapur. "First is sexual aspect and second is psychological. But it is the sexual aspect which overpowers the psychological aspect. In sexual aspect Kapur has shown premarital and extramarital relationship in the novel. In premarital sex Rahul, the boy friend of Nina, ignites the fire of sex in her. In extramarital relationship, Nina finds a partner in Anton. In both the relationship Nina comes forward by herself."(3)

Nina of course, makes a life for herself and that is truly appealing so far as the theme is concerned. Nina's first relationship began with Rahul," fifteen years older than her, a teacher in the English Department of Arts Faculty."(6)

She devoted herself physically and emotionally to him but only dejection was the result. She expected the same love and devotion from his part. (34)

"But Rahul had always made it clear that he wanted to have his cake and eat it like all cakes this one was chewed, mashed into pulp and swallowed too."(p6)

As a result she made compromise with her fate and choose loneliness as her companion. But she has faith in her mind keeping her fate in account. She seems to have agreement with it having fewer opportunities in her luck. Anyway the correspondence promotes the growth of intimacy. Flattering make each other familiar of their respective worlds and works. They started longing for each other. Ananda's mind is eager to present some gift. He expected the gift from Nina also. During Ananda's departure time warm gift offering ceremony was followed by touching, flattering and passionate exchange of remarks. By this hankering for her increased with the obsession towards her body. To this Nina was also respondent.

"She pressed herself closer; Gone was the awkwardness of words. With his free hand he turned her face towards him and nuzzled her lips."(77)

Ananda performed well in the dental college. He got job as Dentist in Canada. Ananda and Nina got married and migrated to Canada. A new turning point in the Nina's life. On that night Nina came to know the Ananda's sexual dysfunction. For Nina it is proved to be the night of thunderclap on expected. She started comparing him with Rahul. "As she lay in bed she tried to transform reality into a scenario that would not confuse or upset her. Togetherness was the important thing. To be critical of how it was achieved was against the spirit of marriage."(p.91)

Excessive boast of success, more preference to money were also some of the reason for the failure in their relationship. Even though they are newly married, Nina was ready to conclude their relationship. She is forced to take this decision because her dream, desires, ambitions were speckled. By this we can get clear idea that love was sex based not on what a woman longs for Nina was a love seeker but Ananda showed his true love only in the dark. But during day time he never find time to talk with her, he simply shook her awake and went out. This makes her realize that her life in Canada was going to be like this only. For her

"There was no one to shout, get up; it's getting late, no task that would suffer by her staying in bed no person whose loneliness she had to assuage."(114)

Life in Canada means no dependency on others. One of the reason for broken relationship is that Nina is in Canada as an immigrant and-

"The Immigrant who comes as a wife has more difficult time At present all she is, is a wife, and a wife is alone for many, many hours."(124)

Gradually the warmth of love, hot passion, affection is gone. He started to ignore her. Ananda is more indulged in his clinic than in his wife. He never bothered about the critical situation of Nina. Without his love and care she could not adjust in Canada, but he failed to realize it.

A nanda started to take against India. He focuses on performance in lovemaking rather than a good husband."He loved his wife but he did not want to feel that she was the only one in the world he could have sex with. What kind of man would make him, with his masculinity so limited?"(151). She has a feeling of not getting child even after six months of her marriage. But A nanda is not ready to understand her feeling, for him it is too early to have a baby. This meant question mark on his potency

"A nanda retreated to the next room to remove the obdurate Nina from his sight. He went over his position in his mind, and found it impeccable."(169)

Without understanding A nanda's problem Nina became more selfish at the same time he did not communicate this to her. Communication barrier is the main factor for most of the failure of the married relationship. "Each felt violated and refused to make conciliatory gestures. Nina brooded over her situation for a few more days before picking up the yellow pages to look for gynecologist."(170) Inadequacy and disregard in her mind these intensified the gap between them. With the period of time the sexual hindrance reached fever pitch. The basic pleasure has long been forgotten.

"She wondered whether she needed to be more emphatic but the state of permanent sexual frustration she was in made it difficult. It grieved her that A nanda had no notion of how she felt. Her idea of matrimony was a husband who was a little more alert to the discreet clues she let drop." (181) Nina asked to Ananda whether anything was wrong with his sex capabilities. By her question A nanda decided to get his problem cured in California secretly. He never revealed this truth to Nina. A nanda return home with victory over his impotency. Now their life changed but still Nina did not happy because the lie he had told her came creeping in their relationship. Now she got irritated.

"Alone her thoughts grew darker. The hollowness of the landscape reverberated inside her, with no people, no conversation to even glaze the surfaces. Hour after hour, day after day could pass without single word uttered."(189)

To get rid of this useless life she wanted to find a job. By this she can establish her foot on her own. Ananda extramarital relationship with Mandy is another factor to break up with his wife. Mandy is a new receptionist. She had an interest to have sex with different men. A nanda feels happy in this relationship.

"He went home that first afternoon, in a slight daze. A- he had committed adultery. His wife never knew. B- There was no way he could give this up. It was too splendid a thing. C- Life was full of surprises and new experiences. He owed it to himself to do them justice."(239) But after knowing her attitude. He started to realize that he had down a great mistake. A nanda wanted to get off with Mandy but he couldn't. Now Nina's focus is PhDs program and his concentration is on money.

One more reason is added to destroy their married relationship. It is an extramarital relationship of Nina with Anton. Both Nina and Ananda were betraying each other. Both married but fallen into a "bantering relationship". The time has come when both A nanda and Nina would be left free to enjoy their extramarital life. But slowly they started to feel guilty for their relationship with Mandy and Anton.

“Filled with the guilt of this, he would not fight with Nina even when she was irritating him. This artifice lessened their relationship and made it seem superficial. Love for Nina began to wear the face of responsibility, and when he was with Mandy being naturally felt less burdened.”(253) Anton began to admire Nina’s beauty. Nina also feels satisfied but after the trip to Ottawa Anton turned his attention towards a new love. He became dispassionate towards Nina. Now Ananda’s relationship with Mandy also started getting sloped. Slowly the married relationship between Nina and Ananda is receded. They themselves are responsible for this. Manju Kapur completes this novel with Nina’s statement

“When something failed it was a signal to move on. For an immigrant there was no going back. When one was reinventing oneself, anywhere could be home. Pull up your shallow roots and move. Find a new place, new friends, and a new family. It had been possible once, it would be possible again.”(334) Nina says that she is not ready to accept the both Ananda and Anton. She is not ready to make a shift to India. But she is moving with a hope of choosing yet another new place, new friend and a new family.

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