

IN SEARCH OF LOVE IN MANJU KAPUR'S DIFFICULT DAUGHTERS

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ABSTRACT: Love has its own place in society. Love gives satisfaction, comfort and it strengthens people to sustain any situation and it is seen as a motivating factor in any person's life. Love is the prominent theme in most works of literature and its very prevalent in literature. The impact of love in literature is very obvious and it makes the impossible to possible. The problem arises when there is lack of love or people are driven into madness when they are deprived of love. The earth revolves with the force called love. This paper aims to bring out the issue of lack of love between mother and daughter which drives Virmati the protagonist of the novel in search of love and hold in life. Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughter* gives different dimension to mother daughter relationship and this lack of love from her mother causes problems in Virmati's life.

KEYWORDS: Love, Search, Mother, Daughter, Problems, Issue

I. INTRODUCTION

The word 'love' is the driving force of human life. Life on earth is impossible without love. All living beings do love and the beautiful feeling of love brings joy and motivates life. Love do bring people together and different kinds of love in our lives we all experience. Love between a father and a child, between siblings, between friends, love for animals, for nature, for religion, and for profession in various aspects is experienced. People say love is life and without love life is meaningless. Mother, the symbol of love, sacrifice and affection. Her love is more special and it starts from day one, when she gets a life in her womb. The bond between the mother and the child can never be separable. The physical and mental bond are so thick that nothing can replace. There are many people who walk in and out of our life but mother is the only person whom we can rely on and who can understand our real self. Children as they grow up, they consider their mothers as their role models. They imitate their mothers while playing as a kid and continue to reflect the characters of their mothers when they become a mother. There are many literary works which portrays the beautiful love of the mother. For example, for you, mom, by Ruth Reichel, Reichel talks about her complicated relationship with her mother. She comes in terms with her deceased mother after reading her mother's diaries and letters. "Where we belong" by Emily Griffin – is a novel published in 2012, which explores the love between herself and her mother. This book leaves a unique relationship between a mother and her daughter. Toni Morrison's "Beloved", is another example of mother's love. In the novel, "Sethe", the protagonist of the novel kills her young daughter to save her from years of slavery. In order to protect their children, mothers go to any extremes in life and do any kind of sacrifice.

"Search for Love" by Virmati:

Virmati, the protagonist of Manju Kapur in "Difficult Daughters" made to nurture her siblings as a mother. Kasthuri, the mother of Virmati always involved in procreating and leaving the young ones to Virmati to tend. So, all the dreams of Virmati ends. The responsibility to take care of the children burdened her and Virmati did her best in order to please her mother and continues her studies. After her cousin Shakuntala's visit, she understands how children of her age are free of mental pressure and enjoys childhood. Virmati gets motivated by her and feels what she is going through is a burden. The maternal pressure is too much for Virmati and her mother insists her not to waste her time, and she has more important things to do. Like looking after children, thought Virmati bitterly and then, as she thought of began to cry. (pg.18). Kasthuri feels that the sole duty of Virmati is to take care of her siblings. When Virmati complains to her mother about her work, she says, "you are the eldest, if you don't see things, who will?" Virmati longs for the love of her mother and she expects her mother to pet her as other siblings of her. When she lays her head next to the feeding youngest baby, Kasthuri gets irritated and says, "Have you seen to their food-milk-clothes-study?" Virmati does everything in order to please her mother and to win her love. She also wishes to pursue her studies. Kasthuri being a dedicated mother who knows only to bear children and take care of her husband, fails to understand the love of Virmati. Virmati's

longing for love drives her into the love affair with professor and even after her marriage with him, she never finds any comfort and satisfaction in love. Kasturi is always reminded that she is born to satisfy her in-laws and to work. Since her young age it was always remembered that marriage is her only fate. There is no great difference between the life of Virmati and Kasturi. Kasturi's only aim with Virmati is to get her into marriage and she remarks "they don't anything from me however an agreement to wed" (DD). Kasturi is much stressed over Virmati's marriage and she worries about her life. Kasturi, being an educated woman fails to understand her daughter and expects the same old traditional customs from her. In *Difficult Daughters*, throughout the novel, Virmati fights against the patriarchal oppression and her mother who is also oppressive equally. So, the rift gets strong between the mother and the daughter and Virmati chooses a rebellious path against the wish of her mother and family. Virmati suffocates by adjusting to everyone's need and her mother's continuous pregnancy which makes Virmati a real substitute for Kasturi. Virmati states, "the language of feeling had never followed between them and this threat was meant to express all the time? In a girl that spelt disaster. Why was saying anything to her mother so difficult? Maybe it was best to keep silent." DD(11).

Virmati has never given any attention throughout her life but instead with household responsibilities. "At times, Virmati yearned for affection, for some sign that she was special... Why did she need to look for gestures when she knew how indispensable she was to her mother and the whole family". DD(6) She realizes that, "It was useless in looking for answers inside the home. One had to look outside to education, freedom and the bright lights of Lahore College" DD(15-16) She decides to be an individual and to rebel against the wishes of her mother and her family. After her prolonged longing for love and understands that there is no point in accepting her duties and being an obedient daughter, she refuses her engagement with Indrajeet. This shatters Kasturi's dream and she feels humiliated.

Kasturi expects her daughter to be happy and settled in life. On the contrary, things has happened against her expectations. The mother and the daughter relationship is not smooth and had quite a misunderstanding. They are always under the domination either by their in-laws or other men. The mother and the daughter fails to understand each other's love, this happens in all the three generations of mothers and daughters.

Virmati's love with Professor Harish creates a havoc in Virmati's family. After knowing about Professor's wife's pregnancy, she tries to escape from the mental agony by pursuing her higher education in Lahore. Even after moving to Lahore, she falls a victim to love again with Professor Harish. He deceives her and she becomes pregnant later. To escape from her shame she has to abort the child. After a long struggle with her family, she marries professor Harish and comes to his house as his second wife. Professor's first wife Ganga, dominates her and makes Virmati to feel that the decision of marrying Harish is wrong.

Virmati feels heart broken when her mother scolds her for such a shameful life and asks her to drown into the canal. After getting mortified she yells, "Of course I made a disastrous marriage... I was nothing, husbandless, childless. I felt myself hovering like a pencil rotation on the margins of society". DD (258)

Virmati tasted failure in search for love from her mother and later from Professor Harish. Her search for love was forever endless. All three protagonists of Manju Kapur proves to be difficult daughters of all three generations – Kasturi, Virmati and Ida. Ida's life is also unsuccessful just like her mother. The misunderstanding between the mother and the daughter, the search for love is like a thread that runs from the beginning till the end of the novel.

II. CONCLUSION

The tradition and the cultural stories of India is very vast. The tales are the reflection of Indian culture and they are said to carry moral values and emotions of every individual. In this novel, Manju Kapur has given an image of Indian women between pre-independence and post-independence. The portrayal of Kasturi, Virmatio and Ida by Manju Kapur shows how women changes in the course of time. The novel makes the readers to realize how it is very important for a mother to understand her daughter. All three women fails to be unsuccessful in life and their search for love becomes an endless journey.

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