

**PORTRAYAL OF FEMININE CONSCIOUSNESS AS A NEW WOMAN
IN CUSTODY**

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Abstract:

Kapur's most recent novel, *Custody* (2011) is marginally not the same as her prior books. This one goes up against a track of separation and life from that point. It talks of the lives of two couples who are secured a savage guardianship fight bringing about giving profound scars to all included. Kapur's novel uncovers the injury which vulnerability in marriage can give, how kids are moved starting with one place then onto the next without deduction what impact it would have on their mind. This and considerably more has been discussed in this novel.

Key Words: Marginally, Guardianship, Profound, Vulnerability, Deduction

In *Custody*, Ishita has tried a solid part. At the point when her marriage with Suryakanta flops because of her inability to imagine, she isn't broken. Rather she chooses to work for the oppressed and begins working with an association which instructs slum children however she excessively ends up feeble what's more, slight when she falls profoundly enamoured with her progression girl. Her affection for the young lady is intense to the point that she can't hold up under any idea of separation from the young lady and the authority fight draws out the delicacy in her. The solid Ishita, ends up frantic to keep her stepdaughter with herself and turns out to be exceptionally shaky. These ladies appear qualities of intensity on occasion and then again are

fragile. More regularly than not these ladies wind up staggering onto convention. Delicacy is such an indistinguishable piece of lady. Anyway, solid a lady may appear on the outside, she is regularly than not greatly delicate in her heart.

Shagun, one of the main characters of the novel *Custody* is sufficiently strong to pick a luxurious way of life with a specific end goal to make her own particular space on the planet, dreading nobody. She is a working-class lady. She is the spouse of Raman, a corporate promoter. She is the mother of two kids as well. Feeling exhausted, estranged and pulled in towards innovation, she builds up an additional conjugal undertaking in spite of being a conventional housewife. A large portion of the ladies in India break their marriage bond, so as to get their missed flexibility. Taslima explains freedom as: “Freedom may be risky. It may have hazards but what joy is there in being caged even in the cage of gold! It is not security that makes. Life worth living, it is the flight into unknown, venturing into the untrodden paths and alleys of life” (5).

Kapur presents shagun’s state as “Now the destroyer was in her heart, threatening what she had once held dear. All her energy was spent in keeping secrets” (Kapur 35). Raman's cold and occupied state of mind towards Shagun harms her affectability and in the meantime her double-crossing in adoration with her better half and kids makes her life suffocating and anxious. Her energy for Ashok drives Shagun to that head on crash amongst want and obligation. Shagun feels “constantly vigilant, continuously invent excuses, convincingly justify absences from home, phone calls, even a preoccupied expression” (35).

The contention between her passionate needs and her external parts as a spouse and a decent mother gives off an impression of being horrendous to her. She battles severely. She makes thousand resolutions to be a decent house spouse. Be that as it may, she falls flat. In the

twelve long stretches of her wedded life, Shagun is worn out on her duty and Raman's sterling characteristics. She is tired and tired of being distant from everyone else. She is bothered when she is pregnant for her second youngster, in light of the fact that Raman relapses into a commonplace Indian dad. She is upset when he abandons her and their child, Arjun, totally alone to focus on his other infant.

Shagun's mental struggle tears her between her own bliss and the joy of her family. This breaks down her physical and mental condition. At the point when Ashok recommends for divorce from Raman, as a mother she says: "I have to stay for my children. How will they like it when they grow up and realize their mother is a divorcee?" (84). Once, when Ashok says they have to move to New York after sometime, "She was panic stricken. Why were things moving so fast?" (86) In her betrayed inclination, she begins to consider her undertaking with Ashok. To her, affection with Ashok is an affair to satisfy all her unfulfilled wants of her school days. Be that as it may, she isn't prepared to confront the results of wedding Ashok and leave for New York which thusly would break her marriage with Raman and separate her from her youngsters.

In *Custody* Shagun is headed to draw in herself in an additional conjugal relationship and is made to confront its repercussions. It is valid in numerous spousal connections the break between want reason is difficult to survive. The characters think that it's hard to control their faculties, yet life shows them a straightforward exercise that a winged creature in a hand is worth two of a shrubbery. The following section titled "Compromise" would substantiate that one can't have it both ways. This person on foot truth would prompt compromise between individuals. The protagonists would understand that it is smarter to be realistic than to be energetically silly.

But, Ishita like every Indian lady yearns for a customary life. At the point when an open door comes through Raman, she devours it and begins her glad existence with Raman and Roohi, rising all of a sudden into spouse, mother and fancy woman of a huge level alongside hirelings. In the fight amongst want and assurance, the heroes of Kapur, who were once enthusiastic and wistful, at last make a sensible trade off? Since decision, think and conditional prompts enduring, the characters take in the craft of bargain. They grapple with life's conceivable outcomes and reasonableness. They understand reality that a flying creature in a hand is worth two in the shrubbery.

Manju Kapur's recent novel, *Custody*, sheds light on many such complex issues regarding motherhood and daughterhood as identifying mechanisms when they fraught with various drawbacks. The mother is considered a goddess for the goddess neither speaks nor reacts. But the moment a mother in human form raises her voice for her certain basic rights, the image of goddess begins to lose its hold and her existence becomes complicated. This duality of experience towards motherhood is the aftermath of the divorce which exists between ideology and reality. Though, the novelist is, at places, critical of this dual attitude but sometimes it seems that Manju Kapur herself attempts to preserve the all forgiving, loving and caring image of the mother, simultaneously presenting an individual counterpart in the form of a defiant daughter.

The novel *Custody* seems, at the first instance, a story of law intrigues and family disputes. But between the lines, there is a large chunk of images and arguments that claim it to be a book concerned with the question of what it means to be a mother or to be a daughter, and both mother and daughter at the same time. What this paper intends to do is to critique such categorization of women as 'mother' or 'daughter' not opposing them with each other, but by

examining their effectiveness in the ways they fight against the social relations of inequality and hierarchy.

In *Custody*, everybody has to pay a price for what they want. The fact that Husband and wife become strangers to each other is pathetic and brings to the surface the hollowness which the modern families experience in this materialistic world. Born in the city of Amritsar in post-independence era when the nation was rising up after two centuries of colonial rule, Manju Kapur had seen the growing up of India. Along with her growing up it was India growing up with its people- men, women, children, families' altogether.

Kapur's *Custody* is a tale of female woes, sufferings as well as their happiness, their way to fulfil their desires and aspirations. The novel takes us through a series of events and incidents with separation, divorce; remarriages of the four adults and with it follows a series of ugliness with the legal procedure or the custody battle with the emotions of the children at stake. The pain and loneliness of the two children of Shagun is well portrayed by Manju Kapur. The story can be termed as a legal drama of the Indian society. Kapur's women are bold enough to face the cruel and slow turns of the Indian judiciary and the way it functions. Manju Kapur's women are no longer confined within the four walls of the family and traditional values. They dare to break down the conventional perceptions and dogmas of the patriarchal society or the bonds of incompatible marriage. In their quest for identity the bold women characters of Kapur are presented by her as real women of flesh and blood who have their own emotions and sentiments.

In Shashi Deshpande's novel, *Roots and Shadows*, Indu, the protagonist feels her own person lost in her marriage- "Have I become fluid, with no shapes, no forms of my own. At

that moment a savage truth had stared me in the face- without wants there is No I am I on my way to becoming an ideal woman, a woman who loses her identity in her husband.”

The same way, Shagun also finds her life monotonous without Raman’s presence at home very frequently. As a traditional Indian woman, Mrs. Sabarwal wants her daughter to settle in a marriage with Raman, a good match for her. Their marriage is arranged along standard lines- “*she the beauty, he the one with the brilliant prospects.*” Mrs. Sabharwal advises her - “*Do what you like after you marry.*” Shagun, after marriage, bears endless responsibilities like claims of her husband, his family and friends, and above all children, which provide no space for her career. The major responsibility is that she is trapped in motherhood soon after her marriage.

In *Custody* both Ishita and Shagun are undergoing a serious mental progression. By making a significant decision of breaking their relationship and entering into a new realm of happiness, they showed the importance of the feminine consciousness in becoming the new women.

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