

A study of the novel “Al Ajiniha Al Mutakassira” of Jibran Kahlil Jibran

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“Al Ajiniha Al Mutakassira” (The Broken Wings) is a poetic novel originally written in Arabic language by Jibran Kahlil Gibran and published in 1912. It is a tragic love story, filled with stunning imagery. It depicts the plight of women and many other social issues of that time. Jibran Khalil Gibran was a famous writer, philosopher, poet, and artist who was born in a village “Al Bishari” in Lebanon on 6th January 1883. He is best known as the author of “the Prophet” and also known for his mystical Arabic and English works. He is the third best-selling poet of all time, behind Shakespeare and LaoTzu. The title of this novel is “Al Ajiniha Al Mutakassira” (the broken wings) and it is a symbolic name. Wings are related to birds and they can fly in the sky. But here these Wings are broken. The characters in this novel like Selma and narrator are trying to fly in the sky, but they can't because their Wings are broken. Faiz karama, another character in this novel, is also passing through the same situation.

The subject matter of the novel is the love and passion between the writer and Selma Karama. It depicts the cruel mind of a Bishop called Pals Ghalib, who is controlling the society in the name of religion. The hero in this novel is the author himself. He narrates the story. It has a foreword and 10 chapters. In the foreword he expresses his love experience with Selma Karama when he was 18 years old. He starts this novel with charming words that “I was 18, when love opened my eyes with its magical rays and touched my soul for the first time with its fairy fingers.

After this The Author began to tell the story. He remembers that all days of happiness have passed and now he is alone and his lover Selma Karama with her infant are resting beneath the soil in the tomb. After this foreword the first chapter of the novel begins.

One day the narrator visited the house of his friend who was living away from the city. There he met Faris karama, the father of his lover Selma Karama. He was an old gentle man and friend of his father. He told the narrator about his friendship with his father. He requested the narrator to visit his house and the narrator promised to visit him. After some times he left the house.

After sometimes Faris karama left the house. Then the narrator's friend told him that he doesn't know a person in Bairut except him whose wealth turned him noble and who got nobility from his wealth. Faris karama was living in the outskirts of the city in a posh house. He was a soft hearted person. He couldn't Defend the others who are controlling him. He accepted the words of bishops without thinking its consequences. As well his daughter always obeyed her father without questioning its right and wrong. The Bishop understood this matter and intended to marry the daughter of Faris to his brother's son Mansoor Bek Galib who was a cruel man. The bishop loved the wealth of this gentleman and wished to procure it to him and Mansoor.

The narrator visited his house and met Selma and her father. He describes in the novel the beautiful atmosphere of his house and the nobility and beauty of Selma. He visited frequently his house and met her.

One day the narrator was invited for a dinner in her house. That day changed their happy moods into sorrow. by this Bishop's messenger who appered in her house and informed Faris Karama that his Master has sent him with his vehicle requesting him to come to meet the bishop. Faris was compelled to visit the Bishop and went out with the messenger. The narrator explains that night and circumstances as follows. "Like wise the heaven

intended, and I became with Selma in the night, in a lonely house protected by the trees, overflowing there the silence and sailing in its sides the imagination of love, purity and beauty”

Selma and the narrator handed over their deep feelings of each one to the other. But after the return of Faris from Bishop's house he announced about the engagement of Salma with Mansoor bek Galib. He explained the Trap of the bishop and expressed his apology to the narrator. He departed from there with tears in his eyes. He recognises the real value of love after this forceful separation. In this context he explains the role and power of the religious leaders in the East. So Faris kerama accepted unwillingly the request of the bishop for selma's hand. Here the narrator reveals the weakness of a Christian in front of a Bishop. Actually the mystery of Salma was due to her father's wealth. The crooked bishop realised the character of Faris and his daughter and exploited the circumstance.

Mansoor bek Galib married Selma. But he didn't care her. He didn't love her. He gave important to her wealth. After their marriage her father died and he knew all the sorrows of Selma. She suffered a lot from her husband. The narrator consoled her, hearing her sorrows he became empathic to her. He has nothing to do in favour of her comfort. After 5 years of marriage Salma became pregnant and she gave birth to a baby. She became happy expecting she will get the relief from this baby. But the destiny was another thing. The doctor announced the death of her baby after a few hours. The next day Salma also died after suffering a lot of sorrows and agony. In the end Salma was buried with her infant in a single tomb where her father was also buried.

Faris Karama bows his head before the selfishness of the Christian Bishop Poles Galib and sacrificed the life of his innocent daughter to a corrupted man. He desired to get a good life to his daughter and expected a bright future to her with his wealth. He nourished her in her childhood after her mother's death. She was most beloved and precious in his heart and she obeyed her father in all his commands.

The heroine of this novel is Selma Karama. She sacrificed a lot of things for the others. Her love to the narrator breakthrough forcefully marrying Mansoor. Like wise her freedom, Justice, hope, desires and dreams were sacrificed by marrying Mansoor, a bad person. When her father admitted her marriage with Mansoor she sacrificed her first love. She could have opposed it. But she obeyed her father, because she does not want to degrade the honour of her father. After the marriage she meets a lot of agony. She felt as she is in a prison. She didn't find any freedom in her marriage life. She also knew that her husband wishes the death of her beloved father. Her father died filling his mind with agony and sorrows about her only one daughter's never ending misery. After the death of her father she lost all supports. In this time she found her earlier lover, the narrator.

She met him once in every month in a temple secretly and shared her agony. This meeting gave her some kind of relaxation. But she was compelled to stop this visits because the bishop has some doubts about her. After the death of her father her husband and his uncle had captured the wealth and make Selma a slave. They ignore the desires, dreams and freedom of a woman.

This Novel is based on the Middle East society in general and Beirut city of north Lebanon in particular. The period of the story is in late 19th century. Some critics say this is the story of Jibra's first love with the Hala zahira, daughter of his teacher Salim Zahir. He completed this Novel in 1912.

This novel explores the spiritual theme of the meaning of human existence in a world that contains profound beauty and love amidst the stains of greed and pains of suffering. In a conversation of Selma to the narrator she says “if darkness hides the trees and flowers from our eyes, it will not hide love from our hearts”. This beautiful tragic love story will be read all generations till the dooms day and whenever the love exists among human being.

References

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