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## The Legal and Moral Aspects Of The Novel ‘The Postman Always Rings Twice’

Shreya Singh

BA.LLB (2020-25).

Symbiosis Law School, Hyderabad.

### ABSTRACT: -

Frank Chambers, a drifter who was kicked off from a hay truck in front of a roadside hotel owned by a Greek migrant Nick Papadakis, narrates *The Postman Always Rings Twice*. He developed a strong attraction to Nick's beautiful wife. Nick happy and friendly with Frank offered him a job. The offer was accepted and Frank became an employee of Nick. Cora, wife of the owner was a winner of a beauty contest, a beautiful and young lady but she repelled with Nick's family background and wasn't happy to work and cook for her husband. Frank and Cora get into a passionate, sometimes violent relationship and conspired to kill Nick and grab all his property, resulting from persistent handwork. The first attempt to kill was when they tried to drown Nick in the bathtub but eventually, a policeman appeared and a power outage occurred, failing the trial. Nick recovers but due to the memory loss, he doesn't know how narrowly his death got avoided. Determined to the aim, a fake car accident was planned. Nick got a stroke on the head, and the car was crashed. Nick died; trial succeeded. After the prosecution, Cora was set behind the bars but her lawyer manages to tackle it and she got a plea agreement. The money and wealth were obtained but their relationship started getting worse. Frank had another affair when Cora was at her mother's funeral. They had several disputes but ended up patching things, got married, and planned a happy future. But destiny played its role and Cora met with an accident and she died. Frank was then pled guilty to murdering Cora because he was the one driving the car. This paper deals with the unfair trials and how justice got suppressed and unnoticed.

KEYWORDS: Adultery, Murder, Justice, Body Shaming, and Morality.

## INTRODUCTION: -

### 1. About The Author -

James M. Cain was a journalist and an American novelist best known for his 1934 novel 'The Postman Always Rings Twice', and made a huge contribution to the list of crime fiction novels. He was born and brought up in Baltimore, did opt for many career options like a reporter, professor, editor, author, and managing director his life. He became a sensation after the release of this novel and was highly appreciated for the same. At the age of 42 years, his first book got published. The novel deals with murder and adultery which are considered as the two-top mentioning in the list of sins. It was inspired by the Snyder case which had a similar concept of murder and adultery. Cain was a very determined person, who died while working on his autobiography. Cain's novel has been adapted four times to film and is highly admired even today.

### 2. About the novel -

The novel works on the major theme of betray and fate. It sends a message across the readers and novels like this upfront the wrongdoing which carried on from past to present but needs to be eradicated and barred to prevent their transfer in the upcoming future. The novel revolves around the betrayal a wife gifted to her husband. In a passionate relationship with the lover, the wife plans to end the life of her old, unattractive husband. This shows the back-stabbing and ignorant attribute of the wife and how she breaks the belief of a divine institution that is marriage and contradicts a holy bond. Another message that the novel delivers is 'never trust people easily, no matter how close they are', as the trust being pillar of a relationship and healthy society is shamelessly broken in the story. Despite all these miseries and unfair intentions going at one end of the novel, a love story reaching to its goal at the other end. They resulted in the victory of their plan and the husband died, but is this success proud? Not. Betraying a sacred bond and indulging in a relationship despite being married is a very obvious social threat. Such people need to be punished, but only if the sufferings of the punishment come from the heart of a sinner. They even tackled the route of punishment by misrepresentation and fake testimonies. The desire of sinners to be united got success but the old man lost his life in the trap of trust.

### 3. The Legal Aspect in the Novel –

Law asks for the proper procedure and justice delivery to be followed and considers murder as an unlawful, unpleasant, and grievous act. The two attempts with bad intentions were made to kill Nick, the old husband

often referred to as 'The Greek', the second try resulted successful for his wife and wife's lover. Here, we see a big loophole in the legal system. What excellence did the system have if it was not even able to give a fair decision and cover the wrongdoers in the blanket of punishment? This makes our know-how in various parts of the world, the guilty manages to walk away after committing such a heinous crime. Even today, years after the book has been written, the condition is many a time similar that the guilty roam on the streets and the innocent is set behind the bars. The research also reveals how justice remains unnoticed in the run of proving the wrongdoers as right and getting the self-contentment by turning a case.

#### 4. Moral Aspect in the novel -

Morality makes us understand the difference between right and wrong. Adultery and Murder, the two unfair practices around which the whole research revolves come under the obligation of individual morality which means going against one's conscience. Marriage is a bond of soul and heart, where the couple promises to never cheat and be the backbone of each other. But, cheat and lies in this purity make the bond polluted and the obligation widens from individual morality to social morality. The research further deals with these moral aspects in depth.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW: -**

#### 1. *"THE DARK SIDE OF HUMAN NATURE IN THE POSTMAN ALWAYS RINGS TWICE"* (LADINO, 2017)–

This article is a medium for the author to convey views over the novel we are dealing with. It has been made clear by the author that every individual in the novel had a dark side and a selfish mind. The lovers who met on the urge of sexual desires and satisfaction lead to a completely different way which underestimated the borderline and they got ready to go at any obscene limit to prove their determination. The author also brings a positive point from the complete issue that despite selfishness at every next moment of their approaches, the lovers tried and maintained their love throughout. I strongly support the content of the article as part of Cora continuously lingered in her mind and lead to her self-destruction also every character was in an urge to prove him/her as the most superior among all from the start and till the end of the novel.

2. *"Adultery, Law, and the State: A History" (D.Weinstein, Adultery, Law, And State: A History, 1986)*

The article deals with the history of Adultery defining that as it was a private offense state had no right to indulge in it and thus the case count reached a higher number. It was however considered wrong do but no action could be taken. Many a time the victim of betraying goes to the worse levels and the matter of murder associates with adultery. The state dealing with the cases of adultery would be a nice impact as explained by the author. I strongly agree with all the statements were given by the speaker as adultery and murder have been the most trending package in the market of crime nowadays. However, if we talk about the adultery laws in India, this has been legalized so there is no offense to have an extramarital affair. The only delay is for society to accept it.

3. *"Desire, Fate, and Murder: The Postman Always Rings Twice Eighty Years On" (Delaney, 2017)-*

This article concludes the story in short and explains the fact behind the naming of a novel, also it explains how passionate was the relationship between Frank and Cora that made them so desperate in love that made both go blind on a path leading to the murder of the Greek man i.e., Nick.

4. *"The Postman Always Rings Twice Two Cases of Shotgun Deaths Associated with an Unconventional Home Security Alarm System" (Mahmut Asirdizer, 2014)-*

Here the author draws a view in contrast to the novel and says that the postman will not ring anymore, thus there are not always chance given to individuals. It also covers the concept of how two suspicious deaths occurred and the psychological status of a homeowner was questioned. The trial was so steady and thus the main aim behind the article was to give a try in the scope of changes related to the judicial system of Turkey and ensure the trials be fast and effective for proper justice delivery.

5. *"THE NEW POLITICS OF ADULTERY" (Cossman. B, 2006)-*

The author wants to explain how adultery being a private matter was an old scenario and laws need to be made for the same because it is the same level of heinous as other criminal events in the country so far. The cases of adultery are expanding so far as we can see and thus the rules and regulations for the proper functioning of the state also need to be expanded with the same potential.

**ANALYSIS: -**

Completing with the literature about the topic, the researcher further proceeds to the analysis of the topic. Adultery is a moral and ethical wrong that also leads to a legal wrong at the time of commitment. It has a historical past and has been continued for ages being considered as a sin. Adultery has always been as a cross-relation with character. Thus, a person who indulges in a love affair with a person unidentical to his/her spouse has always been referred to as a person with low character. But, the right to choose your partner is nowhere restricted up to marriage, India has made adultery a legal practice by stating that choosing a partner for a happy living or sharing love is one's personal choice and the law should not indulge in such matters of personal affairs. The other aspect being discussed majorly is conspiring murder and accomplishing the conspire. Murder is a social evil giving canopy to both moral and ethical evil too. Taking someone's life out of no other reason but to achieve your love and passion is a category of sin. However, both of them is carried on for ages and there is no visible full stop to this ongoing trend as far as we try to see.

Concerning the novel 'The Postman Always Rings Twice, a question of what is morally and legally right or wrong arises. The Greek, an old husband having faith in his wife experiences both the above-discussed wrongs and the offenders were Cora and Frank. The ultimate result of the life-threatening event performed by lovers resulted in the death of Nick. "There is a small stance when Frank defines the beauty of Cora, not by praising her but defaming a particular set of women i.e., Mexicans, Frank goes on saying that Mexican ladies have breasts up under their chin, big hips, and legs having pale skin color and untidy hairs. The entire description was in a negative narrative toward Mexican ladies and to make Cora feel how beautiful she is based on physical appearance" (M. Cain, 2010). The first trial of the act was when Cora and Frank conspired to create a scene where Frank would lay all the shaving stuff in his room upstairs and go to his car later, Cora would be waiting until her husband drowns and die and later push the whole scenario under the blanket of an inevitable accident. This idea came after the article portrayed in the newspaper stating that most people die by drowning in their bathtubs. This statement shows us how statistics and analytics were given importance, that even these records were taken into notice. Thus, an advanced approach was present to draw a proper inspection and inject the vaccine of awareness to prevent some poisonous disease like life-threatening accidents. Moreover, the narrator of this whole story that is Frank stated that Nick was singing and repeating the song 'Mother Machree' while taking the bath. The song contains the emotion and feelings of missing someone very close, a beloved none other than a mother. Continuous singing of the lyrics somewhat indicates how emotional Frank was towards his family, and the potency of love he had for his mother reflecting the soft-hearted soul of Nick. However, the entire conspiracy fails due to a sudden power cut, and the cop arrived instantly at that moment. Nick went through many physical challenges but experienced a short-term memory loss due to the hurt caused in the head which leads him to forget everything

that happened last night. This was a happy moment for the wrongdoers which shows how inhuman they were. Getting pleasure from someone's pain is an act of evil. The cop had a strong sign of suspicion over both of them but even he didn't take the case seriously which shows how ignorant he was towards this case. The next trial was when the lovers fake a car accident of Nick where Frank bought a wrench and hit so hard on Nick's head intending to crush it all over, Nick was curled up on the seat. Cora gave a quick and sarcastic glimpse to Frank, which shows the like minding and evil minding of both. They executed the plan further, Frank was badly hurt and fractured, even Cora had several minor injuries. The whole case was investigated thoroughly and a trial was carried but there was no significant and enough evidence to prove it. Cora was taken into charge; she was provoked to know the background of the event. But the entire case was expelled by the lawyer hired by Frank and Cora was proven guilty. This reflects upon how a villain can be changed to an actor by the efficiency of a lawyer and the dedication lawyer granted despite the knowledge of how immoral the act was. Thus, for the matter of monetary value people keep the moral value aside. This entire story was based on a real-life case of Ruth Snyder in the year 1927 where the wife planned for the murder of her husband by conspiring with her lover. Adultery associated with murder was very commonly seen and even is continued in almost every country. This shows that however, every person is well known of the social evils and the difference between right and wrong, the choice to commit the same is continued.

### CONCLUSION: -

The research papers overall explain how murder and adultery were performed very safely that the husband of the story never got a clue of it, and in the flow of living his life was snatched away by the two evil-minded lovers who were a lot more considerate to keep their sexually driven romance alive. It also draws the attention of the reader to the presence of body shaming practices ages ago. These society-harming practices are being carried on for ages and the unending dialogue of murder and adultery shows no end to the trend. There need to be a proper acceptance for adultery, so that it won't take the turn of a murder as seen in the most common cases.

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