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Custody Battle of Parents in Manju Kapur's Novel Custody

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Abstract:

This paper depicts the custody battle of Raman and Shagun for their children Roohi and Arjun. The condition and mental state of children due to divorce of their parent's separation and divorce. Painful process that disrupt the lives of many families in all over the world, for the Roohi and Arjun who experience the dissolution of their parents' marriage. Manju Kapur is presenting the issues like children's needs and children separation from one of their parents and how the children are in battle field in her novel custody.

Keywords: Custody, manipulation, step parents

Manju Kapur in her novel custody portrays the conflict between the parents for the possession of their children. Marriage brings two person of different background close to each other and from their love they begot the children which resemble them. There in there is painful story where the loveable couple Raman and Shagun in battlefield. She narrates the sorrow and pain of two children Roohi and Arjun and their emotional and psychological state of mind due to separation and divorce of their parents Shagun and Raman who are the protagonist of the novel.

Raman and Shagun were happily married couple, they become the victim of the circumstances. Raman loves his family very much. He loves his wife from the day he met her. In first sight he felled love with her. He decides to marry her as she is very beautiful and charming. He is very good and loveable. In the same way he is very responsible towards his work also for that he is not able to give much time to his family. He was engaged in his new project Mango ha. Raman's boss. Ashok fallen in love with Raman's wife as she is very attractive. Raman engages in his business not able to give much time to his wife and family. Bonding between Raman and Shagun grew weaker and weaker day by day. When Ashok approaches her as he desires to own her from the day he met her. Shagun fallen in love with Ashok, wealthy good looking boss of Raman. Shagun starts the affair just to add adventure to her boredom life. She trapped in her lust and her life twisted because of her single decision to move on for her happiness and leaving Raman. When Raman discovers her affair with his Boss Ashok, tension grew between them. Shagun and Raman decided to take Divorce from each other. They start bargaining of children for the sake of divorce and constant shifting of children like commodities.

Divorce badly affects children psyche and future either they are young kids or grownups. Divorce extremely hurts children some people think that it is fair to get divorced for self-maturation and to allow families to follow a dream of felicity, but in fact it is too selfish an act not to put the children at risk for their own dream of happiness. Parents are supposed to be responsible for their children's proper development when they are minor and dependent on them.

Shagun left home and shifted to Ashok's home leaving his two children with Raman. After few days she misses them so she kidnapped the children in absence of Raman and took with her. Raman decided to file case against her. Shagun and Raman manipulate their kids for the sake of their custody and divorce. The two children Roohi and Arjun, becomes the pawns through whom their parents unleash their fury on each other. When Roohi questioned about the court paper, her intention was to give an unpleasant and bad feedback against Raman.

Kapur count the suffering and exploitation of children which arise because of their parent's decision. And increased rate of depression is noticed in the children, separated from their parents because of marital problems and divorce. The children of divorced parents suffer more psychological problems than that of the children whose parents are not dissociated. It is not sure how far these problems precede the divorce and is related to disharmony between the parents that contributed to the conclusion of divorce through Arjun, the writer depicts the side effects of divorce on the mind and body of the children. The separation of parents affects Arjun's life. Arjun starts complaining about his stomach pain, leg pain and refuse to go to school. His performance also falls in school, though he has perpetually been a brilliant student but at present he is faring poorly in his academic. Shagun holds Raman responsible for all the sufferings of his kids.

Raman used to teach Arjun for his class test and examination. Shagun forget the timetable of Arjun's test. Arjun's behavior changes badly he forges his mother's signature on his test papers, pinches Roohi whenever he wants his mother's care. When Ashok came home, Shagun's center of attention shifted from children to Ashok. Arjun feels ignored because of his mother's attitude. Arjun's behavior depresses Shagun. He refuses to go to school or meet his friends. His legs are always paining his stomach is usually paining

so he refused to eat anything. His face seems pinched and drawn. Shagun insist him to go to school, but he argues 'why do I have to? You did your feeling had changed towards papa; well mine have changed about vivekanandan vidhayalaya. Ashok suggest Shajun to send Arjun to boarding school. Arjun is determined not to change his mind. Arjun shows no interest in any suggestion related to his studies and school. The idea looks like a sound one to Arjun of going to a place where no one will know his parent's separation, where he will not suffer to real pity and curiosity in the eyes of people around him and tolerate to avoid friends. But he is also insecure to leave his mother in Delhi with Ashok.

Though Shagun behaves as the shifting from Raman from Ashok is as natural as changing cloth, but Arjun is not comfortable living with Ashok, a strange who rarely talks to him and agrees to prepare for entrance exam of Dehradun Public Academy boarding school. The separation of parents also affects Roohi, who starts sucking his thumb and wetting the bed at night. Shagun very well known the reason behind the changes in her daughter's life but is helpless. Roohi send with Raman according to the deal and Shagun is free to go to New York to stay with Ashok

A child can't understand a father's pain and too much attention and eagerness makes the child feel strange just like Arjun. Raman is too sensitive about his children to expose them to any odd situation. Ashok's concern is only Shagun and not her kids which hurt Shagun. Father had greater rights over male child but Arjun wants to live with his mother. Though it was so obvious that he was part of her, he looked like her. Shagun wants to send Arjun permanently away from Raman to take revenge because of his denial of divorce. Raman granted visitation rights by the court. Mobbing from one home to another is ok for Roohi because she is too small to understand anything but Arjun it creates more trouble.

Kapur is adept in dealing with this complicated family configuration and the insecurity it brings to the step-parents as well as children after divorce. Rooho is not getting motherly care and love. Arjun finds the New York interesting and adventurous and enjoys past time with his mother and Ashok. Arjun's behavior changes towards Raman as Raman can't provide him glamour and adventure of foreign countries. He can give him stability and love and consistently trying this. But Arjun is not able to understand his father's emotions because of his young age and influence of his mother's manipulation. Meanwhile Raman get marry with Ishita a divorce woman who is not able to give birth a child. The situation is stressed when Arjun comes home during his vacation he doesn't like Ishita, thus he always try to manipulate Roohi not to call her Mamma and stay away from her. Raman doesn't want his children to suffer any side effects of his marriage. Raman's main concern is his kid's happiness and other relations are less important to him now Ishita feel ignored.

It's strange that a father has to assure his own son that he loves him and insist him of conversation. Raman doesn't like to send or make messages out of the children. Ishita doesn't want to send Roohi to visit Shagun ever in her life because it may confuse and distract the child; Ishita doubts if she keeps visiting her biological mother, she will be confounded eventually Roohi not sent to America with Arjun. Ishita can't let Roohi suffer between the trauma of two mother, two homes and two countries.

On the hearing date of custody Roohi tells the judge the Ishita is her mother and she wants to live with her. Eventually Roohi's custody is provided to Raman and Ishita, and Arjun's custody is given to Shagun, till the time the kids become eighteen years old and decide on their own. Ishita and Shagun manipulate both their kids of the sake of custody and for the welfare of their own.

As Keen observer of human life, affairs and relationship. There search is expected to bring changes the way of life to understand the value to family for the children. Both father and mother are equally important for the children to raise them. Female character is the important part of any society. All virtues and vice of female draw impact on their rest family members it's a duty of all society to understand the harmony of relationship and bring the necessary changes in relationship. It aware about the future of their children before taking any decision in life. Kapur gives us an insight to go deeper into the heart of children who are torn between the crude and shrewd battle of their custody. In this battle of egos. She has successfully presented the suffering of innocent children the complexities of life and different structure of values in her novel. For the majority of families, separation and divorce provoke a time of crisis and destabilization. Yet, research demonstrates that after an initial period of distress, most adults and children are able to adapt effectively to new family structures and dynamics. Health care professionals are well placed to assist families in making the adjustment to a new set of demands and challenges. Parents are typically concerned about how divorce may affect their children; thus, it can be very reassuring for them to learn about the common reactions that children have to divorce, and to learn that strengthening their own support systems developing a non adversarial co-parenting relationship and maintaining a quality parent-child relationship

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