



Examining Psychological and Economic Stress in ‘If I Die Today’

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Abstract

The novel ‘If I Die Today’ investigates the more obscure parts of human instinct like subjects of psychic pressure, retribution, desire, prurience, and murder. What's more, the outcomes of yielding to base cravings and motivations. focuses on the helplessness of patients when a doctor is a psychopath and highlights the tension and fear that arises when someone in a position of power abuses it. The novel additionally addresses topics of ethical quality, equity, and the outcomes of staying quiet despite bad behavior. Shashi Deshpande's novels address a few social issues, including illegal affairs, prostitution, assault, and murder, revealing insight into the casualty's aggravation. If I Die Today uncovers that deranged and unreasonable people might carry out murders to hide their violations. Social orders are not resistant to issues, and people have confronted challenges since their appearance on The planet. This paper is to examine the issues we run over in Shashi Deshpande's novel If I Die Today and attempt to find in the event that the central reason for issues lies in winning financial independence.

I. Introduction

Shashi Deshpande is a well-known feminist writer in the sense that her fictional work is more or less concerned with the trauma and dilemma of the middle-class educated family governed by traditional and long-established social code. It is very close to the fact that through her portrayal of a protagonist fighting against oppression, she has shed light on the challenges faced by Indian women in specific. She has sought to highlight various forms of exploitation of the Indian women in her fiction. She has attempted to expose the evils of child-marriage, matchless marriage, sati-pratha and restriction on widow- remarriage. Now feminists from all over the world are supporting women in general who are struggling for their rights. Gender politics has occupied their minds. They condemn it from every angle.

Shashi Deshpande, the daughter of the renowned Sanskrit Researcher Adya Rangacharya, who was otherwise called Sri Ranga, acquired specific outstanding characteristics from her dad regardless of his profound separation from his youngsters. Her dad's impact helped shape her into a mentally inquisitive person who sought after degrees in Financial matters, Regulation, and English, as well as a recognition in News-casting from different colleges. Her enthusiasm for perusing drove her to turn into a columnist, and in the end, a productive essayist of articles, brief tales, and books. Shashi Deshpande drew motivation from both local and unfamiliar authors during her investigations, which assisted shape her composition with styling. She has created nine books, a few assortments of brief tales, and four youngsters' books to date.

Psychic-Economical Strain

If I Die Today is a fictional novella by Shashi Deshpande that explores the theme of death. This captivating novel, featuring the character Mriga and other characters, provides a glimpse into the issues prevalent in a patriarchal society. The book is not a perfect detective thriller, but rather a poignant and insightful portrayal of the effects of murder on a community. Indeed, If I Die Today is a remarkable work of fiction that offers a thought-provoking reflection on the nature of death and its impact on society.

Despite appearing to be a campus novel, the story is an incisive and compelling detective thriller that portrays the impact of murder on a community. The setting of the novel is the S.D.M. College and Hospital, established by the present Sethji and his father with a vision to make it “the best in the country”. The campus of the college has been known as the place of murders in the sense that most of the serious patients have met their death for one or other reason. Murders too have been attempted.

The story of the novel opens with the admission of Guruji, a patient of cancer, to the hospital. He has



risen above all human weaknesses and even the eternal human fear of death. Guruji, a cousin of Dr Ashok's, accepts his impending death. Accordingly, his behaviour, attitude to life and gestures are interpreted in different ways by different persons. To Ashok's wife Meera, he is

"a saint..a black mailer" (p. 68). "Either a malicious man or a silly fool (p. 101).

after the arrival of Guruji, his disturbing and dangerous presence makes the matters still worse. Since he is a man different from all around him, he finds himself to be a spectator. It is again a peculiar thing to note that the mystery of the death of Tambe becomes a matter of whispers, doubts and conjectures. Even the women-folk of the hospital employees are found discussing this and such other cases of deaths and murders. Rani, the Dean's wife, Manju, Mriga, Dr. Kulkarni's hyper-sensitive daughter and Dr. Vidya discuss these cases among them.

Overall, *If I Die Today* is a marvellous work that showcases the author's ability to create a compelling story that sheds light on important social issues.

Economical Independence in Patriarchal Society

The novel seeks to explore the diminishing influence of psychic fear on the human mind. The main theme of the novel is concerned with Manju, the protagonist who at a later stage gets relief from her tension, and her problem is resolved. Evidently the novel is set against the background of a small community of doctors and their families living in the college campus. At the campus they are leading happy and peaceful life. It is a co- incidence that with the arrival of Guru, a cousin of Dr. Ashok, that peaceful atmosphere is disturbed. After the death of Guru, a sense of unknown fear prevails upon the minds of the campus residents.

Manju, the narrator protagonist in the novel, is stunned to find that her husband Vijay, is doubted to be one of the suspects involved in the death case of the patient. She herself feels shattered and grief-stricken. The murder of Guru is followed by other two deaths in the hospital campus where she lives. The deaths and murders create an atmosphere of fear and distrust but Vijay reveals nothing to her. Unable to bear his silence, she urges him to communicate with her but in vain. Manju feels alienated on the other hand Vijay too realizes that she married him against her wishes. That is why

a sense of distrust prevails between the two. However, when Manju tries her best to convince him with all sincerity asserting that she loves him truly, Vijay seems convinced with her confession. Now both of them begin to trust each other. The happiness and peace of the family is restored. This puts an end to Manju's sense of alienation from her husband. A sense of compromise and reconciliation regains their faith and loyalty to each other.

"Deshpande tries to unmask the outwardly sophisticated and well-educated person's yearning for a son. Deshpande also lays bare the feeble male ego which cannot tolerate the idea of female superiority."

Sunitha Reddy has aptly said that and Readers can also perceive the central theme of the similar novel 'Come Up and Be Dead' from the following lines:

"What is noticeable in this regard is that he (varma) occupies a respectable possession in society, as he is a member of the Board of the Governors and also tries to continue to be respectable. He silences the people, who come to know of his diabolical activities, either by bribing them or by getting them killed." [4]

This novel shows the human weaknesses that contribute to the disaster to a large extent and depicts characters involved in lustful activities leading to their decay, death, or suicide. Murder is the outcome of the sex scandals, and the novel suggests that evil should be punished. The author's view is seen as partial and conservative, as the problem of prostitution is isolated from socio-economic roots and blamed on inherent human potentiality.

II. Conclusion:

Shashi Deshpande's novels, *If I Die Today* explores the darker aspects of human nature and the consequences of giving in to base desires and impulses. In *If I Die Today*, the story highlights the helplessness of patients when a doctor is a psychopath and portrays the tension and fear that arises when someone in a position of power abuses it. This novel emphasizes the importance of overcoming these human weaknesses and working towards a better society. Deshpande's writing delves into the complexities of human nature, the societal issues that plague us, and the need for empathy and understanding. Through her storytelling, she encourages readers to question their own motivations and actions and strive towards personal



growth and social change. Overall, these novels offer insightful commentary on the human condition and the importance of personal responsibility and compassion towards others.

The writer appears to acknowledge what our great Scriptures instruct us. Indeed, even the counsel given to Arjun by Ruler Krishna to attempt to limit his psyche from the evil additionally stands the test in the book. It infers that the great ought to be compensated and the evil be rebuffed and also, self destruction is likewise a type of self-discipline

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