

THE THEME OF LONELINESS IN TARA MOSS'S HIT

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Abstract-

Loneliness is an old grouse, but it became powerful in the modern and post modern period. Literary writers of the age have focused on the theme of loneliness in a number of their works. Tara Moss is also no exception for the same. The feelings of abandonment, rejection, depression, insecurity, anxiety, hopelessness, unworthiness, meaninglessness, resentment etc. are the causes of loneliness. This paper attempts to focus on the theme of loneliness in Tara Moss's *Hit*.

Tara Moss (b. 1973) a distinguished post-modern Canadian-Australian novelist of crime fiction, was born in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. She is a former model. Tara Moss took up residence in Australia in 1996 and currently resides in Sydney and Los Angeles where her novels are being adapted for the screen. She holds both Canadian and Australian citizenship and has held licenses as a private investigator and race car driver. Moss has been a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador since 2007 and an ambassador for the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children since 2000. She has been honored with a bronze star on the Australian Walk of Fame as the first person inducted for services to literature.

Here books are published in seventeen countries in eleven languages and include the internationally best-selling and critically acclaimed crime novels '*Fetish*' (1999), '*Split*' (2002), '*Covet*' (2004), '*Hit*' (2006) and '*Siren*' (2009). She is known for her in depth novel research which has included touring the FBI, spending time in morgues and courtrooms the FBI, spending time in morgues and courtrooms and earning her certificate III as a private investigator at the Australian Security Academy.

Loneliness is an unpleasant feeling in which a person feels a strong sense of emptiness and solitude resulting from inadequate levels of social relationships. However, it is a subjective experience. Loneliness has also been described as social pain, a psychological

mechanism meant to alert an individual of isolation and motivate him/her to seek social connections. People can experience loneliness for many reasons and many life events are associated with it, like the lack of friendship, or the physical absence of meaningful people around a person, are a few causes for loneliness. It is also very common, though normally temporary, consequence of loss of any important long-term relationship.

Loneliness can occur within unstable marriages or other close relationships in a similar nature, in which feelings present may include anger or resentment, or in which the feeling of love cannot be given or received. It may represent a dysfunction of communication learning to cope with changes in life pattern is essential in overcoming loneliness.

Loneliness may be a symptom of other social or psychological problems. Many people experience loneliness for the first time when they are left alone as infants. It is also very common, though normally temporary consequence of divorce or the break up, or loss of any important long term relationship. One may feel lonely, even in the company of others. Thus, feelings of abandonment, rejection, depression, insecurity, anxiety, hopelessness, unworthiness, meaninglessness, resentment etc. are the causes of loneliness.

A major character and protagonist Makedde Vanderwall in 'Hit' has experienced loneliness. She was born in Canada, which is her native country. Then she travels to Australia with her boyfriend Andy Flynn, who is a cop in Australian Police Department. She is live-in-Relationship with her boyfriend. She has completed her Ph.D. in Forensic Psychology and has Certificate III in private investigation. Away from her native country and her family, she feels lonely in this new place. The writer describes her loneliness:

'Mak stood for a moment with her arms crossed, feeling the breeze whip around her. She felt a long way from home and she had begun to question the wisdom of the choices that had taken her so far away. Looking back, she could see how it had happened, step by inevitable step. The years had mapped out a roller-coaster of emotions and difficult decisions, and now she was here in Sydney, Australia so far from her birthplace. In here dreams, things had run a lot more smoothly. In her dreams, she and Andy shared normal, simple domestic bliss although one that didn't involve her doing any cooking. In her dreams she had not abandoned her widowed father in the country of her birth. (Hit 38).

Makedde Vanderwall's mother has been died of cancer. Mak feels very sorry for it. The mother is very near and dear person in one's life, mother cares for her children. In her

presence children feel comfort and security. So, if anybody loses her, then it is very difficult to lead a life without the feeling of loneliness. Mak feels emptiness in her home in Australia. Mak's father Les Vanderwall is living with his girlfriend and elder daughter Theresa. It is obvious that one may feel lonely without mother in home, in life.

Mak leads her life in Sydney, Australia where she is live-in-relationship with her boyfriend Andy Flynn. Though she lives or shares her house with her boyfriend, the house does not have feeling of home. The home is supposed to be the place of love, comfort, security, and bond between members of family. It seems that their togetherness does not have attachment. In the unknown place Sidney or Australia, Mak has only company of Andy, who is dear one to her. Mak has few friends in Australia like Karen Mahoney, who is cop in the Police Department and Loulou, who is now engaged with Drayson, musician. The feeling of away from native place or country may cause loneliness in Mak's life.

Being in new place or country, she does not have social relations, which may cause social pain. It may possible to feel void in Mak's life in new atmosphere. So, frequently, she becomes nostalgic about her native place Canada and her family. It is natural for any body that in one's native place, he/she can develop many attachments. It is feeling of love, devotion to one's own country. If someone travels to another country like Mak, it is possible to become nostalgic of past memories.

One more important reason of loneliness in Mak's life in Sydney is that Andy uses to go frequently away from her and Sydney, for his duties as a cop. Andy is sole reason of Mak's residence in Sydney, Australia. She is in love with him and develops live-in-relationship with him. If he goes away from her frequently, his absence may cause the feeling of loneliness in Makedde Vanderwall. Writer describes Mak's state of mind as,:

'It Mak thought this state of frequent absences and near-platonic boredom was less than ideal, she wondered how their relationship would be once he had returned and had to be on site at the new Canberra unit a full five days aweei (Hit 52).

Makedde Vanderwall, who is heroine of the novel, always thinks of her family in Canada, her boyfriend Andy and her friend Loulou in Sydney. After the death of her mother by cancer, her father has developed relation with his girlfriend Ann. She always thinks of her father, who is widower, with great affinity. Les Vanderwall, her father and Theresa, her elder sister are only blood relatives and intimate people in her world. So, she feels sad and lonely

in this new land. Andy, Mak's boyfriend, has got new job, which may be prosperous opportunity to him. But he has to go away for his job from Mak. Consequently Mak becomes restless as,:

'Her thoughts drifted a little, And'ys trip; his new job; her dad's new life in Canada with his girl friend, Ann Loulou's crazy infatuation with yet another muso.' (Hit 111).

When Mak sees the photograph of her father and his girlfriend, her mouth curves upwards in the sad, sentimental smile of those who have strayed far from home. This isn't how Mak imagined things would be when she left Canada. A slew of personal and family crises had at one point made her feel like she would never get there. However, despite all the obstacles put in her way, she has made it this far as,:

Mak's existence in Sydney isn't quite what she planned and her being with a cop is not what her father wanted. Mak doesn't know what else she can do. Mak was clueless in these areas in Sydney, and she doesn't have a mum to call. (Hit 116).

When Mak thinks of her decision to travel to Sydney with Andy, she feels nostalgic and confuses about her decision, so she is in dilemma. Therefore, she feels lonely in this new country as there is no mum to console and calm her.

One more reason of loneliness in Mak's life is her ambition. She has completed her Ph.D. in Forensic Psychology and wants to make career in it. She has also achieved certificate III in private investigation, so she wants to work as private investigator. Her ambition about career takes her away from her family. It is obvious in some reasons that she is herself responsible for her loneliness. Once her father asked her about a job in Justice Department in Canada. She refuses her father's request to join a job in Canada.

Mak is thankful to luck that her father is no longer alone after her mother's death. He has found Ann, a Psychologist, Mak likes Ann a lot though of course she would never replace her mum. The feeling of absense of her mother in this world makes Mak sad and lonely. Mak was so often far from home that the idea of seeing her father at least once a month seemed like heaven. Given with all his meddling, she misses him terribly. The feeling of homelessness causes sadness and loneliness in the mind of Makedde.

When Mak visits dead Meaghan Wallace's parents for private investigation, Mak thinks:

'What would it be like to lose a daughter? She knew what it was like to lose a mother.' (Hit 165).

Mak reminds her childhood that the Vanderwalls had been a strong family and seemingly one of the few families at Mak's school which had not been fragmented by divorce or death. Mak's school friends had always wanted to come over to her place because her parents were so normal and safe family home. Mak used to feel loss of her family at Canada. That feeling of loss of her family creates feeling of loneliness in her mind.

When Andy, boyfriend of Mak, goes away for three months, she feels three months is a long time. It is obvious that in absence of our near and dear one, one might feel lonely in this world. In this post modern world, everybody is conscious about his/her career, so they are forced to depart from each other by their career opportunities. It naturally causes loneliness in one's life.

Jane Vanderwall had died of cancer. Cancer is a horrible disease that has taken not only her mother, but so many other people as well. Mak is not alone in having lost a parent. It had been five and half years since her mother, bald and painfully swollen from chemotherapy, had finally lost her brave battle. But when Mak recalls the memories of her lost mother, she becomes restless and the feeling of loneliness overpowers her.

Makedde's close friend Catherine had been murdered, Mak was witness of the murder. After the death of Catherine, Mak feels very sad to lose a close friend. Loulou is also close friend of Mak in Sydney, but she is going to shift to Melbourne with her boyfriend Drayson. So, Mak becomes restless. The author describes Mak's restlessness as,:

'Her friend Catherine had been murdered, her mother had died, and her father and sister were thousands of miles away, so one could hardly blame her for being a little less open than the average girl. But Mak was lonely at times, especially with Andy's long work hours. She envied people who lived their lives enveloped by a comforting circle of close and trusted long term friends. Mak wanted Loulou to find happiness, but she would be sad to lose her to Melbourne.' (Hit 254).

Andy flynn, boyfriend of Mak, was away from Mak in Canberra and Mak was in Melbourne with her friend Loulou for private, investigation. She strongly feels uncomfortable silence, when she thinks of Andy. Andy did not respond Mak for long time by phone. They are intimate to each other and they have spent much time together even though, it seems that

there is no feeling of attachment or togetherness. Andy has not discussed with Mak about his trip to Canberra, he never has talked about how she might fit into that picture. It causes the feeling of loneliness in the mind of Makeedde.

Mak was in Melbourne for investigation. She was tired of overwork, so her friend Loulou advised her to massage by Bogey, who is friend of Loulou. When Mak was alone with Bogey for Massage Mak felt as,:

She felt the sharp edge of her loneliness, away from everyone she knew, away from her lover, her life, displaced.' (Hit 385)

Andy calls Mak and asks her for break up, So Mak is shocked and shattered by Andy's words. There is fickleness in the relation between Mak and Andy. Andy has done break-ups with Mak when she was in Canada. Though Andy and Mak are in live-in-relationship with each other for long time, there is always threat of break-up in the mind of Mak. It causes the feeling of loneliness in the mind of Mak.

By the behavior of Andy and his fickleness in relations, Mak thinks that she should go back to Canada to join Justice Department. She thinks whether Andy wants this. She also thinks to leave the job of investigator to go with Andy to Canberra. The thought makes her sad.

The feeling of loneliness overpowers Mak, when she comes to their residence at terrace. The author describes her condition as,:

'Mak found herself procrastinating over her arrival home. Whether it was nerves or the thought of spending another lonely night in the terrace one of many to come Mak had put off coming home until she was tired enough to go straight to sleep.' (Hit 477).

Reference:

Moss, Tara. *Hit. Australia:Harpercollins, 2006.*