

## Cycle of Guilties in the novel *The Kite Runner*

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Khaled Hosseini, a physician by profession and a novelist by choice is born in Kabul, the city of Afghanistan on March 4<sup>th</sup>, 1965. He has lived in the United States since he was fifteen years old and is an American citizen now. His 2003 debut novel, *The Kite Runner* was an international best seller and his second novel, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* was released on May 22, 2007. His third novel, *And The Mountains Echoed* is published on May 21, 2013. The novel, *The Kite Runner* has been published as a graphic novel on September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012 to further increase the readership of the Afghan miserable life.

Khaled Hussein's father worked with the Afghan Ministry and often moved his residence according to his postings. In 1970, Hosseini and his family moved to Tehran and returned back to Kabul in 1973. In 1976 Hosseini's father obtained a job in Paris, France and moved with the family there. Plans to return to Kabul in 1980 were thwarted by the bloody communist coup and subsequent invasions of the soviet army. The Hosseinis sought and were granted political asylum by the United State and they moved to San Jose, California, in September 1980. After his M.D. in 1993, he completed his residence in internal medicine at Cedars-Sinai Medical centre in Los Angeles in 1996 and practiced as internist until a year and a half after the release of the *The Kite Runner*. Khaled Hosseini is presently working with UNHCR, a UN refugee agency, one of the foremost humanitarian agencies. Its mandate is to protect the basic human rights of refugees, provide emergency relief, and to help refugees restart their lives in a safe environment. He has also established Khaled Hosseini foundation to provide shelter, health care, education and economic opportunity for people in Afghanistan.

Every individual has a dream to achieve in order to reach up to the climax of life. A person puts every endeavor to achieve his goal. There are diverse means through which we can accomplish, but mostly there are two ways to attain our purposes, legitimate and illegitimate. A person, who begins to achieve his task, which gives him joy through a legitimate way and becomes successful despite faces many hurdles, but at last success kisses his feet. Because the way he/she adopts is acceptable to everybody without harming anybody's personal life. In all means he is on

the right track, and becomes the ideal among his peers, who try to achieve something in their lives. On the other hand, an individual who adopts an illegitimate method in reaching to his goal and thinks that it is the easiest way to get success, without knowing the consequences. He uses all kinds of efforts to get his ambition. After much endeavor he attains his goal and gets excellence against his counterparts who are on right path. But alas! After getting that thing, he becomes involved in other wrong doings, because his thirst never quenches, he does guilt after guilt to meet his demands. He becomes completely dejected and imposes self isolation in order to avoid social influence. So, it is obvious an individual while taking extreme steps to grab his earnest need, that thing which he desires, becomes destruction to his life.

The novel *The Kite Runner* provides a glimpse in which the main character becomes the cause of his own destruction. The wrong way which he chooses haunts him throughout his life. *The Kite Runner* which tells the story of two friends. Amir and Hassan, who are growing up in Kabul, through raised in the same household and sharing the same wet nurse. Amir and Hassan grow up in different worlds, their intertwined lives, and their fates, reflect the eventual tragedy of the world around them. When the Soviets invade, Amir and his father flee the country for a new life in California; Amir thinks that he has escaped his past. And yet he cannot leave the memory behind him and its scars left an indelible mark on him.. The novel is about the friendship, betrayal and the price of loyalty.

Amir the protagonist in the novel *The Kite Runner* who has a peculiar desire of achievement. He fulfils his goal, which he carves so intensely to get without knowing the consequences. In fact he gets what he wants, but he losses much what he possessed, Amir wants Baba to love him only. He does not like to see Baba's affection towards Hassan. In this way he adopts a wrong method to get Baba's love. Amir makes every type of strategy to get rid of Hassan and tries to fill hatred in the eyes of Baba against Hassan. Amir's wicked approach to get Baba's affection only to him does not run smoothly, and it throws Amir into a pit of guilities, where from it becomes typical for him to come out. He does sin after sin to grab Baba's affections. Amir's initial betrayal against Hassan disturbs him psychologically and socially. Hassan's presence evoke trauma in Amir, and tries to entirely dissociate from Hassan. Amir sits lonely most of his time in his room and buried himself in books. School provides Amir an excuse to avoid Hassan's confrontation. It becomes evident here how a single wrong way of guilt becomes a cause of cycle of wrongdoings.

Amir, the protagonist who wants full entry in the heart of his father, Baba who like mostly Hassan because of his manly traits. Amir on the other hand buried his face in the books and could recite a dozen of poems. Baba wants Amir to act like him.

“Real men didn't read poetry- and God forbid they should ever write it: Real men – real boys – played soccer just as Baba had when he had been young” (p17)

Amir in this way doesn't stand on the expectations of his father. Amir becomes jealous of Hassan's superiority and smartness. His excessive desire of returning Baba from Hassan, throws him into a

pit of evils. He not only refuses to teach Hassan, but also makes fun of him while not knowing certain things. Amir's position as a master empowers him to treat Hassan with no respect. On the day of Kite fighting tournament, Amir who has got inspiration from Baba and wants to run the last kite and going to win. It was the only way in becoming the favorite of Baba. After winning the kite tournament, Hassan goes to retrieve the fallen kite for Amir, but on his way he is confronted by neighborhood bully, Assef and his friends, Wali and Kamal. They wanted to snatch the blue kite only, but when Hassan prevented, Assef tries to force him. But when he looks resistance in the eyes of Hassan, he changes his mind and Hassan was raped by Assef in saving the last kite for Amir. While Amir watched as a mule spectator, he could step into the alley and stand up for Hassan as he stood for him in the past. Amir a coward, he chooses to runaway and betrayed Hassan, an ever loyal friend. Instead of coming to the rescue of Hassan, he runs away, because his mind already was imbued with selfish motives. Amir thought if he will come to stand up for Hassan, he will loss Baba's expectation, to whom he has assured that this time he is not going to fail.

Amir after winning the kite tournament, he gets Baba's love and affection besides he also enters into the world of wrong doings. Amir did not know beforehand, what will be the consequences of selfishness. Amir in trying to hide his guilt, he tries to remain away from Hassan as soon as possible, because Hassan's presence distracts his mind to that unforgettable scene. Amir makes devil strategies to get rid from Hassan. After the dreadful event, Amir starts committing sin after sin in order to forget the alley scene. Amir tries to provoke Hassan into getting angry or fighting with him, but Hassan, an ever loyal friend as loyal as dog according to Assef. Hassan never reacts the same way as Amir Wants. One afternoon early at the summer time I ask Hassan to come up the hill with me. At the hill spot, Amir tries to persuade Hassan to retaliate. There we collected a dozen of pomegranates under the tree. It was only propaganda of telling a new story to Hassan. Amir wants to be punished by Hassan. To incline Hassan to retaliate back, he throws Hassan an overripe pomegranate which struck him on the chest. But Hassan does not even defend to himself. Instead of defending himself, Amir wants he would hit him back. So that Amir would get the punishment which he deserved.

Hassan did pick up a pomegranate. He walked toward me. He opened it and crushed it against his own forehead. "Are you satisfied" (p-81)

When Ali asked Amir what happens to Hassan after kite tournament. Instead of telling the actual situation Amir lies to Ali and says,

"After the kite tournament, he came home a little bloodied and his shirt was torn. I asked him what has happened and he said it was nothing, that he'd gotten into a little scuffle with some kids over the kite" (p 71)

As Baba was Amir's now, after gained some attention from his father after kite tournament triumph, Baba agreed everything which he wishes. Baba asked me if you would to see Eid with Chalto Heston at cinema Aryana. Baba's love for Hassan is same as it was before kite tournament. Baba asks Amir to tell Hassan to come along with us. Amir finds he is unable to enjoy great movements. Amir says

Where ever I turned I saw signs of Hassan's loyalty, his goddamn unwavering loyalty." (P-89)

Baba asks Amir to tell Hassan to come along with us. Amir gets agitated and tells another lie in replying to Baba.

“He’s mareez,” I said. Not feeling well.” Really? Baba stopped rocking in his chair. “What is wrong with him?” I gave a shrug and sank into the sofa by the fireplace. He’s got a cold or something. Ali says he’s sleeping it off.” (P-71)

Amir does everything to get rid of his best friend Hassan and in replace he wants only to get Baba’s affection. A few months after the kite tournament, he always prefers to remain in his room, when Baba was out of home. In the kitchen, as usual as Hassan were doing his daily chores. Hassan always comes to meet him, but mostly Amir tried to avoid him. Hassan tries to find a way to revert their relation. For long hours Amir tries to stay in his room. Once Baba and Amir were in the garden, planting the buds, which Amir handed to him, the same mischief was dancing in his head. Amir asked Baba, have you ever thought of getting new servants. I was not expecting it from you.. There was not even a ounce of change in Baba’s attitude towards Hassan.

When we were on a journey to see Eid cid. Baba had invited kaka Homayoun and other two dozen people. Kaka Homayoun congratulated and patted me and was much proud of me. After the day’s journey we all start preparing to go to bed and lie down on soft mattresses. All my relatives were sleeping well with snoring grunted sound coming. But I was the only helpless who tossed and turned all night. In the darkness of the night Amir admits what he has seen in the alley.

I watched Hassan get raped, “I said to no one.” (P-75)

I wish someone wake up and listen to my unatoned sins. I want to escape from this, but no one woke up. Later after Amir’s birthday party Amir, on the ongoing of wrongdoings committing against Hassan. This time Amir wants to do something shameful again in order to erase his past guilt, he wants to eradicate the image of Hassan, to brush out from his mind in any way. Amir is again stepping upon the same ladder to get relief to his untreatable mind. This time in the absence of Ali and Hassan. Amir hides his wristwatch and a bundle of cash under Hassan’s mattress, in order to defame and degrade Hassan in the eyes of Baba. After hiding, he reports the missing items to Baba. Baba called a meeting to ensure Ali and Hassan’s presence in his office. When they appereared, their eyes had turned red, because they both were crying. When Baba questions Hassan, if you have stolen the money and the watch. Hassan answers. Yes, because he wants to keep the honor of his selfish friend and also he does not want to degrade him in the eyes of his own father. Amir feels a pang of guilt and understands Hassan’s final sacrifice. Lie after lie does not only haunt Amir alone, but this time the lie also affects terribly Baba too. When Ali and Hassan decided to leave Baba and Amir’s household, Baba felt too much sad, devastated and wept bitterly for the first time in his life.

After the Soviet invasion, Amir and Baba are now living in Fremont, California. Amir gets attracted here with Soraya, an Afghan girl. Amir is still thinking of his past guilties. Before marriage with Soraya, she confessed her past wrong doing confidently to make the path clear without hiding anything. But, Amir, who is the builder of lies, once again is determined to his wrong doings and later after marriage thinks himself responsible for soraya’s incapability of giving birth to child.

But above all cycles of wrong doings there is a moral message in this novel how to be good again or rectify one's sins and get the atonement. Amir on the insistence of Rahim Khan comes to Pakistan and his call opens a gateway for Amir to erase his past sins. After arriving in Pakistan, Rahim Khan discloses his purpose of inviting Amir to Pakistan. Amir who firstly becomes reluctant, but later on starts his ship with full of sins on a dangerous sea, acts lastly as a determined hero like Santiago to struggle every horrible path and become adventurous in his way of search and saves Hassan's son Sohrab after much struggle from the clutches of Assef- who adopts the ideology of Hitler, to clean the land of Afghanistan from Hazars. Amir now feels comfortable seeing the smile on the face of Sohrab when flying a kite in the park of America.

### Reference

Hosseini, Khaled. *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. Bloomsbury Publishing Plc. 36 Soho Square, London. 2007.