

Appreciation of “*Morning Bells*” by Jayashree Mohanraj

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ABSTRACT:

Jayashree Mohanraj is one of the most remembered writers of Andhra Pradesh in special and India in general. A multilingual translator, Jayashree Mohan Raj possessed the gift of translating poems from vernacular languages to English. As an experienced writer, Mohan Raj has captured the attention of the readers through her short stories, poems and Fiction in which she paints pictures of problems of middle class families. Her writings are very effective and inspiring as she narrates stories from her real life experiences. Her stories deal with realistic themes of predicament of children, situation of women, class conflict, and etc. ‘*Morning Bells*’ is a very good example of a story which deals with four children who experience poverty and squalor because they have been cast away from home due to poor economic conditions.

KEY WORDS: Multilingual, translator, vernacular, middle class, problems, realistic, predicament.

INTRODUCTION

Jayashree Mohan raj hails from middle class family. Her life experiences left a great impact on her writings and very courageously Mohan raj presented the problems faced by middle class men, women and children. Mohan raj is a talented Indian writer of Short stories and a creative writer who has made a fine mark on the reader’s mind at the global level.

THE STORY IN A NUT SHELL:

The present story titled “*Morning Bells*” is an honest presentation of small children who are deprived of food, clothing, shelter and basic necessities of life because they have been orphaned when they were kids. The story is about four rag pickers which provide deep insights into the hypocrisy of the aristocratic. Chotu, Ramu, Irfan and Munna are rag pickers. Who roam in the streets groping for garbage in public dustbins .Every day the routine goes on for the small boys and without any unhappiness or sorrow, the four boys go about their business of rag picking as they have no other choice. They enjoy doing the menial job as a gift from God and picked up objects which they discovered will give them some money. Each boy has his own story which is so painful. The boys have experienced pathetic situations like beatings and scolding of a drunken father, harassment of stepmother, physical abuse by the hotel proprietor, etc in their childhood. They believe that God’s providence has brought them together. All four of them once met at a dumping yard and started to live together.

One day the four boys happened to come across the huge garbage bin. Their joy knew no bounds. All four of them quickly go near the garbage and to their astonishment; a swarm of flies rose up in the air. After searching poignantly in the bin, Chotu felt something soft and tender in his hands. He was shocked to see a dead infant. Without any second thought, Chotu calls Ramu and points at the lumpy thing inside the bin. Then both of them pick up the small bundle only to discover that it was a female infant. They wrapped the baby in an old newspaper and took it home along with them.

On the way to their shed, the four boys stopped at the temple. There they came across people of all classes and communities entering the temple. The author describes the temple goers adorned with bright vermilion marks and carrying the necessary things to be placed at the altar. Some of the temple goers displayed true devotion and

piety while the others exhibited hypocrisy. There was one woman in particular who didn't want the shadow of the poor rag pickers and stayed away from the edge of her saree touching the boys who came near the kiosk.

THEMES OF THE STORY

The central themes of the story are predicament of rag pickers, child labor, and rights of children, class conflict, female infanticide, and theme of Social Evils etc, all which are meaningfully projected through four characters- Chotu, Ramu, Irfan and Munna. There exist some or other social evils in societies around the world. Evils exist indifferent forms such as poverty, child labor, female infanticide, gender bias, beggary, abandoned children, untouchability, superstitions, religious hypocrisy, alcoholism, etc. The author hits upon all these social evils in the story. According to Mohanraj, social evils can only be eliminated by society itself. The evils act as barriers to the progress of any country, and hence humans should strive together to put an end to them. The story also explores the way how people behave towards fellow humans. The author tries to make the readers realize that one should never forget the human principles and values. The message the author wants to convey through the story is "service to man is service to god".

LANGUAGE AND STYLE

Through the use of very simple and straightforward language, the author tries to project the idea that the life of simple and under privileged people is very pathetic and the working class faces enormous economic problems because they are financially weak.

“They are a group of children you encounter on the roads everyday. Chotu, Ramu, Irfan, and Munna are rag pickers. They get up early in the morning, Go about from Garbage to garbage”.

The use of diction by the author displays that the life of the rag pickers is very simple but they make it meaningful through their hard work and determination.

DIDACTIC ELEMENT IN THE STORY

The author drives home the point that practicing human values is the need of the hour. People should treat the other as his own kith and kin. Compassion towards others is an important virtue. This is well exemplified in the words of the municipal sweeper who ordered the rag pickers to take whatever they wanted from the garbage bin.

“Take what you want but don't scatter the garbage said the kindly old municipal sweeper as he passed by ”

It is the responsibility of all human beings to show pity and kindness to others irrespective of caste, creed, religion, sex and community. So through the story, the author expresses the truth that human values are essential for all to be implemented and practiced.

CONCLUSION:

Jayashree Mohanraj's story *Morning Bells* gives the readers meaningful lessons for life. The story should be taken as an illustration of core human values. As human beings, one should be good and do good to others and make this place a better and happy place for all to live. The realistic story of the rag pickers should inspire all to undergo transformation of mind and heart.

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