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IDENTITY CRISIS AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN GREGORY E UPSHAW'S *DOMESTIC VIOLENCE*

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Gregory E Upshaw is a poet, author, writer, and advocate for social, civil, and human justice. He believes that everyone in the world has a right to social harmony no matter the color, ethnicity, culture, race, gender, or disability. He says that we are humans beings hidden away in layers and layers of skin, also all people have unique commonality, that they are born, they live, and they die. His writings are based on social, civil, and human injustices. He also infuses areas of hope, spirituality, self-reflection, and family. All his works are to interact, to feel, and connect with something or someone. He had done his post graduate and doctorate in Human Services.

The poem symbolizes the suffering of a young girl whose life was ruined in the very young age and there is no identity for her in the society. The poem begins with a word beautiful decoration, but it not to the girl but to her graveyard. Throughout the poem the poet insists the point that the girl has been the victim of society. The young girl was married to a street man who had no mannerism and she has been pushed to undergo a lot of pain because of his anger. She was married at the age of seventeen and was pregnant by eighteen. She lost her identity in the very next year and lost her entirely and now sleeps so calm in the cold grave.

This poem brings out various issues like child marriage, gender inequality, abuse, identity crisis, and also male domination. It is said that these issues occur due to poverty, where the people get their child married so early so as to put down their major burden from their head. But people do not think about the suffering that their child undergoes after marriage. Here the male domination takes place where the women cannot rise against their men. This occurs due to lack of proper knowledge and strength.

These lines:

"A year from graduation

Thrust into marriage of circumstance

A man of street – with decades of hate" (Upshaw15-17)

This is so very clear that she was pushed by the society to get married, but the society after that did not accept her when she suffered.

In this poem the girl undergoes pregnancy and was ex-communicated by the family, which she thought that could be her nest for her life time. In the society she was not recognized and she dies due to lack of health. She cannot do anything more than praying for relief. With her there are more titles but not to praise her. Those say that she is a victim of society, aggression, domestic violence and her questions were unanswered.

The poet on the whole portrayed the real suffering of an immature girl who lost the life of flying colours. Also it is not the age to sleep calm in the grave. It is all due to the society that the girl has lost herself as a dead body, because she did not wish to marry but she was forced to get married at the very next year of

graduation. She is the victim of society because she did not wish all such things but she was forced to do so and suffer by her fate.

Even in the current society many issues are witnessed including father abusing the girl child. These are all the shame on the society and the stain in the corrupted minds did not vanish. The women should be given freedom to decide on their own about their life; nothing could be done by compulsion because they are all not the toys in the hands of the society. Nothing should be given to her for the sake of society.

Everybody speaks about empowerment of women, women's rights, equality in all circumstances but even then such violence occurs. The solution could be brought only through a proper education and self defensive skills must be taught to women in the society.

This poem can be related to the patriarchal society which excludes women in major powers. Also to the Marxist theory, that women are the mere tools to reproduce and perform household duties.

Work cited

Upshaw, E Gregory. *Poetry of the Soul: Revelations*. New Delhi: Lulu Publishing.2011.Print.
