Moral Sacrifice in The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas

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Fiction, Moral Imagination, and the Society of Omelas

Fictional stories are the ones that lead their readers to a world that is changed with the real world. It gives the audience pleasure as well as an insight into a different world. Many fictional writers use their talent and write fictional stories for the audience, often including painful realities or experiences of the real world. Similarly, a short story, "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas," written by Ursula K. Le Guin, is based on several harsh realities of the real world. In the form of the utopian genre, Le Guin tried to depict several paradigms of tensions in her story and argued about the principle of morality that shows people who had done wrong to anyone will receive detention in the end

The short story represents a small city of joyful and cheerful people celebrating the summer festival with music and dancing. The saddest part of this poem is that the citizens of Omelas locked a child in a closet within the city and his condition was very vulnerable and bad. Le Guin states, "If the child were brought up into the sunlight out of that vile place if it were cleaned and fed and comforted, that would be a good thing indeed; but if it were done, in that day and hour all the prosperity and beauty and delight of Omelas would wither and be destroyed. Those are the terms." (282). The people of Omelas supposed that the vulnerability of this child would make them happy forever. It's a city of happy people, but they are dead from the inside. Everyone knows about the bad condition of the child, but no one cares because their happiness is linked to the vulnerable situation of the child.

The people of Omelas showed happy and joyful behavior throughout the story as they did not have any grief in their hearts about that child. They are celebrating a summer festival happily, and a little child is suffering from hunger and sorrow in the closet of a house within the city. A pure heart will lead to the pleasure of true happiness. The citizens of Omelas don't have pure hearts, as they all were pitiless and merciless people. They believe that their happiness depends upon the misery of the child. These people are not humble and poor in spirit as they are selfish and cruel people who locked up a poor child in a miserable condition and linked their happiness to the unfortunate situation of the child.

Meekness, Spiritual Values, and the Ethics of

Sacrifice

In the holy book of “Sermon on the Mount,” it is written in verse 5 that “Blessed Are The Meek: For They Shall Inherit The Earth. It means that the most successful people on earth are the ones who are meek. Meek is a term that refers to showing the gentle, tolerant, patient, and kind behavior of humankind. The people of Omelas are not meek and will not succeed on earth as they are cruel and pitiless. They are not kind to a child and link their happiness to the misery of the child. They will have to suffer what they have done with the child. The people of Omelas will suffer in the end as they were cruel and pitiless for a poor little child and locked him up in jail.

Many people of Omelas thought about the child and felt his suffering, but they all were unable to do something for him. They leave the city and never come back. These were all also selfish people who felt the little child’s suffering but never did anything for him. They leave the city for their sake so that they will not see the misery of the child. Jesus said in the “Sermon on the Mount” that “Blessed Are The Peacemakers: For They Shall Be Called The Children Of God,” which means that the peacemakers will be called the children of God. Peace is calmness and a state of harmony which can be achieved by doing good deeds for the sake of humankind. The people of Omelas are not peacemakers; they are selfish and cruel.

The story’s central theme is based on the fact that a stereotype that is based on a wrong act or does not follow the rules of morality is not worthy enough to follow. Several stereotypes in the world exist today but are not worthy enough to follow. These stereotypes should be removed from society by society members for their wrong and illogical reasons. The people of Omelas who were not able to reduce the level of vulnerability of the child should not leave their society and should try consistently for the rights of the child. Escaping from the society is not a good option. If anyone wants peace in any community, then it is right to fight for peace, and it is a real endeavor.

Collective Happiness and the Suffering of the Abandoned Child

The people of Omelas were living in peace and happiness, but they believed their happiness was linked to the bad condition of the little child. They supposed that if they left the child, their joy would end, and they would have to suffer from grief and bad conditions. It’s a bad stereotype of Omelas’s society. In the “Sermon on the Mount,” verse 8 states “Blessed Are They Which Are Persecuted For Righteousness’ Sake: For Theirs Is The Kingdom Of Heaven.” This means that the people who always do the right things are the ones who will enjoy the Kingdom of Heaven. The people of Omelas were doing wrong with the child so that people would never enjoy the Kingdom of Heaven.

According to Jerre Collins, “The story is a critique of American moral life” (525). Le Guin tried to depict the moral life of the United States and showed that it is not based on true moral values. She added

that the developed society of the country is based on a modern lifestyle and high living standards. Still, the nation does not consider that it is exploiting other people and not following the principles of morality, like the poor child in the short story who was suffering from a very depressed and bad condition in the locked jail. However, in the context of the American system, it is not true. The people of Omelas had a bad stereotype, and they followed it due to their belief that they would be happy if they kept the child in a miserable condition. However, no such stereotypes exist in the United States, and society follows them.

In the form of the utopian genre, Le Guin tried to depict several paradigms of tensions in her story and argued about the principle of morality that shows people who had done wrong to anyone will receive detention in the end. The story's central idea is that many societies follow wrong and illogical stereotypes that hurt people like the child in the story. These are not worthy and should not be followed by any society. If any wrong stereotype exists in any society, its members should try to remove it rather than follow it.

Works Cited

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