The Price Of Shame. Perf. Monica Lewinsky

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Reflection Paper

Monica, in her speech, talks about how her story became public. She says that everyone makes mistakes in their twenties, and she did, too. She was only twenty-two years old when she fell in love with her boss. It was about two decades ago. At the age of twenty-four, she discovered the mistake she had made. The affair turned out to be the biggest blunder of her life. She is regretful about that. She was completely a private person, enjoying her personal life, but it was before the scandal of her affair broke out in public. The scandal was reported in print media, and she was completely devastated. She had never experienced shame in public. But this time, it took away her dignity. She had lost her reputation. In a matter of minutes, she was now humiliated in public. Her personal life was no longer a personal one. The public knew everything about her. She was humiliated and shamed by the public. This was the time before social media became active. However, people could still comment and post stories through emails. Print media published plastered photos of her to attract public attention. Her story went viral. She lost her reputation and life when the scandal broke out. According to Monica, there was no name for such issues when her scandal broke out. She could not imagine such a humiliation. She was branded as a bad woman. She couldn't resist it. Such acts are now called cyberbullying. Monica shares her stories about stopping such acts that take away dignity from others. Social harassment needs to stop. Monica shares her story to help those who are also victims of cyberbullying and online harassment. It's easy for others to comment, but many such harassing comments on social media can rip away someone's dignity. The same happened to Monica.

Monica tells her story back in 1998 when her conversation, words, and photos became public. It is against the privacy of someone to publicize someone's private content in the media even without consent. This is something that happened to Monica. Her scandal with the president went viral. Bullying began, and she lost her life at that moment. It brought shame to herself and her family. It was before social media became active. In 2010, she read the story of a freshman at college whose intimate video went viral on social media. Bullying and harassment started in a matter of minutes. The boy ended up committing suicide. Such are the consequences of online harassment and social bullying. She can totally relate to the incident and understand the pain of the person who committed suicide as well as the trauma his family went through. But there is nobody to stop this. Monica's mother can recall those times when the scandal broke out after hearing about this boy's incident. Her mom could recall how she used to sit beside her bed and used to soothe her.

Unfortunately, not many parents like mine get the opportunity to learn about the sufferings of their

children. They cannot figure out what goes wrong, and most of the time, it's too late. Today, social media connects millions of people to the internet. People who are not equipped to handle this social media suffer from different kinds of humiliation and cyberbullying. Sometimes, the consequences are so bad that they even end their lives. Childline is a UK-based private organization. The organization deals with issues related to online harassment. According to statistics recorded, there has been about an eighty-seven per cent increase in the cases that reported cyberbullying. These figures are huge (Lewinsky).

Monica makes a very appealing point by saying that anyone who is subject to humiliation can survive. This is not because she survived it but because anyone can make it. She knows it is hard, but we all have the capacity to stand tall after such incidents. Social media has taken bullying to another level. Shame is the price that victims pay, but people are more interested in the price they earn when humiliating others. Monica talks about empathy. She says that empathy can do wonders. It can help victims to get out of humiliation and embarrassment.

I believe that the beginning and the end parts of the conversation were the most important. In the beginning, she begins her story with a little humour to attract the attention of the audience towards a serious issue. In the end, she builds courage and talks about how empathy can help despite the shame media can bring into someone's life. She brings hope and builds confidence for victims who experience humiliation like she did.

One question that comes to my mind after hearing the talk is how someone can build confidence after being humiliated on social media when there are very few people to support and millions of people to bully. It's tough for the victims of social bullying. The speaker needs to talk in detail about ways one can get rid of the embarrassment. Are there special institutes to help? How can family and friends build support in these circumstances?

I really liked the conversation. It talked about hope. It was about women whose lives were devastated by humiliation but who still managed to stay strong. The talk builds hope for all those who experience humiliation in any form. Nothing can take away our lives. If we are strong, we can do anything.

Works Cited

The Price of Shame. Perf. Monica Lewinsky. 2015. TED Talks.