



## ASPECTS OF MOTHERHOOD IN KRISTIN HANNAH'S *NIGHT ROAD*

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### ABSTRACT

*Motherhood and mothering is a recurring problematic in the recent minority and feminist theories. The surge of critical text such as Nancy Chodorow's Reproduction of Mothering (1978), Adrienne Rich's of woman Born: Motherhood as institution and experience (1976), Marianne Hirsch's The Mother/Daughter plot: Narrative, Psychoanalysis, Feminism (1989), Susan Rubin Suleiman's "who one is". Encounters with contemporary Art and Literature (1994), and Susanne Danuta Walters lives together/world Apart (1992) testify indubitably to the growing interest in the study of motherhood. Recent psychoanalytic, sociological, and feminist perspectives have proved most useful in analyzing the representations of motherhood. Growing up in a working-class household in the 1950s, historian Carolyn Steedman revealed that her mother's economic problems and the absence of husband made her resentful and exasperated with motherhood and therefore, Chodorow's traditional nurturing role model. Joseph cautions against viewing conceptions of motherhood and mother-daughter relationships, from white feminist psychoanalytic theoretical perspectives. Further, she suggests that motherhood and mother daughter relationships can be best discussed within the context of history and cultural difference instead of through an isolated analysis. Mother and child relationship that have strongly influenced the existing perceptions of motherhood.*

### INTRODUCTION

Chanie Brusie says; My husband thinks it's great fun to tease me about our kids growing up. He will purposely pick them up and hold them in his arms taunting me by saying stuff like, "Remember when she was our baby? It seems like just yesterday and before you knew it, they will be leaving you..." (M.p.no12) and then he stares at me, just waiting for the tears to fall. And while I admit that I have my emotional mom moments, I will also say that there are some pretty awesome things about watching your kids grow up – and not every mom longs



for the baby days to stay forever, as incredible as they can be. Sometimes I would I like to move past this particular stereotype and somehow learn not to use the phrase, “I can’t believe they are growing up so fast!”.

But in Hannah’s *Night Road*, Miles advises his wife (Jude) to treat their children as a growing because Jude checks their homework every day and chaperone every dance and organize every school function. She prepares them breakfast and drives them every where they need to go. So he asks her to let them loose a little. Jude told her husband that “I can’t believe they’re starting high school. They were just in kinder garden a second age” (*Night Road*, p.no:13).

Johnson and Ferguson (1990) suggested that one aspects of motherhood agreed upon in the 21<sup>st</sup> century regardless of the ideological position of the writer is that motherhood is an idealized. In this novel *Night Road*, Jude’s idealized character revealed when she told to Lexi about Haley, who was Mia’s friend and Zach felt by her love trap. Mia becomes speechless after heard about this. After that incident Jude started to think often about Mia, here after she should think about Lexi also. Jude gave car key to Zach and allows them to go out without her presence. And also idealized about the kids, who were seated in the car. Jude with the absence of mind listens to the news with her husband. Because she thinks about Zach for his broken love with Amanda.

The results are discussed in the context of Russo’s (1976) analysis of the motherhood Mandate and Eagly and Steffen’s (1984) theory of gender stereotypes. Implications for the career-oriented mothers are examined. As predicted, the mother who remained home with her child and who was satisfied with staying home was rated higher than was the dissatisfied stay-at-home mother. As explained earlier, In Hannah’s *Night Road* Jude feels happy to stay at home to take care on her children and for their goodness sake. She was there to fulfill their needs and to console them. For instance, from the novel: Jude sat on the edge of bed and looked at her fourteen year old daughter, who was sprawled on top of the blankets in her four-postured bed, asleep. Suddenly she changed like a young mother, when she saw her twin children playing and fighting.

Then Jude thinks about years ago, when her twins started sixth grade. Some women might be overwhelmed by the noise of making by the kids, but she is different. She made a vow on herself that did not want to drop her children under anyone’s care. She wished to do everything for her children, of course every mother will do. But she stood different from them. When Lexi admitted to Jude that her mother is a drug addict with hesitation because she thought that Jude will never allow her to continue the bond of friendship with Mia. But Jude looked only at the character of Lexi. Jude wished to decorate her house in a different way, to celebrate Christmas with her children. Since mother-hood had surprised her with it’s powerful pull, she’d become a holiday Junkie. Whatever she has done was only for the



happiness of her children. Jude got bewildered on whether to be with Mia's or with Zach. She went with Zach because he was not feeling well and though she felt bad for Mia she couldn't stay with her, as she wished Zach to be alive at least.

Naomi Wolf said; A woman who decide to work full time as a mother in the home can be happy and deserves full admiration from us. Motherhood is one of the most difficult and creative jobs anybody can do. The goal is to recreate the world so that our choices are not so stark. In the words of Naomi Wolf motherhood roles are challenging and creative jobs, it's proved by Hannah's novel *Night Road*. Jude, Mia and Lexi went shopping for dresses. Jude set up Manicures and Pedicures for both Mia and Lexi. She knows well that they just went for dance nothing earth-shattering, but she spent much amount for her daughter because it's Mia's first party and she wishes to make that day as an unforgettable day for her daughter. Jude's caring not only for her daughter Mia but also Mia's friend Lexi too. Jude purchased many things for Lexi too, and surprisingly she gifted to Lexi. When Lexi looked at herself in the mirror, she saw a stranger - a girl with sleek, glossy black hair, layered now around her face, and perfectly arched eyebrows. Maybe Jude did for the happiness of Mia or her concern about Lexi, whatever she did, she stood as a Motherhood.

Jude spent six hundred and fifty dollars to purchase Bazrah ring to Mia and she thought it would make a beautiful graduation gift for her daughter. Then Jude purchase watch to Zach. She did everything best for her children but she lacked her smartness to know about her son and her daughter. She felt bad in herself, when she got information about Zach's missing football coaching class from Molly. After Mia's death only she knew that white rose is the favourite for Mia suddenly she felt ashamed of herself as a motherhood. Jude makes her children's dream come true to get admission from USC for their higher education. Jude thinks that she is smart enough about her children but in reality, the situation tipped like a coin, she thinks that Zach did not drink, or consume alcohol, but on that night, Zach had been drunk and everything is toppled over, Lexi drives and fate resulted in an accident. As a result Mia dies, so her prediction is wrong, as a result, it lacks her smartness.

Webster's Dictionary defines mother as "a mother is something that gives rise to or exercise protective care over something else". A mother is not merely the tool of a child but she is someone who takes care of someone else. Lexi gives her life as an instance for her daughter Grace. When Grace walks with her mother to the school ground, she felt that she is unfriendly. When Lexi notices this from Grace's face, she told that once in her schooling she herself go front to talk to Mia. They were inseparable, but before that she was also unfriendly. Lexi advises her daughter that if you want to gain something, you should step forward to reach that. Grace fulfilled her life by getting the love from her mother Lexi.

According to the famous American writer, Tennessee Williams, "others play an important role in people's lives. Yet, mothers are just the same as everyone else. They have their beliefs,



morals, opinions, aim and not to mention their flaws”. As Williams set it, Jude has her own ethics and values. She has her aim to make garden in the summer for tourist. She loved her garden in october. It was a time of organization for her, to plan the future. Jude lost herself in planning and she imagines how to alter the garden. In early June, the garden becomes miraculous. Ude felt that this is the time for her to sit back and enjoy the hard work she’d done. While she looks around, everywhere she saw the rewards of her careful planning and judicious pruning.

A mother is the first, formost and best friend of everyone’s life as no one can be true and real like her. She is the one and only who always stands with us in our all good and bad times. She always loves and cares us more than we deserve and others in her life. She gives us first priority of her life and gives us glimpse of hope in our bad times. She knows our all the reasons of happiness and sadness and try to make us happy every time. The above words run parrallel in the story of *Hannah’s Night Road*. Jude is the first and foermost best friend of her children, especially to Mia. When Jude hears about the love of her son with Lexi, she doesn’t care about her son’s love, she just thinks about Mia because already she is hurt with her another friend. Jude advices her daughter to be with the friend of Lexi forever, though she hs a role of mother and also elder one of the family, she doesn’t know how to console her son and couldn’t look at her son’s weeping, while Zach hears about the death of Mia, who is the part of his life.

Sorensen in his article posted the following words, mothers go missing in movies because leabving them in the lives of characters in crisis mmakes sustaining conflict difficult. Mothers listen and resole problems. They are selfless and have love without conditions. But Hannah’s novel the case is different. Here the family loses Mia, who is twin child in Farraday’s family. Mia’s death makes the family upside down. Though Jude has another child, Zach, she couldn’t come out of that pain. Zach also feels ready to leave his love with Lexi because his mother thinks that Lexi is the reason for Mia’s death. Lexi also goes to prison, and loses her ove, and becomes lonely in Farraday’s family. Hannah told that mothers do everything and more.. the subject of motherhood is attender one that evokes some of our greatest joys and heartaches. This has been so from the beginning. Jude was “glad” after the fall, realizing she otherwise would not have had children.

Kieth Merrill, an Academy Award – winning director, says that there is a reason they rarely find strong mother in novel today. In this novell “*Night Road*”, jude Farraday stand as a strong mother. One of the trits that Jude and Lexi’s mother are being controlling and demanding. It could be the motherly instinct within these two women that cause them to act this way, but it also hurts mother – child relationship. Mr. Sedat tells about motherhood in hir article: “men are more important and have all power, so if women want to influence they should be more like men”. It’s relevant to the novel “*Night Road*”. Jude did everything for her children. Even she destroyed her careful planning of garden, because there is no white



rose in that garden, which is favourite for her daughter Mia. The role mother is always different and precious than other involved in our life.

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