

ISSN NO: 2395-339X

ANALYSIS OF CHETAN BHAGAT'S THE GIRL IN ROOM 105 AS SUSPENSE NOVEL

*By Jaydipkumar Devabhai Pandya

ABSTRACT

Chetan Bhagat introduced his book “The Girl in Room No. 105” with a Bollywood style teaser. This is the first time when Chetan Bhagat has attempted the mystery-thriller genre as he likes to surprise his readers. From the last book, “One Indian Girl”, this time Chetan Bhagat has attempted something very different. It is still a fun and light book, a Chetan Bhagat book. It is a story about two boys who end up becoming bumbling detectives in an attempt to solve a crime and people enjoyed it as a good funny thriller which has not come for a while.

As, Chetan Bhagat don't wants to become repetitive, he always put a certain context in every story. In the backdrop, the book covers a social issue. This one touches upon Kashmir, Hindu-Muslim prejudice and many readers still do not know much about Kashmir's life. An average Kashmiri is not very political in nature. It is just the noise that makes it to the news. It is not a Kashmir book but highlights a lot of things.

KEY WORDS: Chetan Bhagat, The Girl, Murder, Kashmir

Saarth

E-Journal of Research

ISSN NO: 2395-339X

INTRODUCTION

Chetan Bhagat is the author of eight bestselling novels, which have sold over twelve million copies and have been translated in over twenty languages worldwide. The New York Times has called him ‘the biggest selling author in India’s history’. Time magazine named him as one of the 100 most influential people in the world, and Fast Company USA named him as one of the 100 most creative people in business worldwide. Many of his books have been adapted into films and were major Bollywood blockbusters. He is also a Film-fare award-winning screenplay writer. Chetan writes columns in the Times of India and Dainik Bhaskar, which are amongst the most influential and widely, read newspapers in the country. He is also one of the country’s leading motivational speakers. Chetan went to college at IIT Delhi and IIM Ahmedabad, after which he worked in investment banking for a decade before quitting his job to become a full-time writer.

In the 21st century, everywhere in the world, youth is considered as the power of its nation. And it's true as the nation can become powerful only if its youth is contributing for the development of the nation. Though the nations are trying to do a lot for youth but on the other hand they are worried about them as they are sometimes wasting their time for useless things or using talent for wrong works, etc. In the same way, India is also trying to focus on youth and issues of youth. The former president of India Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam always tried to ignite the minds of people by saying that society should give special attention towards the issues related to youth because they are the future of nation. So it is necessary to utilize the power of youth as well as intelligence of youth for better

Saarth

E-Journal of Research

ISSN NO: 2395-339X

building the nation. Indian writers of this age are also trying to present such issues through their works. Chetan Bhagat through his novel depicts youths, youth oriented views, youth's problems, and their inner struggle while coping with the present education system as well as the picture of youth culture. The present paper is an attempt to study Chetan Bhagat's *The Girl in Room 105* as a critique of youth culture and Kashmir. It also deals with the youth issues and their protesting voice about the present situation and social system reflected in *The Girl in Room 105*.

The Girl in Room 105 by Chetan Bhagat is a work of fiction. Names, characters, organizations, places, events, and incidents are either products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, or actual events is purely coincidental has been into buzz for a while. Yes, it is not an ordinary love story, like his other books, the author claims that with this book he intends to get into 'mystery and thriller' kind of genre. Let's see how good he fared up with this new book. Unlike his other novels, this one is lengthy one, around 312 pages.

The story opens with Chetan Bhagat travelling on a midnight plane from Hyderabad to Delhi. Next to him seated is this guy, Keshav Rajpurohit – the hero cum detective of this novel. After initial boring conversation, Chetan agrees to listen to the un-love story of Keshav. Please note that it's not a love story, rather in snatches, otherwise a pure mystery. Keshav hails from Alwar and his father is a senior RSS worker there. Well, Keshav is not influenced by RSS – he drinks and often eats non-veg., including beef. Keshav passed out from IIT Delhi in

Saarth

E-Journal of Research

ISSN NO: 2395-339X

2013. IIT and IIM are some of the favorite settings of Chetan's novels. So, no wonders here.

When Keshav was about to leave IIT, he fell in love with Zara Lone, a stunning beautiful girl from Kashmir. She's an engineering student at Delhi University and after that takes admission in IIT Delhi for PHD. How they fell in love is something of not significance. Unfortunately, their love story did not go as per their plan, because of religious conflicts. Keshav is a former IIT student who currently works as a teacher in a JEE tuition center. Actually, Keshav after passing out from IIT didn't get any good job offer. So, he teaches as a Maths faculty at Chandan Classes, there he gets into strong friendship bonding with this chap Saurabh, who is damn good at hacking websites, especially Tinder App. Anyway Chandan Classes was meant for page filling.

He hates his job and reaches out through LinkedIn, but fails to find a proper job. He is a part of an orthodox family. His mother is a homemaker and his father is a part of the RSS. He has a love story with a colleague named Zara Lone, who is pursuing her Ph.D. in IIT. Zara is from a Kashmiri Muslim family and their love story ends due to their families, who fight over religious issues. Keshav couldn't come out of it and keeps remembering Zara, who then loves Raghu (Keshav's classmate). Raghu happens to be an intelligent person with a geeky look. Keshav often calls Zara begging her to come back to him, but she never agrees. Saurabh (Keshav's friend) bids Keshav to forget his past love and focus on his future.

Saarth

E-Journal of Research

ISSN NO: 2395-339X

Zara and her family wanted Keshav to accept their religion i.e. Islam, if he wished to marry her. Keshav couldn't do that as you know he comes from RSS background. Things go awry and they break. Zara's character shown complex and her true nature are rather put up in some objectionable fashion. Be it, that's not important. On her birthday, that is 9th of February every year, Keshav receives a barrage of Whats App messages from her and on an impulse Keshav goes to wish her in her hostel room number 105 in IIT Delhi. He breaks inside by climbing a mango tree. With him there is this interesting character named Saurabh.

The real story starts when Keshav in pure drunken state breaks into the room of Zara. On Zara's birthday, Keshav controls his urge to call Zara and wish her at midnight. He and Saurabh drink and fall asleep. Around 3 a.m. in the morning, he gets text messages from Zara asking him why he didn't wish her this year. Zara goes on and tells him to meet her in her room immediately. Keshav complies and rushes to Zara's room to wish her in person. As Keshav enters the room, he finds that the room is dark and it's utterly silent. Zara is asleep on the bed. He touches her forehead and feels a cold chill.

He then switches on the light and sees her dead. To his surprise, he finds her dead and cold. He informs Saurabh who suggests they run away from the scene. But Keshav becomes determined to find the killer. He informs the police, Raghu, and Zara's parents. Scared like anything, Keshav and Saurabh call up the police to report the murder. Soon there is commotion nationwide because media stirring the case like anything. Keshav and his friend find themselves in a trap but

Saarth

E-Journal of Research

ISSN NO: 2395-339X

their honesty saves them. They come clear off the case. Because of media and political pressure, the Delhi police put the blame on Lakshman Reddy, the security guard who was missing for exactly 40 minutes on the night of murder, and once he threatened Zara to kill as she had slapped him hard when he was caught making video of campus girls.

To avoid pressure, police keeps the security guard in custody. But Keshav has a hunch that the murderer is someone else. And from this point, he along with his friend Saurabh starts investigating the case. They get the help of the police inspector Rana, who is obsessed about his promotion and nothing else. As they start investigating, one by one the blame begins falling on a number of persons, like the dean of campus Prof. Saxena, as he wants to have had Zara, then on her father Safdar Lone on account of honor killing, and then on Sikander, the younger stepbrother of Zara, he is a terrorist in Kashmir. Since the girl was from Kashmir so we see that terrorism angle gets added up in the story without a say.

Zara's current lover cum fiancée Raghu Venkatesh (whom she often teased as a black guy from South India) was admitted in a hospital in Hyderabad. So, clearly he is not the murderer. But why is Zara in love with this lanky black fellow? Because he is a genius and his startup receives millions of USD as venture funding. See here, the girl is clearly after his money.

Keshav is hell bent on solving the case. He even goes to Kashmir to meet Sikander and Zara's officer friend Faiz. Though for some time Sikander seems to be the prime suspect but when he commits suicide, the story veers towards Faiz,

Saarth

E-Journal of Research

ISSN NO: 2395-339X

as he had an extra-marital affair with Zara. A lot of people have been put under the suspect radar but no one thinks of Raghu. But in the end it comes out that it was Raghu who murdered her out of sheer jealousy, because Zara was double dating, and planning to rob his wealth.

The police arrest the watchman of the hostel, who is missed from the CCTV camera during the time Zara was killed. Although police close the case afterwards, Keshav continues his investigation. Keshav digs deeper, with the help of police Inspector Vikas Rana. He first suspects Prof. Saxena (Zara's Ph.D. guide), who tries to harass Zara. Then, Prof. Saxena is withdrawn as a suspect in Zara's murder case after finding out the truth.

After seeking of new suspects in the murder case, he tries to find Sikander, Zara's stepbrother who happens to be part of a terrorist group in Kashmir. Keshav seeks help from Zara's father and checks her room for clues. He finds a locker with gunpowder, pregnancy kits, and selfish of Sikander with a gun along with Zara who happens to be smiling in the picture. Keshav goes through the clues one by one. He first tries to meet Sikander and asks him about his group called Tehreek. Sikander gets afraid and threatens them with a gun and runs away. They try to reach him out through his mother in Kashmir.

Sikander meets them again and tries to explain that he is not the murderer. But with the proper clues, Keshav almost gets convinced that Sikander killed his sister in the fear that Tehreek might be known to the army. The next day Sikander kills himself, telling that his existence would harm Tehreek and convince everyone that he did not kill his sister. After the suicide of Sikander, Keshav realizes he made a mistake by doubting upon him.

Saarth

E-Journal of Research

ISSN NO: 2395-339X

He then finds out about the pregnancy kits Zara had in her safe and sees a picture of an army officer (Captain Faiz Khan) in Kashmir with Zara, in her Instagram. After proper investigation, he finds out that the army officer has gifted Zara expensive jewelry and they raid his house in Delhi. They find the same pregnancy kits and check his internet history, which has search histories related to abortion and divorce. They also find gold blocks in his house and get convinced with the theory that he made Zara pregnant and killed her in guilt. They arrange a dinner party to announce the victim and arrest him unknowingly by inviting everyone Zara knew, after the 100th day of her death.

Just before Keshav announces the killer, he goes on a little trip to Hyderabad. This is when he realizes that Raghu is the killer. Raghu confesses to have killed Zara. He killed Zara because he found out she had an affair with her childhood friend, Captain Faiz, and was perhaps pregnant with his child; Faiz tells, however, that she wasn't. While they did have an affair, it ended because Faiz was married and Zara didn't want him to leave his wife and kids, and because Zara loved Raghu. Keshav learns that Raghu had sent the text messages to him on Zara's birthday, and that Zara was already dead. Raghu is arrested by Inspector Rana. The novel ends with Keshav visiting Zara's grave, and Keshav and Saurabh opening a detective agency.

CONCLUSION

The story remains predictable in snatches, but the way Keshav solves the murder mystery is some delight to readers as the language was not supportive to its tightly-looking plot. Overall it was a good attempt by Chetan Sir.

Saarth

E-Journal of Research

ISSN NO: 2395-339X

REFERENCES

1. Book Review : “The Girl in Room 105 - The Post”. thepost.co.in. 6 November 2018.
2. "Chetan Bhagat's latest book: Quiet release, cooler reception". theweek.in.
3. "Chetan Bhagat: Right place at the right time". thehindubusinessline.com.
4. Saha, Shreshtha (August 25, 2020). "One Arranged Murder: Chetan Bhagat opens up about his 9th book". The Telegraph. Retrieved October 20, 2020.
5. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/335972007_Chetan_Bhagat
6. <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/blink/meet/chetan-bhagat-being-at-the-right-place-at-the-right-time>