

Review of *Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini

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Kite Runner is Khaled Hosseini's debut novel which got published in 2003. He is also famous for another work, *A Thousand Splendid Sun* which is also about Afgan society. *Kite Runner* narrates the story of two boys from Kabul , Amir, a pushtan and his dearest friend Hassan , a Hazara, son of Amirs' father's servant, Ali. Amir's father Bhaba prefers Haasan over him because he considers Amir responsible for his wife's death as she died giving birth to Amir and also because Hassan is his illegitimate son. His father's love towards Haasan motivates Amir's jealousy towards Hassan and also Amir has a hatred towards Hassan because he belongs to the lower strata of the society. After winning a kite tournament, Hassan runs to bring kite for Amir but ends up being beaten and raped by Asif , a boy from upper strata of the society. Amir witnesses the whole incident without taking a single step to rescue Hassan in order to win his father' love and affection, undivided. And this incident brings to fore the major themes of this novel i.e betrayal which ultimately leads to forgiveness and Amir's redumption. Hassan and his father are forced to leave Bhaba's house and due to intervention of Soviet union, Amir and his father too are forced to leave Afghanistan and they move to Pakistan. Finally they settle in California where Amir grows up with the guilt of betraying Hassan. One day, Amir gets a call from Rahim Khan, his father's friend and he is called back to Kabul to redeem himself from the guilt of betraying Hassan by saving Hassan's son , Sohrab from being abused as an orphan. His saving of Sohrab from Asif, helps him to overcome his guilt and leads to the redemption of Amir's own soul. In Kabul he also learns how the Taliban invasion has destroyed the peace in Afghanistan and how they killed innocent Hazara , his dearest friend , Hassan.

Hosseini has set this novel during the terrible events like fall of Afghanistan's monarchy by force of soviet union, evacuation of refugees to multiple countries and Taliban regime. Hosseini has shown us how social, political and cultural upheavals bring destruction and havoc in the lives of normal people. Cultural discrimination created by State of Kabul which divides it's people between Pushtans and Hazaras becomes a great cause of fall in the budding friendship of Amir and Hassan. As literature is the reflection of society, Hosseini in his *Kite Runner* has reflected the society of Afghanistan.

Afghanistan is usually seen as a country full of violence, bloodshed, terror, illiteracy and full of petrific events. But Hosseini, on his part, has done a great job by showing the other side of Afghanistan which is as beautiful as any other country where love, respect, friendship, loyalty dwell in abundance. In spite of being hit by the wars, terror and bloodshed, the country's people are full of love for each other as seen in case of Hassan's love for Amir, Bhaba's love for Amir, Hassan and his servant , Ali despite the class difference until and unless disturbed by outer influences like cultural , social and political upheaval as well as discriminations .Hosseini is trying to show to the whole world the real picture of Afghanistan where peace in normal people's life is disturbed by negative influence which is as true to Afghanistan as any other country. Afghanistan is shown as a country where people like Hassan, who is a true

definition of loyalty, bravery, faithfulness dwell. Afghanistan is a country where love and peace too can exist only with the cooperation of its authority. Well, apart from Afghanistan's pictures what we found most interesting is that this brilliant work has an untold story of men. Rape and harassment which is mostly associated with female gender only, is true to men too but goes unnoticed because of patriarchal notion of being superior and physically powerful. They too are harassed, tortured, can become a toy of sexual pleasure and those who have humble emotions and feelings they are more prone to become victims. In this novel, Hassan is brutally raped by Asif in Alley. He struggles a lot but ends up being brutally raped by Asif. Brilliantly shown the other side of men, men too are sensible. This novel has increased our admiration for Khalid Hosseini. Another interesting aspect of this novel along with conflicts, hardships, guilt is a laudable Love that a husband and wife share. Amazingly portrayed the way Bhaba's wife respects her husband's emotions and feelings. Hosseini has strikingly shown faith and trust as pillars of any relationship. When Amir narrates the whole story to his wife after getting a call from Rahim, she supports him unconditionally in rescuing Sohrab, Hassan's son. And the way Amir adopts Sohrab as his own son and ends this beautiful novel with Afghan's culture by flying kite for Sohrab once more as he used to do for Hassan and utters "For you a thousand times over" touches the heart of every reader. Khalid Hosseini's *Kite Runner* is a must read novel. It brings out many hidden pictures of Afghanistan as well as of human nature. Such stories may have been told prior to this novel also, but not with the same intensity and credibility. It is a fascinating debut. A piece of heart to Khalid Hosseini and his *Kite Runner*.