

DEPICTION OF BATTERED WOMAN SYNDROME IN SOPHIE TAMAS' LIFE AFTER DEATH: THE REMAINS OF SPOUSAL ABUSE

Dr. Disha Khanna

Deputy Dean
Faculty of Liberal Arts
GNA University
Contact- 6280270388
Email- dishakhannadoc@gmail.com

Abstract

Domestic violence is a worldwide misfortune that leads to melancholy to anyone at any point of time in one's existence. It is indeed predominant throughout the globe in multifarious cultures and badly affects multitude of all economic status quo. Paying heed to the daily distressful occurrences are the common signs of an obnoxious liaison to put a cease to psycho traumatic ordeal of perpetual worries. Continuous bullying and verbal abuse are the common standing grounds for the escalation in the recurrently happening domestic violence. Staying in a relationship that incurs trepidation upon a person you adore in life, is sheer anguish. Such a relationship turns out to be sickening and proves to be a total disaster in the times to come. The research paper in hand will intentionally intrigue every female to contemplate over the appalling situation, "If you feel like you have to walk on eggshells around your partner, continually watching what you say and do in order to avoid a blow up; probability is pin-pointing to your relationship that is detrimental and abusive" (Bowker 98). Keeping in view Sophie Tamas' maiden work *Life After Leaving: The Remains of Spousal Abuse*, a ground-breaking endeavour is executed to disclose how women persistently contest to make over the loss incurred and make sincere die hard endeavours to recuperate from the battered women syndrome, and finally go through the blossoming of adoration and kindheartedness. Battered Woman Syndrome (BWS) is a psychological condition that can mature when an individual experiences exploitation at the hands of an intimate partner. Despite of its intricacy, women contest to file lawful parting to abandon an unmannerly and torturous connection. The works of Sophie Tamas, an award-winning playwright, and an interdisciplinary intellectual and practitioner have accomplished eclectic fame in the form of articles deliberating on the ethical and real life turbulences pertaining to matrimonial affairs. The current study will integrate Tamas' debut novel and extol on multifarious conducts in which spousal mishandling can be restricted gainfully and in the best possible optimistic manner. This research venture will predominantly throw light upon the connotation of nuptial ties, whether with positivity intact or really demanding, yet leave an indelible mark by making life utterly significant and evocative.

Keywords- Abuse, Battered Woman Syndrome (BWS), Conjugal Relationships, Liaison, Marital Ties, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Spouse mishandling

DEPICTION OF BATTERED WOMAN SYNDROME IN SOPHIE TAMAS' LIFE AFTER DEATH: THE REMAINS OF SPOUSAL ABUSE

Sophie Tamas, boxes the chart in portraying women's real life experiences of existing with, and abandoning away with spousal vehemence within a socio-historical setting then recreating it by piloting a painstaking exploration about her turbulent survivals. Tamas is an interdisciplinary scholar cum practitioner with scholarly skills. Her dissertation is centered upon autoethnographic- an art that's grounded upon the participatory action research with fighters of spousal abuse, discovering the real use of theatre to expedite trauma reclamation, expand better comprehension of recovery needs, and encourage civic education on Battered Woman Syndrome (BWS). Tamas has even accolades by being the designer of an online dynamic atlas and trauma scrapbook to document the influence of leaving abuse at (www.postscrap.org), to be launched in early 2015. Tamas herself is a victim of male partner antagonism and penned down the dissertation about her harrowing and tormenting saga for the other women passing through a similar disturbed vicious cycle of male atrocities at a universal level.

Violence incurred due to extra marital affairs is prevalent across the globe despite the social, economic, religious or cultural group. Forcefulness against women performed by a spouse or an intimate male partner is accepted to be the most pervasive practices of violence. In many cases, womenfolk can act hostile in associations with men, and predominantly violence is established in same-sex partnerships, the devastating misfortune of spouse violence is endured by women at the shackles of chauvinistic men. It has been timeworn that women have been a perpetual victim mental, physical and emotional trauma torture at the hands of dominant men; leading to

psychosomatic disorders. At times, they even encounter the perils of gruesome injury resulting into loss of one's life. Such a trauma makes the subdued womenfolk develop the conviction that either they must assassinate the partner or better be killed. When such an abuse becomes a monotonous vicious cycle of torture and bickering, the relationship turns out to be sickening, and is better denoted as "battering" (Dalton and Schneider 86). Battered Woman Syndrome is a corporal and psychosomatic condition among those women who have experienced emotional, physical, or sexual abuse at the hands of their spouse resulting into Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a disorder pertaining to nervousness that can happen promptly in succession of a melancholic experience like combats, nature borne calamities, brutal incidents, grave accidents, sexual battering during adult phase or childhood period. It simply transforms any human being behaving normally to perform in a detesting manner.

The current research ordeal in hand, exposes certain misfortunes directly linked with traumatic involvements of spousal mishandling and intolerable pestering. This research endeavor will tutelage in rendering beneficial tips for a satiated and happy go lucky wed locked life. To utter despair, women have been the constant victim of spousal disharmony and hostility ensuing into being battered women burdened with PTSD. At this junction, the unemotional and stone-hearted woman being the scapegoat of unwanted betrayal at the end of bosomed spouse reciprocates with the myriad intricacies invited in her conjugal life. This betrayed woman is subdued by certain indefinite somatic disorders like unnecessary intense headache, insomnia and abdominal pain. Abandoning the bullying husband is the least available solution that the batterer woman can anticipate and execute at her end. This alternative can be the only way out that can make her take a step forward in the direction of a 'New Woman' (Fitzpatrick 122). Mostly happy marriages are based on deep telepathy and utmost synchronization. One said and the other simply accepts it- this should be the mantra of lifelong happiness together. Mostly it is the women who always make sincere endeavours in nurturing intimate and strong nuptial connect. In the couple goals, the individuals should well comprehend that for real time unconditional love, they must be in complete sync. Not only this, the couple should act as a support system during all the good and bad times leading to deep rooted understanding for life. Their connection should not be that of a relationship but that of a partnership wherein understanding of thoughts and actions reign supreme.

Tamas' *Life After Leaving (LAL): The Remains of Spousal Abuse*, is spirited work showcasing her life at its best and integrates fictitious conversations held with various authors experiencing traumatic domestic violence. In her doctoral dissertation entitled *Playing the survivor: How (and if) Tamas showcases how subdued women recover from the shackles of spousal abuse*. *LAL* is segregated into five acts unfurling the impediments of spousal abuse which is fundamental in the entire history of Tamas' life. The research will grab your attention on the perils allied with distressing experiences of spousal mistreatment and persecution. The research in hand will also render the readers with certain stern measures that can be duly incorporated to overcome spousal abuse and provide some functional guidelines that can assuredly lead to a gratified and everlasting wedded life. Inconceivable betrayal been endured by woman from her intimate partner automatically drives in countless complexities in their matrimonial life.

Sans any apprehensions, at times, women act ferociously and fearlessly in striking back, yet it is this fairer sex who is being indignant on both physical and emotional grounds. Such a woman is indeed the battered woman, whose the only recourse is to give upon her partner and truly run after the new self-concept of a 'New Woman'. Women should always strive hard to develop close intimacy with her spouse in bettering their bond of oneness. And on the other hand, the efforts of men should also not be less so as to cultivate the happy union of two souls resting on true unconditional love and eternal care.

Dr. and Mrs Ibn-Tamas, the partners in *LAL* were the victims of erratic violent episodes leading to lullness and complete quietness. As misfortune would befall, early in the morning, the couple travelled through some knock-backs upon which Mrs Ibn-Tamas in the fit of vexation, fired a blow at her husband. Throughout her stay with Dr. Tamas' house, Mrs Tamas had been the constant prey of verbal abuse. Dr. Ibn-Tamas never spared his wife in beating and bullying her. He had been thoroughly a hard hearted devil. He continually battered his expecting wife by ruthlessly dragging her up to the staircase, and by angling a gun on her despondent visage. Dr Ibn-Tamas was actually frantically roaring at her to discern the place of her stay. As heights of tolerance would have it, Mrs. Ibn-Tamas crossed the limits of controlling herself and simply fired a deadly gunshot at her husband and culminated the torturous saga forever from her existence.

In the unique work of Tamas *LAL*, the trial clearly squabbled that Mrs. Ibn-Tamas presented herself flamboyantly. Totally horrified of being strangled from her place of dwelling into a weird city where she stubbornly raised her voice against the ill-treatment met out to her by the closest companion hence, further liaisons with other counterparts and entangled him in his official location. But the case came out in a different manner wherein the defense needed Dr. Walker's testament on grounds of humble petition in order to elucidate in detail the notion of "wife battering" and in a way offer a clear cut guesstimate if Mrs. Ibn-Tamas conduct was in sync with the deportment of other women carried out in her research study.

The prosecutor held the opinion in favour of the statement given by Dr. Walker in gauging the fidelity of accusation raised by Mrs Ibn-Tamas about the forthcoming threat. In her own self-defense, Mrs Ibn-Tamas without any second thought shot her spouse to death. Though, the DC Court of Appeals held the belief that the

trial court has actually made a grave flaw in eliminating Dr. Walker's testimony. The appellate court adhered to all the legalities and simply rebutted that Dr. Walker's contention is indeed minuscule and of no weightage in this case. As a result, the DC Court of Appeals apparently proclaimed that the third Dyas point requires no recognition of the results liable to Dr. Walker's procedure.

Here keeping in light, the suitability of the BWS testimony, it simply surpasses its impact. Thus, the trial court revealed the authentication of Dr. Ibn-Tamas' actions of unfriendly behaviour against his partner. The DC Court of Appeals was generous enough of conceding that Dr. Walker's indication on BWS carried a deleterious influence. This hint by Dr. Ibn Tamas was "highly probative" and unswervingly related to his sensitivity at the time of the shooting him acted as the 'need of the hour' in apprehended on grounds of her self-defense during that appalling situation of survival extinct.

Keeping in view all the presented evidences, the DC court of Appeals incarcerated proclaiming on the judiciousness of the judge to abolish Dr Walker's testimony due to bereft of valid proofs of "manifest error". The DC Court of Appeals just declined to transpose the ruling of the trial courts. It stood simply evident that the maltreated woman is suffering from BWS. The court allowed the state's specialist to act as a witness for the spousal cruelty meted out by Mrs. Tamas and its subsequent ramifications on the battered woman and the other similar battered women across the globe. The jury raised some very startling volley of questions so as to comprehend the intention why the battered woman did not finish her relationship with the respondent, why did she not take painstaking endeavours in presenting her battering to the police, why she did not act fearlessly in deserting the scene even after perpetual assaults, and why she kept tolerating the culprit's demands.

In such a harrowing situation, it was anticipated from the state to determine the dilapidated state of the victim. In asserting that Mrs. Tamas is a battered woman, the testimony will act as a great assistance in guiding the panelists regarding the department of the sufferer. The startling evidences of the wrongdoings supported the expert's testimony regarding the detestable relationship shared by the couple as applicable by the expert as BWS. The BWS now turns out to be the fatalities of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder resulting in psychosomatic complications. In the very beginning, they enter into compassion with the authority so as to refuge the battered woman in getting some relief from legal advocating. Further, parting of the connubial ties and dissolution of the current marriage, along with grappling the battered to subdue his ruthless behaviour by her; and thus struggling with the addict, was deliberated to be the next step. The woman should make an effort to narrate her depressing tale of abuse to her confidant if any, the closest ones, health care provider and or other close associations.

Passing away the remaining years of life after being legally separated can act as a thunderbolt for any woman, whether intrepid or timid at the initial state. This saddening state of affairs in a woman's life can lead to paralysis of analysis. The tag of a married woman always keeps the lady safeguarded from any kind of impertinent danger. The status quo of a married woman renders the chance to a woman to execute her subject roles like that of a daughter, sister, mother and so on in the so called civilized. But, on the other hand, a woman who had been subjugated for years completely drops her poise and confidence. In this case, existing on independent grounds perturbs such a devastated woman for life. Staying single and alone due to an unbearable relationship and disturbed marriage is one of the stiffest situations transpired in a life of any battered woman. From such a cumbersome state of affairs, it is anticipated that such a woman will befall under the trap of PTSD.

The typical style of autothenographic writing was duly incorporated throwing light upon the PTSD as prevalent in *LAL*. Here Tamas makes an effort of flagging down the responsibility on the women themselves. Women have a stickling nature of carrying forward and compromising their relationship thinking that someday it will improve leading to stability in affairs. Women are referred to as the 'Fair sex' (Fletcher and Simpson pp. 72-89) and they possess real difficulty of unraveling the self from others. The cause of this material connection to life is a much disputed one. There stand numerous reasons like upbringing of children, financial security that obligates women to withstand cycles of vehemence, and in a way locate ways for expansion and settlement. Women always value intimacy as supreme and are mostly fearful of legal separation. In such cases of extreme loneliness and toxic thoughts of separation from their loved ones lead them to suffer from PTSD. In such cases, their psychological trauma is inevitable to be eliminated. Mostly, separating from such a toxic relationship doesn't anticipate a guarantee for a safe future. There is a susceptibility that fierceness can at times stretch to an extent of leaving the victim totally shattered and finding an escape from the harsh oddities by ending her life.

Women are graciously powered up with innate intimacy, and this is one angle for which they need not to struggle. Men are real chauvinist and they intentionally exhibit their power sheer dominance over women as a mere piece of commodity, their benefactor. But women since their existence on earth till their culmination of breath are duly engrossed in executing their three tiered roles of entering into a wedlock, nurturing the little munchkins and performing the monotonous household chores. Women are just labeled as 'Fair sex' and are meant to be submissive and timid at the hands of the patriarchal male dominance. Showing with disagreement has never been considered the forte of women and their reactions even in terse scenarios are not welcomed at all. Being hyper is not considered to be the cup of tea of females. A male and woman alliance is that of a puppeteer and a puppet, wherein females are meant to endure brutality of men during all times. Men should take charge of women's happiness and should make every bit possible in rendering smiling visages to women till they breath hot.

There are a few set of startling questions that always bother women like- Why do women always have to take succumb to the male dominance? Is there any need of psychological therapy for mental recovery? How can a woman deter to spousal abuse? In reference to all the these volley of questions, Dr. Disha Khanna in one of her poems 'Who is a Female?' from "And Hence the Phoenix Rose" stated the plight of a woman-
Who is a female?

A question that consistently ponders me.
Is she a mere piece of flesh and bone?
Is she a puppet to dance at the tunes of the males?
Is she the one to earn and make the family sustain?
Or is she a bundle of joy-
Born to nurture in the so called democratic world
Born merely to endeavor day and night
Born to bring smiles but not to cherish one for herself
Born to endure every pressure with open arms and smiling face
Born to take care of every parasite enjoying in the family
Born to cook delectable cuisines to satiate the hungry souls
But If she is all in one
If she is a versatile genius
If she is deft in performing multifarious roles
If she is dexterous in garbing different subject positions
If she is the heart throb among the chauvinistic male fraternity
If she is the incarnation of the Gods and Goddesses
If she is a complete whole
Then why still
A female is a non-entity
Mere piece of furniture
Decked up with a hypocrite smile
Unable to exercise her own self
Falling short in not using her hard earned resources
I implore every individual to ponder over the following feminine concerns-
When will the revolution occur in the life of a female?
Who will bring the change for a female for the better?
When will this poor soul seek dignity in a male dominated society?
When can this beautiful creation live her life the way she wants to?
F- Fortunate
E- Elegant
M- Motherly
A-Adorable
L-Lovable
E-Enigmatic
Let this impeccable beauty be blessed with bundle of Joy!
Amen!

Women possess no liberality at the hands of men. A woman is just a butterfly who is simply twittering and tossing its head within a prescribed territory and hence doesn't execute any independence. A battered woman is never considered an equal in the eyes of her spouse. In such a confided environ, they stay victimized for years and keep enduring this psychological trauma sans uttering a single saga of their painful and struggling existence. Within heart of the hearts, these battered women are desperately in hunt of freedom and in search for peaceful existence. But the very thought of financial constraint on the batterer refrains women not to take some solid step of staying alone and abandoning such an unhealthy connect. Here, the reference to Maslow's Pyramid of Hierarchy comes in frame. Till the day, an individual realizes her self-worth and put a cease in seeking validation from the society or especially the intimate one; it's indeed next to impossible that the female will ever reach to a state of self-actualization. Carrying low self-esteem is one of the emotional responses that strongly hinder a woman for taking a bold step of leaving a venomous relationship or staying like a dead zombie in such a confided existence wherein you have no right to speak or execute anything.

For one's own self-esteem, women need to take a strong initiative in declining disrespectful comments, criticism, and justifications of violence against themselves. A woman should carry a bold heart in fighting back for their endurance, safety, children, freedom, and personal dignity by keeping aside the basic needs like love, family, and economic security. We exist in a hypocrite fickle minded so called civilized society that always judge a woman for an incompetent in making her marriage successful; for enduring an abusive liaison; and many more. A woman in any circumstance is damned if she does and damned if she doesn't.

During the BWS, there is a gradual testimony of booming of pressure due to the hostile conduct on the part of the batterer rising to torturous acts of abuse in the form of corporal punishment. Despite the on-going tense

relationship, still the batterer keeps his dissatisfaction within himself. The woman, on the other is very delicate and is keen to carry forward her sickening relationship with the batterer. She does certain gestures and love full acts thinking she might please him by paying special heed to her partner's mood swings. Though the batterer extends kindness and promises in return for a better and long lasting connect sans any mental and physical torture. This tends the woman to confide in her partner, lending her a ray of hope. But the victimized has the tendency of resorting back to the previous bouts of sufferings at the end of the abuser resulting to an inner conflict in the woman. She dwindles in difficult waters between the cost of enduring and the benefits of leaving. While surviving in a battered relationship, women acquire the power either to subdue their resentment or hunt for different ways of expression leading to severe PTSD symptoms. Finally, when the battered woman finds that staying in a toxic relationship greatly overshadows the benefits, that the woman transforms her passive acceptance into optimistic gestures.

The victim should act as an ever ready power puffed being with her stuff pertaining to the basic needs always packed for an easy escape. An emergency bag encapsulating important personal papers, money, prescription and medications should be handy so as to escape any further rebuttal at the hands of the batterer. Some helping professionals should extend some compassion for the victimized women in order to render a societal transformation towards abolishing this social stigma.

Even after going through Tamas' *LAL*, one should make an effort to look for measures that can assist in resolving disturbing marital discord. It is the prime responsibility of both the partners to maintain high integrity in their relationship by being completely supportive, else even the most adoring associations unsurprisingly takes a back seat and fail after some point of time. Love is that ushering force that even melts mountains, so in couple goals, it is just love that can resolve many related concerns. One should strive to look for measures that can be of assistance in resolving violent and disturbing marital relationships. An error at the end of one another is anticipated; provided you don't take that mistake as a lifelong angle of complains and rebuttals. One should treat their spouse's mistakes, as you would want them to treat your mistakes. Complete shoulder to shoulder participation and unscrupulous support at the end of the partner is expected both in times of gleeful and tormenting phase. Cultivating the 'attitude of gratitude' (Pleck 99) and extending gratitude not only in terms of has diction, but also in gestures simply strengthened the deep rooted connect. With the incorporation of these life skills into our daily life cycle will assist in constructing a healthy and gratifying bond that will be exemplary in front of many. Women throughout their life work industriously in the execution of myriad subject roles, yet they earn disrespect at the hands of chauvinistic male driven society. Men should rather pay homage to the sincere deeds executed at the end of women and value every gesture of theirs.

Men should be a little generous in comprehending the kind of endless work pressure at the end of women. Being a woman and executing all the chores sans any frown is not an easy task. Life of a woman is not a bed of roses, yet she has to execute all her responsibilities by carrying a smiling visage. Across the globe, it is believed that the emphasis in matrimony is to remain confided in the wedlock till the grave. On similar grounds, the same level of expectations is demanded from the spouse despite any specific gender roles. One's another dignity should be the defining goals of a happy go lucky relationship. Rather men should acknowledge and bless their better halves with complete adoration, unwavering honour and indefatigably render them with the basic amenities in a mutual existence. Henceforth at both the ends, no leverage should be given to trivial matters and exaggeration of any type to the core should be totally avoided. Strict measures should be taken to eliminate violence from the life of couples, and deep rooted bond should be established over the passage of years. Each partner should be cognizant about his/ her roles and responsibilities. Battered women's centres provide support groups and individual counseling, job training, special programs for children, total assistance in dealing with social services and legal matters, referrals for treatment for drug and alcohol abuse. Such administrative agencies and women social activist protect assistance to the women in society, and save them from such unbearable situation.

After quitting her twelve years long marriage, Sophie Tamas visited the local women's shelter to seek advice if she had been maltreated. In Sophie's world, the academic lectures, the therapy sessions, the childrearing, the dealings with an ex-spouse, the house reconstruction as she hunts for answers in the literature and universally in the lives of other women. Her enchanting tale establishes chorus of voices, leaving the participants express the affectionate, pining, agony, optimism, and thwarting of their involvements after departing from an unmannerly and dilapidated relationship. The text culminates with astute and startling recommendations for reframing "recovery". An earlier version of this manuscript was short-listed for the AERA Arts-Based Dissertation Award and grabbed the 2011 Outstanding Dissertation Award from the International Institute for Qualitative Methodology sponsored by the International Institute for Qualitative Methodology, University of Alberta.

This research ordeal typically showcases a spirited, postmodern exploration of the retrieval paradigm and its inadequacies as exclusively stated in Sophie Tamas' *Life After Death: The Remains of Spousal Abuse*. A battered woman will automatically resort to PTSD despite the tutelage rendered to her from various 'recovery agencies' but once the call has been taken at her to fight back then, she can persistently contest to make over the loss incurred and make sincere die hard endeavours to recuperate from the battered women syndrome, and finally go through the blossoming of adoration and kindheartedness as well stated in this research.

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