



SHELTER IN JOJO MOYES'S *SHELTERING RAIN* 2002

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Abstract

Everyone is bothered by the restrictions or laws dictated to him by others, but sensitive people cannot endure these burdens. They flee to find shelters that enable them to live freely and protect them from the stress of life. People differ in sheltering themselves. Some use reading to travel spiritually across the words to unknown world, or isolate themselves in a place where no people. Others escape far away from their environment to a new land that differs in its traditions and people and concerns with their ambitions and hopes. The most sensitive people are women. Woman tends to be respected, loved and cared of. She likes to live freely and cannot bloom under a heavy stress. Woman somehow feels that

society is unfair and cruel with her. Therefore, she tries to break its rules and create her own principles under varies shelters. This study intends to find out the meaning of shelter in Jojo Moyes's *Sheltering Rain* 2002 and what type of shelter each of the main three characters search.

Keywords: *Shelter, Fleeing, Relationships, Love, Family*

* Introduction

Shelter means finding a place to hide yourself from danger, attack or natural disasters. It is something that protects you from fearful things (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus, 2020, para.1) Shelter comes from "Old English *scylldruma*, from *scield* "shield". In Middle English, it is *sheltron*,

sheldtrume "roof or wall formed by locked *shields*" (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2020, p.1). There are two types of shelters: physical and psychological. A physical shelter: shed, house, tent etc. is "something beneath, behind, or within which a person, animal, or thing is protected from storms, missiles, adverse conditions, etc.; refuge" (Collins, W. sons & co. ltd, 2020, p.1). Psychological shelter is a space in which a person is taken out of the world he\she lives in for moments. It brings people to a state of "meditative calm" to make them feel that they are a completely different person from what they were before. A space that makes them discover who they are, where they are and what they really want. Social stress often causes this isolation from others as a kind of escape (Collier, G. 2014, p.1)

*** Author's Biography**

Pauline Sara Jo Moyes is the real name of the English journalist and romance novelist Jojo Moyes, who was born in London in 1969. Moyes began her career as a journalist at many newspapers. She had worked at Independent for ten years. Through her work, she stepped towards fiction and wrote three drafts. Unfortunately, none of them had an opportunity to be published (Wikipedia, 2020, pp. 1-2).

"She has been a full-time novelist since 2002, when her" forth novel *Sheltering Rain* was successfully published. From that time, she devoted herself entirely to writing and she continued to work for the Daily Telegraph (BookBrowse LLC, 2019, p.1). Later on, she could publish all her previous books at many publishing houses such as Penguins House and New York Times, which classified them as the best sales books. In 2013, American screenwriters and producers quoted a film from her novel *Me Before You* 2012. This encourages her to be a screenplay writer in 2016. Moreover, the Romantic Novelist Association awarded her twice the "Romantic Novel of the year award." Most of her works have been translated into many languages and acted as screen movies. In her writing Moyes is influenced" by many feminist authors such as Kate Atkinson (1951-....), Barbara Kingsolver (1955-....), Lisa Jewell (1968-....) and Jane Austen (1775 –1817) (Wikipedia, 2020, ps. 1-2). Her famous books are *Sheltering Rain* 2002, *Foreign Fruit* 2003, *The Peacock Emporium* 2004, *The Ship of Brides* 2005, *Silver Bay* 2007, *Night Music* 2008, *The Horse Dancer* 2009, *The Last Letter from Your Lover* 2010, *Me Before You* 2012, *The Girl You Left Behind* 2012, *Honeymoon in Paris* 2013, *One Plus One* 2014, *Paris for*

One 2016 and *Sill Me* 2018 (Web Biography Promoting Female Writers, 1969, p.2).

*** Shelter in Jojo Moyes's *Sheltering Rain***

Moyes enhances her novel *Sheltering Rain* from her grandmother's memories (Moyes, J. 2002, p.1). It narrates the life of three women who represent three-generation grandmother, mother and daughter. Each one has her own attitudes and thoughts. The transitions from daughter to mother and from mother to grandmother as if history repeats itself. Joy is a naive girl is always criticized and controlled by her mother. She falls in love with an Irish officer who meets her at a party and becomes the love of her life. She believes that true love cannot be spoiled or faded away. Joy intends to be a good wife and a successful mother, keening to care of her two children, Christopher and Katherine. A big gap grows between her and her daughter (Kate) when she parts her from her childhood friend the Chinese boy. Kate has misconceptions that her mother has racial fanaticism. At the age of 18, Kate becomes pregnant and flees from the Irish house to London, leaving all her dreams and memories escaping from family rules, which are imposed by her parents. In London, Kate lives many unsuccessful

affairs with several men obeying her desire to be loved and lives as she wants. As a daughter and a mother, her daughter Sabine dreams in a real family and hates Kate's relationships. Criticizing her mother in everything, Sabine pushes her mother to send her as sixteen-year-old girl, to her grandparents in Ireland. Separating from her friends, putting her under a pressure of arrogance grandparents, whom she does not know before. Ireland ends everything by gathering the three women again making each woman discovers herself and knows what she really wants (Ibid).

Each of the three main characters are in a journey to find shelter from the rain of life. They move from place to another in order to get relief. At the beginning of the novel, Moyes mentions that life is full of clouds. As if, she prepares her characters to find their own shelters: "*It was a day portentous of rain, not divine appointment. The skies over Hong Kong harbor had been humid and iron gray*" (Ibid, pp.). The three main characters intend to escape to be free. "*They feel restricted by some kind of force and having a desire to remove this restriction from themselves emotionally*" (Desire to Escape, 2015, pp.). Each of them tries to escape from their reality and suppression. The main

character Joy believes that true love is her shelter to change her life. Joy feels as outsider. “*A person who is not involved with a particular group of people or organization or what who does not live in a particular place*” (Cambridge University, n. d. p 1). Although she is a naive girl from a conservative family, she feels different. Joy has sense of not belonging to the world in which she lives in. She is very shy and wishes to be like her friend Stella in many situations. She has lacking social skills for talking:-

Joy had grown progressively more withdrawn as the evening had drawn on, lacking the social skills for talking about nothing that these events seemed to require. Joy was apparently good only at losing people, not captivating them (Moyes, J. 2002, pp.).

When a person meets someone special from his/her point of view and corresponds with his\her beliefs and experiences. He/ She will be attracted mentally and physically. Biologically speaking, his / her body takes control and promotes what his/her mind already knows that this person makes him/her feel fascinated (Cambridge University Press, 2020, pp.). This happens to Joy when she goes riding with Edward. She sees herself in him: “well, that’s me, too. That’s me. It’s

like listening to my own thoughts. So, I can’t. I can’t let you leave (Moyes, J. 2002, and pp.).” According to her, that true love cannot be vanished. She insists on her thoughts and accepts to be with Edward to prove her ideas about marriage and love:-

She was almost smiling, a patronizing smile, the kind of smile that said, oh, young people—they might think they’re in love, but let’s see what happens six months down the line. Alice wanted to be proven right, Joy realized, feeling cold. She wanted the affirmation that true love didn’t exist, that everyone ended up in marriages as miserable as her own. Well, if they thought this was going to put her off, they were wrong. (pp.)

Edward is her shelter in which all her dreams will be fulfilled. In his eyes, she can predict her future clearly:-

In his eyes she saw other lands, green fields and hunting dogs, eccentric villagers, and a world devoid of cocktail parties. In his voice, she heard a speech free from artifice, and cleverness, continents away from the mannered, moneyed language of the Hong Kong expat. In his broad, freckled hands, she saw horses and kindnesses and something else that made her stomach constrict with longing

Nevertheless, “how can a person know that true love will last forever?” Lovers do not expect that even true love will comprise only of positive feelings. Many studies state that people share a common image of what it means to be loved. The main characteristics of knowing the love of someone include support without charge, being with you in difficult circumstances, telling you that he/she loves you, forgiving you when you sin, and feeling privacy and appreciation with him/her. On the contrary, people agree that we do not feel love toward someone trying to take over and control us (Mercury, 2015, pp.). Currently, there is no such thing as true love. Everything that is presently available is a conditional love due to a certain reason or for a special interest to satisfy the greed and need of a certain person masked by love (Batcho, K. I. 2015, pp.). Joy discovers her husband’s betrayal with their Chinese servant. He apologizes to her that he was drunk and out of control, but she is only the one he loves so much. In spite of his disloyalty, that destroys the portrait of true love in her mind, she continues in supporting her husband in everything. She decides to keep this love pure even from her side:

Edward had risen from the table then, and walked round to her chair. There,

he kneeled, and pressed his face into her hand, lifting it from her lap. “I thought—I thought you were going to leave,” he said, his voice suddenly breaking. Joy said nothing, her jaw trembling slightly as she kept her face fixed toward the window. She could feel his hot tears on her skin. “Oh, God, Joy. I love you so much. I’m so, so sorry. I just got so terribly lonely.

I—” Joy’s head snapped back around. She pulled her hand away from him. “I don’t want to talk about it,” she said. “Ever” (Moyes, J. 2002, p.349).

The parental imposition on the child generates a big dilemma continues to adulthood and has a great effect at adolescence. Preventing the child from doing his favorites such as choosing friends, clothes, toys etc. without justification, destroys the child’s personality. A child’s misunderstanding of adult’s behavior may cause many psychological nodes that may lead to the idea of running away from the house and parental control (Quora, 2019, pp.). Many studies show that childhood problems encourage many teenagers to flee at age 16-18 from home to search their independence and live the way they want (LCSW, M. A. 2019. PP.). This is what happens between Joy as a mother and Kate as a daughter. As a daughter of respectable family, Joy tries to

impose her traditions on her daughter. She inhibits Kate from mixing with children of other classes. For example, she prevents her from playing with the Chinese boy without any reason; moreover, Joy dismissed that boy from their house. Kate hates this behavior, which made her lose the only friend she has:

“There was a pool at the back of the apartments where we lived. In Hong Kong. And when none of the other families were around, he and I used to play water dragons in there. Or ride my red bicycle around the edge. We fell in a couple of times, if I remember. My amah was furious.” She laughed. “She had a hell of a job drying off anything in the wet season, so having one’s best shoes in the swimming pool was really a no-no.”

“How old are you there?”

Kate frowned. “I think we moved to the swimming pool place when I was about four, so . . . probably about five? Or six?”

“What happened to him?”

Kate’s expression changed. She looked suddenly less animated.

“Well, I sort of had to stop playing with him.”

“Why?”

Kate paused. “It’s just the way things were then. Your—your granny had very firm ideas about what was proper.

And apparently playing with Tung-Li wasn’t proper. Not for a girl like me.” (Moyes, J. 2002, P.293)

Gradually she grows up with misconception rebellious spirit leads her to break all the rules of her family by meeting Thom secretary in the summerhouse. When she gets pregnant from a lustful man, she flees to London at the age of 18 to get her independence. London is her shelter to do whatever she wants. Her false ideas about love destroy her life. She becomes a woman who falls in love with a series of men but at the end, she isolates herself. Her independence does not make her happy. She is wandering from relationship to relationship, without having an ability to stay with anyone. She loses even her only daughter by dismissing her to rural Ireland. Sabine hates her mother's betraying Geoff, whom Sabine considers her father. He appears in her life since childhood. He cares a lot about her and prepares food because her mother cannot master it. Sabine feels so sorry about him. She disgusts her mother’s selfishness by leaving Geoff for a man such Justin:

She didn’t let either of them know how hard she had cried. Geoff had been irritating, and a bit earnest, and she had never let him think he was a dad of sorts. But he had been kind,

and he had cooked, and kept Mum sane, and he had been around since she was a kid. Longer than any of the others, in fact. Besides, the thought of Mum and Justin Stewartson doing it made her want to vomit (pp.).

Although parents are the source of the greatest love for children. This love may hurt the children due to the great care for their future. The sons understand that the parents' love is accompanied by hopes and expectations consistent with the parents' desires for their future. Parental fear drives behavior that children do not understand and may lead to a gap between them (Lingua press Intermediate English, n. d. pp. 1-2). Kate's sending her daughter to her Grandparent's house without disclosing the real reason behind this, makes Sabine believe that her mother does not love her and is trying to get rid of her:

She wanted to tell her that she was sending her to Ireland to protect her, to save her from witnessing the kind of bitter scenes that she and Geoff had barely been suppressing as they ended their six-year relationship; and she wanted to tell her that even though she and her own mother no longer had any kind of relationship, Kate unselfishly wanted her to feel like she had some kind of grandmother,

someone other than just her (Moyes, J. 2002, pp.).

Grandparents' love is a little simpler, as it contains a little restraint and little freedom. Here the close relationship between the grandparents and their grandchildren grows up. Grandparents often feel anxious about grandchildren therefore they spend more time with them trying to pass some of their skills to grandchildren, especially when the grandparents are old or sick. They attempt to connect grandchildren with the past, which helps them feel a sense of family membership, and they realize how these traditions are a greater part of an individual's life. Passing these traditions across generations is not without benefits, and some deserve to be preserved. It is not wrong to merge new traditions with the past (Liveaboutdotcom, n. d. pp.).

Grandparents should also tell stories about their own lives. Whether they are informative, humorous or tragic, such stories can make grandparents more real to storytelling is just one way that grandparents can share and preserve their family history (pp.-9).

The presence of heritage and these traditions entices the grandchildren and reduces the risk of loneliness (pp.). Although Sabine

initially suffers from loneliness and tries to escape to her mother's house in London, over time, she likes her new community in which she feels that she belongs to a family and she is part of it. As a grandmother, Joy gradually succeeds in teaching Sabine everything relates to their rural life, such as horse-riding, hunting, and home traditions. Therefore, Sabine has many things to do instead of sitting alone. She is able to have relationships with her neighbors. Her relation with her grandfather becomes so strong. She is spending her time next to his bed and reading to him for a long time. She has an ability knowing what he wants through his eyes. Her granny gives her a time to talk about her memories with granddad and their old photos. The house of the grandparents becomes the shelter she is looking for:

who seemed to be permanently closeted with either one of her grandparents, reading to her grandfather, riding her horse, or bombarding her grandmother with questions about life "in the olden days"(Moyes, J. 2002, p.236)?

The author designs the summerhouse in Ireland as psychological and physical shelter (therapy) for the three main characters. When one of them passes a crisis, feels sad and in trouble, she escapes to the

summerhouse. Each one goes there running from rain or psychological problem, remembering what happens before, checking her faults, and finding solution. She walks out with relief and new decision for future: "*They walked out of the summerhouse together like wary travelers venturing out after a great storm*" (P. 301).

* **Conclusion**

The author starts her narration with clouds and ends it with rain, and between them, the characters are in the process of searching a shelter. Although each character's goals and inclinations are different, the solution is at a certain point. All the problems that the three women suffer from are ended under the umbrella of the family in Ireland. Joy lives with her true love and keeps this love forever even after his death: "*Joy paused. "Of course, I'll miss him. But we had some lovely times, your grandfather and I. And I'll have those forever"*" (P.376). Kate is able to understand her mother's behavior in removing the Chinese boy:-

"You've got it wrong."

"How? How have I got it bloody wrong? I was six years old!"

"I've told you, it's just not how it was."

"So, you tell me!"

“All right! All right. I’ll tell you.” Joy took a deep breath. Closed her eyes. “The reason I couldn’t let you play with Tung-Li . . .”

She paused, took another breath. Outside the door, one of the dogs scratched and whined to be let in. “The reason I couldn’t let you play with Tung-Li is because . . . I couldn’t bear it. Because it was too hard.” She opened her eyes, and looked straight at Kate. They were glistening, bright with tears. “Because he was your brother” (P.329).

In addition, she returns to find love with her old teenage friend Thom, with whom she will bring her daughter back to live as a family that she has always dreamt of.

Sabine fulfils her dream in having a real lovable family mother, father (Tom), grandparents and friendly neighbors and lovers:-

And that left only Thom, Kate, Sabine, and Joy, a tall, stern figure in a black suit that appeared to have last seen good use in the late 1950s, standing quietly beside the grave, not even looking up as the vicar disappeared into the church (p.375).

Consequently, Rural Ireland is the physical shelter of the three characters. It is the place, where love blooms between Joy and Eduard, Kate

finds her true love Thom, and Sabine meets her grandparents. The family is their psychological shelter. When the three women understand its meaning, the confusion among them disappears. They realize that happiness is to share tearful and joyful moments with the people who really love you. The family represents the umbrella under which Joy, Kate and Sabine will live together. It will protect them from the rain of life and this is exactly what Moyes wants to tell her readers as the researcher concludes.

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