

## **EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA IN GAYLE FORMAN'S IF I STAY**

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### **Abstract**

Gayle Forman is an American writer, began her career as writing for magazine. She is excellent in young adult literature and all her works are about young adults and social concern. She likes to travel, So she travelled with her husband to many countries. From the experience and information she wrote many work. Many people motivated her to write novels and magazines. Psychoanalysis is a theory of the world which casts a skeptical eye on the stories that have preceded it and itself is a form of therapy which aims to cure mental disorders by investigating the interaction of conscious and unconscious elements in the mind. *If I Stay* is all about the life of Mia a 17 year old girl. She struggles with life and death after a horrible automobile accident that kills her parents and younger brother, and leaves her as the only survivor in this world. After the accident she went to coma stage. Adam is her boyfriend, because of the love that he shows she finally become conscious. Gayle Forman's *If I Stay* is a young adult fiction which presents the consequences of both emotional and the psychological trauma. The characters, such as Mia, Adam and her relatives experience psychological trauma. They are psychologically affected by the loss, separation of family, and also aching for love. This paper presentation is an attempt to study the emotional and psychological traumatic effects faced by the characters in *If I Stay*.

**Keyword :** *Psychoanalysis, conscious, unconscious, trauma*

### **INTRODUCTION**

American literature is the literature written or produce in the area of the United States and its preceding colonies, American Indians lived across a vast stretch of land. There was a time when American Indians had never seen a European. But in 1620, all that changed. Colonists from Europe came to America and the country went through extreme changes. Many chose to express themselves with writing, this was the beginning of American literature.

Trauma is explained by the American Psychological Association (APA) as the emotional feeling that someone has to an utmost negative event. Trauma can be caused by an overcome of negative event that remains a permanent effect of the victim's mental and emotional stability. Young children are particularly harmed by trauma and they should be psychologically inquired after a traumatic event has existed to make safe their emotions healthy. The symbol of traumatic victim is anxiety. Anxiety due to trauma can appear in problems such as nightmare, easily annoyed, lack of concentration and irritability.

Gayle Forman's *If I Stay* is a young adult fiction which presents the consequences of both emotional and the psychological trauma. The characters, such as Mia, Adam and her relatives experience psychological trauma. They are psychologically affected by the loss, separation of family, and also aching for love.

This paper presentation is an attempt to study the emotional and psychological traumatic effects faced by the characters in *If I Stay*, and how they are able to overcome those traumatic experiences with various therapeutic methods.

Forman is a young adult fiction writer, most of her novel talks about young people's life and their mindset. The title of this novel *If I Stay* shows the entire story. Mia is a young girl she is protagonist person in this novel. Her mind is full of confusion between life and death. Being in coma Mia faced lot of difficulties in her mind, she was affected psychologically and emotionally. This novel bring many psychological elements and thinking such as nightmare, alienation, annoyance, anxiety, thought and expression. Generally young people are affected by these kind of psychological problems. The novel focuses on how people are affected when something unexpected happens in their life.

This novel shows how Mia overcame all her difficult situation in her life. No one is aware of their death, it will happen all of a sudden. Loss of her family gets her into deep depression and she felt isolated in the hospital. We love few people and we are loved by many. Mia loves her family and her relatives. She has some good friends in her life. It makes her feel great when she is in depressed situation. Psychologically Mia is affected a lot when the accident happened. She think it is a kind of nightmare but then she realizes it is the reality faced by herself.

Psychologically, nightmare is one of the traumatic experiences that a child undergoes when he/she has had some bad events taken place in the past. Likewise, Mia also had a pathetic experience when she met with a deadly accident and which her parents died. On seeing her body full of blood Mia got into deep depression. Mia has a hard time accepting the reality and which led her into coma. Mia thinks it is a nightmare. She also had many unpleasant nightmares in the past. In spite of all these happenings, she has a loveable family. They used to show love and comfort, and they always motivate her to achieve her wishes. Mia wears the bracelet in her hand which was gifted by Adam.

She doesn't know what has really happened in her life. All she could realize is the last time when she saw her brother and parents in the car. The major twist in the story is when Mia goes through these nightmares, she has the memory of her love Adam in her heart.

Kim is a Jewish young girl and the daughter of Mr. Schein and also the friend of Mia. Mia and Kim are dark, quiet and studious. Both of them are called twins in school. Both have interest in the same field but slightly different from each other. Mia loves classical music and Kim loves art and photography. Kim never cries in any difficult situation but when she sees Mia at the hospital her eyes are welled up with tears. Mia watches all of them talking about her but no one is ready to talk with her. Kim never prays to God but out of her love for Mia she goes to chapel and prays for her. She has a final appeal to Mia "please don't die." People pray only in a difficult situations.

When she is in hospital all the known people pour their love on Mia. When Mia falls in love with Adam, she tries to make their relationship strong and so she introduces Adam to Kim and tries to make them good friends but Adam never gets along with Kim because Adam doesn't want to speak with anyone else except Mia. During this accident, Adam and Kim behave like good friends, hugging and comforting each other. Mia watches them and feels happy. Many time's she tried to make them good friends but she could not. But now everything happens unexpectedly.

Love is always shift to one from to another in that way Mia loves her family then her love shift to Adam. After the death of her family members she also wanted to die along with her parents but at the same time she want to live for her lover Adam. He doesn't want to lose her, so she changes her mindset and decided to live in this world. Everyone has like and dislike in their life like wise Mia also had in her life. This novel shows how people are affected because of unexpected incident which happens in their life. If any bad things happened first it is very difficult to accept the situation after that when thinking about the reality of life then they accept the situation. Mia feels alone first and decides to die but when she meets Adam and listen to his speech she changes her mind. She has the power to live in this world, love makes her life to be new and fruitful.

This novel shows conscious and unconscious mind of Mia. When that accident happen she is in unconscious level. If a person loves anyone first few day they are in unconscious level then only they came to consciousness. Most of the people are affected in the unconscious stage. In this stage people can't remember anything, they forget themselves after that all they do is in their sub conscious mind. In this novel finally love cures Mia, she has lot of affection and love for Adam, and it cures her from brain death. Trauma means psychological or emotional injury caused by deep disturbing experience. When she sees her own body full of blood she is shocked and gets in to depression which in turn leads her into coma.

## CONCLUSION

In this novel Mia's mind is full of confusion and fear. She thinks about her happy and sad moments in her past life. From her childhood she thinks she is from a different tribe in her family, because she is the only person who loves classical music. After her relationship starts with Adam she has the same feeling because Adam also loves western music and he is a very famous musician. This situation gets her into deep depression. She is afraid if the distance will separate the relationship of her with Adam. She doesn't want to lose him. She thinks Adam is like her dad because when she is in the hospital, Adam tells her that he wants to live with her. It is his only wish and he is ready to sacrifice all his wishes for her. Before that he has many wishes of his own. Mia seems important to him than his wishes and so he ready to go along with her.

The characters in *If I Stay* are affected by the devastating accident. All are very emotional, and they want Mia to live. Trauma is an unpleasant experience for Mia that causes mental and emotional problems to her. Even death visits her life and it becomes a fact of Mia's life. Her relatives are deeply affected by the accident. But they have love for her in their heart, and they don't want to lose Mia at any cost. It is then love that cures Mia and Mia comes back to her consciousness defeating all her traumatic experiences. This paper presentation is an attempt to study the emotional and psychological traumatic effects faced by the characters in *If I Stay*. Love makes her cure and helps her to overcome those traumatic experiences with various therapeutic methods.

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