

# The lake review

Literature



A Review of Manazuru Number A Review of Manazuru Manazuru is a novel reported by Kei, a middle-aged female character with a young daughter, Momo, in her teens. The woman's husband abandoned the family more than a decade ago. The mother simply could not trace the whereabouts of her man; throughout the book, Kei eventually withstands this sudden occurrence in her family. The woman and her daughter live with the latter's grandmother, in a family of three women. Kei starts a relationship with Seiji, her boss in a marriage. The relationship enables Kei to enjoy what she lost for a long period of life, a male companion: she is content of the man and their relationship. By admitting that she has " never been jealous of Seiji's wife or his children" (Kawakami, & Emmerich, 2010), Kei fails to understand the essence of family. She adds that she did not contribute to the establishment of the household into which she was brought up, and that the family she took part in building crumbled away, easily. Throughout the book, single-mother phenomenon and the infidel Seiji manifests the commonness of weak family values within the society.

#### Forgetting the painful past

Throughout her narration, Kei recounts the past, offering bits of her liaison with her husband, Rei. She recalls a few incidents, as the real lessons increasingly fade from her memory, with time. In her reminisces, Kei attempts to examine his personality, and what may have triggered the breaking up. The relationship appeared not to have matured; she was younger than him, but failed to understand and nurture her growth. By cutting the image of an individual who is more aloof than a down-to-earth partner, the literature presents Rei as a character who champions intolerance and the society's reluctance to nurture growth. This painful past,

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however, is forgotten when Kei, a victim of this repression attempts to march forward.

Kei get's rid of her estranged husband's belongings such as " diary from my bag" (Kawakami, & Emmerich, 2010), regularly, and hoping that she would eventually, erase the man from her mind completely. In light of this, the literature provides the significance of breaking away from the past.

Nevertheless, the past does not get away that easily; for instance, Kei finds herself constantly drawn to the past experiences, as if she may discover a breakthrough to the mysteries in her life, such as the abrupt desertion of Rei.

The painful past recurs in Kei, as she thinks that some unsettled past experiences haunt her. Regardless, a little effort to break away from the past, the society manages to achieve a fresh dawn. In light of this, Kei senses the presence of a woman who ultimately enables her to ventilate the dark past and contributes to the finding of solutions to unanswerable questions, especially the mysteries surrounding the disappearance of Rei.

### Conclusion

Manazuru emphasizes the need for independence in society. This is manifest in almost all the characters used by Kawakami. Kei's mother, Kei, and Momo are all independent female characters. Seiji seeks to be economically and socially independent; he runs his own business, and engages in escapades with Kei, despite his married life. Kei is a character who injects a fresh beginning in the literature, by opting to forget about Rei, though, painfully, with little assistance from the community. The first 180 pages of the book are interesting, in that Kawakami manages to present the difficult transition of letting go and taking a new life positively.

Reference

Kawakami, H. & Emmerich, M. (2010). *Manazuru*. New York: Counterpoint.