

# Close reading

Literature



Doha was crushed. He must be blaming me for avoiding this company and refusing to talk to him she thought, and that's why he's upset with me. She felt embarrassed that she had shouted at him and was dabbing at her tears with a handkerchief when she heard a voice close besides her saying: How cruel you were, cousin! Always ignoring me! (Wu Jianren, *Sea of Regret*, 144).

This passage is in relevance with the dream of Dihua about finding her lover and fiancé Bohe. This passage reflects how much she loves Bohe and longs for him. In the story, both these lovers are separated who were engaged previously. They were separated due to boxer uprising right before their marriage. Here we can see that Dihua a Confucian lady stuck between an ailing mother and opium addicted fiancé finds it difficult to overcome the separation from her love life. Even though Dihua is besides her mother, her concentration is on her wandering fiancé Bohe. She was worried about his safety and health. Here we can see the mind of women, especially a lady who has grown up in Asian culture. Her bond to the man is strong and despite the entire obstacle she thinks for his wellbeing. In this passage we can see many elements like love, passion, sacrifice, agony and sorrow. A feeling of a woman and the problems she faced in a Chinese society in early times can be seen in this passage. We can see many facts in this passage like social changes, conflicts, love, attachment and gender and class tension. The women in the passage are a symbol of love, trust, commitment and loyalty. She can be seen as an ideal woman who cares for her future husband and devoted to him.

From this passage we can see that separation from Bohe is agonizing Dihua. She is getting a feeling that she has been neglecting Bohe. Her intuition is

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telling her that Bohe is angry with her for some reason. We can see that the woman is under social pressure and is torn between love and life. We can understand the helplessness of women in general and the trust and devotion a woman kept in olden times. She is repressing her emotional and physical responses and is falling into delusion. However, her character also shows cases resilience as she is able to keep her love alive. We can understand that Dihua is more loyal to Bohe as she after all difficulties keeps her love and passion intact.

Even after Bohe neglects her she is thinking of herself as guilty. So we can find the innocence and purity of her character. Her values is reflection of the integrity and value of Chinese women. The Confucian inspired ideologies are reflected in the passage. Here the passage denotes that Bohe as changed with time but Dihua remain the same old girl who loved Bohe since childhood. Here Dihua is an example of correct moral behavior. She maintains her ethics and morality despite all the chaos and social disorder. After all the troubles she endures and still loves Bohe and nothing affected her love for him. The author through the passage that Dihau is engaged to an inadequate partner.

The passage show that Dihua is in distress but still she thinks for the well being of her fiancé. We can also see the gender stratification in Chinese society where women were entrapped inside home and men explored the outside world like Bohe. The women have been loyal and still care for their partner even before marriage. She adheres to the standards of a perfect woman who has love, compassion and devotion to her man. She strives towards piety, self – sacrifice and self – practice. Her chastity is an ideal characteristic which every woman should strive to achieve. She has been

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thinking of her fiancé even in sleep that she has dreams of him coming to see her.

But we can also see here that Dihua is incapable to adapt to new situations in life. When she found that Bohe has been avoiding her she continues to long for him and waste her time and life. We can see that Dihua as a misconception that Bohe is angry with her for not giving him company. She is unaware of the fact that he has been a cheater and has changed due to his change of social status. She thinks because she ignored Bohe that he is unhappy with her but the thing is that he no longer loved her as much she loved him. His ways have changed and his preference, needs and desires have changed. We can understand from passage that women in older times were lot aloof from the realities of the world and sometimes remained in an illusion of a perfect lover, fiancé or husband.