

When Nelson Mandela was finally released from his unjust imprisonment, later becoming the first black president of South Africa, many anticipated that an impending blood bath was to happen—but it didn't—because Mandela pointed out to his citizens that the white Afrikaners, like the black victims of apartheid, were also victims. Victims of being born, raised, and brainwashed into embracing racism, bigotry, & segregation.

As William Styron pointed out, “life is [indeed] a search for justice.” In Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* it's obvious that women's search for equity in this world is far from over. Yet, if one looks closely, it's evident that men like Rasheed are also casualties of injustice, programmed from the outset to embrace misogyny and toxic masculinity. Though Rasheed is not conscious of his pursuit for justice, and though he fails miserably to attain it, Rasheed does receive that which is just.

But even more salient, Rasheed serves as an admonishment to the reader that when one succumbs to clinging to anger, misogyny, and a lust for power and control, justice is not only denied for those that surround them, but they are also destined for destruction.

Though we know very little about Rasheed's past, or the injustices he may have faced, the reader can aptly assume that being born into a strictly patriarchal and theocratic society in the Middle East, he was brainwashed from the outset to practice misogyny. We see this when Rasheed forces the wedding ring on Mariam's hand—we see it in the face of Rasheed's first wife when Mariam discovers the photo—and finally we see the objectification of women and Rasheed's propensity for violence and abuse with the discovery of the gun and pornography. And of course, always omnipresent in his society and in his heart, Rasheed embraces the cruel ideologies of *Sharia Law*.

Though Rasheed is largely unaware of his destructive nature, and though he would never acquiesce to the concept that he is a victim of society's norms, Mariam is there to deliver unto him what is just. With the swinging of the shovel, Mariam not only receives recompense for all the physical abuse she has endured, she also bestows upon Rasheed a gift—an epiphany—Rasheed's face “soften[ed]” and she caught glimpses of “self-denial [and] regret.” A moment of clarity “literally knocking some understanding into his head.” Sadly, it doesn't last as his look of astonishment returns to his “spiteful sneer” and he rushes towards his impending death.

One can't help but wonder that if Rasheed wasn't born into the confines of cruel patriarchy and theocracy if things would have turned out differently for him. Nevertheless, no matter how victimized Rasheed is by the edicts of toxic masculinity, he still has a choice. He's privy to seeing other positive males like Hakim—he knows there's another way. But instead, he clings to animosity, intolerance, and domineering abuse. Again, Rasheed receives that which is justly due to him, but he unconsciously denies himself any semblance of justice by rejecting humility, reflection, and awareness, and social or physical destruction will always be the end result for those that adopt similar ideologies.

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Which formatting do you prefer? 2 big paragraphs or frequent paragraph breaks?

Did Mr. Thom...

- 1) *analyze the character's understanding of justice (aware or unaware?)***
- 2) address if the search was successful or unsuccessful or mixed?**
- 3) prove what Hoseinni is trying to say with Rasheed's search for justice—the lesson—the so what?**

What overall score would you give Mr. Thom?

0= didn't attempt

1= attempted but insufficient (F)

2= a bit more developed, but still entirely insufficient (D)

3= has some good ideas, but never really pulls it off. (D+/C-)

4= address all the prompt is asking, but too mechanical/more summary than analysis, So What is closer to a cliché'. (B)

5= Like a 4, it accomplishes everything necessary with some salient analysis but mechanics may be distracting—still this is a strong essay. (B+/A-)

6= Accomplishes everything necessary & contains insightful & original analysis, complemented with a flair for writing (collegiate diction, sentence variety, strong mechanics) (A+)

S- Summary Brief

A-Analysis

S- So What?

SAS-Y

(H)- Hook

A-Author

T- Title

D- Device (Character)

S- So What?