

The Despair of Addie LaRue

RQ : How effectively does V.E Schwab present her view of women's despair in The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue ?.

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Introduction

The book from V.E Schwab “An Invisible Life of Addie LaRue.” explains about the young girl named Addie, or “Adeline” her parents called her. This book mainly has the timeline in the 18th century, even though they changed the timeline so often. In the beginning of the book, she told the readers that Addie tried to escape from young marriage. Her dreams of being free and falling for freedom caused her to make an outrageous decision. She decided to make a deal with the devil, Lucifer. Lucifer guaranteed that she will live her dream life, being free, and not bound with any rules. Her despair of being free has shown us how terrible rules are about women in the past. Moreover, she knows that making a deal with Lucifer is not much better than committing to a young marriage. Lucifer is very anarchistic and manipulative, but Addie wants freedom so much. Until she decided to sell her soul to Lucifer as the cost of freedom that she wanted. Living across continents within centuries, for three hundred years and Addie believes that she will always learn something new in life (Schwab, 2020. P 316).

An Invisible Life of Addie LaRue is an English book that was published on 6th October 2020 by Tor Books. Written by V.E Schwab, an American author. This book has 448 pages and 108 chapters in it. This book has a woman as its main character, a French young woman who was forced to have a young marriage. The woman who fell for freedom and being a woman that remembered, this young woman named Adeline LaRue. She has the appearance of a classic French woman with seven freckles on her face like stars.

This book is beautifully written and delightful to read, mainly tells us about heartbreak and desperation. This book also told us about how women being discriminated in the past and how the stereotypes are limiting woman to work and do anything they want

Addie LaRue's Stories

Adeline LaRue, a French woman who dreamt for freedom and remembered. She is a woman who was born in 1691, Villon-Sur-Sarthe, a rural area in France.. She has a mother and a father, his father works as a carpenter. She always dreamt of traveling with his father, which shows how desperate she is for freedom. She thinks that the name of Adeline doesn't suit him, so she decided to change her nickname to Addie.

Grew up in an environment that didn't suit her at all. Following the traditional norms that a woman is supposed to get married and carry children only, it is contrasting with her dream.

The main thing that started everything is when Addie was forced to get married at a young age on July 29th 1714. She saw her childhood friend who had a young marriage, and started to lose herself. Her friend is no longer smiling and as happy as she was. Addie wanted to be a free woman, she always wanted to be a woman who can be free without all of the patriarchist stereotypes around her. Even though she needs to sacrifice her soul and be forgotten by her parents. She is a woman who is desperate and always wants to be free. She loves traveling and being free.

When she went to the river to meet the woman who she idolized so much, Estelle. An old woman who always inspires her, who always tells her story about the world and increasing her spirit to be a free woman. To tackle all of the stereotypes and finally be free. Estelle always told Addie to believe that god always loves gifts, just like the way she prays

anywhere. She has a background of a religious family. Just like when she was forced to get married in the church then she ran away and decided to make the deal with the devil ; how contrast both events.

Even after she made the deal, she still suffers from being forgotten. But, other than that, she must live with the stereotype that might kill her dreams. She got called as a girl who was inappropriate just because she hasn't got married and always travels alone everywhere. She is the woman who kept dreaming about her own world, where she can do anything. She thought that when she made the deal with Luc (The Devil), then she would be free. But on the other hand, the reality says otherwise, she is haunted by the fact that everyone who met her will forget her in a split second, this phenomenon happened as the consequences of her deal with Lucifer.

Living her life as a woman who chased for freedom, who ran from a forced marriage, who believes she must have her rights, grew up between a religious family. But, the stereotype and the traditional laws about women in the past makes her do all of this.

Patriarchy in The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue

The patriarchy, one of the important elements in the book of The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue. Patriarchy believes to be the system created by men which divides the power between men and women unequally (Facio, 2013). The system of patriarchy is also shown in the book of The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue in many parts and those parts have shown us some meaning behind them.

The darkness claimed that he'd given her freedom, but really, there is no such thing for women, not in the world where they are bound inside their clothes, and sealed inside their homes, a world where only men are given leave to roam. (Schwab, 2020 p. 197)

From the line above, there are several words that very sharp and has a deep meaning. Such as bound and sealed. There is also a sentence that states only men who are given room to roam, it explains to us that women can't roam on their own. They must know their boundaries and they must stay at home instead of roaming out there.

The young marriage also has so many factors to be declined. Women have the rights to do the similar rebellion, other people might consider it as a crazy step and outrageous. But, before they stepped on our shoes, they wouldn't understand. Young marriage isn't only affecting the bride, their physical look and the probability of them having a child at an early age. It is also affecting their mental and inner child. When they supposed to play with their friend, but they must obey all the rules and etcetera.

Young marriage is also possible to be a big damage for mental health, could be anxiety, depression and bipolar syndrome. When the bride suffers from mental health issues, their child and people around them could possibly get the impact. Naturally, teenagers have an unstable emotion, and if they get married at the age that they are not supposed to have marriage. They will have more issues with their emotions. They are forced to carry children, they are forced to obey their husband, they are forced to be fitted to the society's standard as a mom, wife, and woman. It is such a burden for them.

Latent seeing of occasions, generally happening inside homes, as well, meaningfully affects young ladies. Young ladies growing up seeing viciousness towards their mom, incorporate the torment and find it challenging to adapt to it when they wind up experiencing the same thing.

While kids might adversely affect mental results like melancholy and life fulfillment, they may likewise decrease specific ways of behaving like hitting the bottle hard (Bachmann et al. 2002). Considering that fruitfulness stays higher among wedded ladies regardless of the sensational ascent in nonmarital childbearing (Martin et al. 2010), being a parent might make sense of an adverse consequence of marriage on youthful grown-ups' psychological well-being or smother a beneficial outcome on emotional well-being. (Uecker, 2012)

This is also supported in the novel when Adeline saw her childhood bestfriend, Isabelle Therault.

Schwab states in her book on page 38 that Adeline thinks about how Issabelle, her childhood friend, has lost her smile with an analogy of aging for ten years in two. Patriarchy has so many effects on women's mental health, since we believe that women are the ones who get harassed and treated like an object. On the sentence "Where once her cheeks were red from laughter." Symbolize that Therault have lost her smile, a hyperbole word also addressed in the paragraph, "She aged ten years in two, it seems." This sentence shows that marriage is exhausting for a young woman, that is what makes Adeline afraid. Seeing her bestfriend become sorrowful and lost, she does not want to be like her.

Addie hates to be controlled by other people, especially when it is related to her dream. We can see it from her act of being resistant towards marriage. She assumed that being married to someone means that you are losing your freedom. Especially she grew up in an environment that believes "Man has control." She saw her friend losing her smiles because of a young marriage. While Addie's mother believes that marriage will help the economy of the family.

This desire for marriage stems from the fact that, though marriage is not the source of most women's economic support any more, it is still often the source of their self-worth. Bell hooks in her book *communion: the female search for love* discusses women's obsession with finding love as being_derived from being raised in a patriarchal culture. "Femaleness in patriarchal culture marks us from the very beginning as unworthy or not as worthy, and it should come as no surprise that we learn to worry most as girls, as women, about whether or not we are worthy of love." (Morrow, 2002)

A woman sitting alone in the sun is not a crime

(Schwab, The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue 2020. P 251)

The writer once again emphasizes that being single is not a crime. She even uses the vocabulary of “Crime” that shows us how cruel society was back then. Thinking that a single woman who stays single is a crime. It is like women are destined to be someone’s wife and not have any choice including being single. Society In the past always had bad stereotypes for women who were out alone in the day, such as whore, prostitute or a widow. They stamped a woman who is single as a bad thing, even though that is a normal thing. Women are supposed to be able to choose what they want.

Inequality in The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue

Inequality in this book has been stated several times by Schwab using some justification in the book. The journey of Adeline LaRue began when she ran away from a forced marriage arranged by her parents. She felt that in the traditional rules, there are so many inequalities between men and women. Even in the present now, we understand that some people think that men have more capability on doing more things than women. This issue is also stated in this line from the book of *The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue*.

Addie thinks that life will be easier if you are men.

(Schwab, The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue 2020. P 203)

Addie grows in an environment that believes men are more superior than women. Example, when she wanted to travel alone but her mother won't allow her. She also believes that "Life will be easier if you are men." This line started because Addie believes that men have restrictions too, but not as much as women.

The statement of life is easier when you are a man, also proved by the traditional law in the past. Most of our ancestors feel grateful when they have a boy as their child but feel that they get a curse when they get a girl. In the past, women were considered a burden to the family, they can't work as hard as men, they can't produce money as much as men. But the only way they can be a pride from a family is when they are married to a man. Women are believed to be destined as a wife, their jobs are only carrying children, working in the kitchen and serving their husband. Meanwhile men can do anything they desire. Being a man in the past means that you get to control everything, being a man in the past also means that you are the leader of the family when a woman only obeys your words.

Besides that, people in the past also glorified everything that men do. The little things that they have done, they always glorify them even though it's only a bare minimum. When a man comes home late, people will think that they are hard workers. But when it comes to women, they will think that she worked as a mannerless woman who is not obeying her husband. Adeline also thinks that men have more freedom than women. They always have less limitations and stigma from society. This issue has made Adeline think that life will be easier if you were a man. A man in the past identical with education, power, freedom, dominance and everyone will follow him, especially women. That is the reason that has made Adeline have thoughts about men having more freedom.

Beggars can't be choosers, and it is too dangerous to travel as a woman alone.

(Schwab, The Invisible Life of Addie La Rue 2020. P 387)

Addie always has the dream of travelling, but she can't go anywhere because she is a woman. When she travelled to Paris, instantly people would call her a whore, hoe, or anything negative. Meanwhile, when men travel alone, they will get "stamped" as independent and responsible. The term dangerous has a negative connotation as society believes that women can be treated like an object. It shows that people in the past have less respect for women and they feel that they are free to treat women the way they desire. The term "Dangerous" has stated that women in this world are not safe. They are often treated like an object and used by anyone as they desire. That is why it is considered not safe for women to travel alone.

Adeline has no job after she made the deal with Luc. She became a beggar, she begged people even though she knows that it is not a proper job. She even works as a prostitute to get her enough money. All these things she did because she wanted her freedom. Related to the previous sentence about life will be easier when you are a man, she can't get a

proper job. When men can easily find jobs because of their strength. Meanwhile, we can't judge that a woman can't be as strong as a man. Sadly, in the past, they gave unequal treatment between men and women, they had different salaries and there are some stereotypes that they believed. The inequality between man and woman in the past has triggered Addie's spirit to get her freedom in any way that possible.

The Sacrifices in The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue

As we understand that Adeline LaRue really wants freedom. In order to get the life that she has been wanting for a long time, she sacrifices everything. We can see from the way she made the deal with Lucifer; she came from a religious family, but she made the deal with the devil, very ironic. There are some consequences that she must accept after making the deal with Lucifer. Some consequences are very unbearable, but Adeline still does the deal to pay for the cost of freedom.

Three hundred years since she knelt in the woods and summoned the darkness, and lost everything but freedom (Schwab, *The Invisible Life of Addie La Rue* 2020. P 453)

This line shows that she is willing to give everything for her freedom. She must sacrifice everything. She must be living as a person who will be forgotten by everyone. She left her family. "Lost everything but freedom." This sentence hits hard since women have had very limited freedom in the past. Every limitation that society has given to women, has pushed the urge to get freedom. Adeline gives her everything to be able to live the life that she always wanted. She knelt to Lucifer in the woods. She begged him for her freedom, clearly with consequences that she will get as a human.

At the beginning of the sentence it stated that "Three hundred years." Adeline lived for three hundred years, yet she still lost everything. She lost her family, friends, and even her lover. She is always forgotten by every new person that she met in three hundred years. She had nothing. Adeline is willing to wait that long and sacrifices that much to get freedom. It has been proven that freedom for women in the past was impossible. With all the stigma, norms, and nonsense limitations for women, has made Adeline take the decision that she never wanted to take before.

Being forgotten, she thinks, is a bit going mad.

(Schwab, The Invisible Life of Addie La Rue 2020. P 121)

The line above is the consequence of her deal between herself and the darkness. Being forgotten is an extreme pain, but she is willing to feel all those things to get her freedom. These sacrifices that she made are for the life that she dreamed of. The life that she dreamed of was limited by the traditional law. She is a woman. Adeline is a woman. She meant to be married to someone, she meant to carry children. But Adeline fights harder to get what she wants. She sold her soul, even though she needs to bear all the pain and consequences, at least she gets to live the life that she wanted. She can travel, she can work, she can go anywhere she likes. Not even bound to any rule, she is free to close both of her ears and live her life as a free woman.

The line “Is a bit going mad.” on page 121 shows us the expression that being forgotten, and freedom are two things that are not relevant. The writer shows that the consequence is not as big as the thing that she gets, which is her freedom. The line also represents how Adeline feels regarding her own decision. “Mad” is a strong word, which could shows the desperation in the sentence, she referring to herself as “Mad” to get that freedom.

Conclusion

V.E Schwab represents women's despair in the past very well, she represents them through the character of Adeline LaRue. She uses strong vocabularies to show how desperate and sad women are in the history of the past. She also gave consequences to Adeline's deal, in order to show that there are so many things that women must sacrifice in order to get their freedom. Back then, women were not free to work nor going out. From this book we can understand how hard their life was, how hard they were fighting against society's rules and stereotypes about them. Society keeps giving limitations to their dreams and at the end of the day kills them.

Schwab has represented women in her book very well, she has used some strong vocabularies to be able to touch the heart of the audience.

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