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Stream of Consciousness in Monica Ali's *In the Kitchen*

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Abstract:

In this paper, I have said about the stream of consciousness technique which is fully expressed through the characters like Gabriel, Lena, Nana and his father in Monica Ali's In the Kitchen. All these characters are recollecting the multitudinous thoughts and feelings, favourable or unfavourable incidences throughout their life. Gabriel Lightfoot a forty-two year old man working as a Northern English Executive Chef in the Imperial Hotel of London, who always searches his identity crisis and sketches to begin an own restaurant in London. Lena always prostitutes with men for money. Nana his powerless grandmother, always seems to be his well wisher. Also the novel discovers the unsatisfied tummy life of cooking people in London Hotel. Though Gabriel has attraction to women, he undergoes many risks for the sake of family, mentally and physically. After understanding the value of true love, he adores to devote his life for his family. Moreover we can recognize her incomplete success, since Ali has not undertaken any diverse themes, styles, techniques and characters which are flexible only to certain situation while comparing with her previous novels.

Monica Ali's third novel *In the kitchen* is fully waves with stream of consciousness, which boats all the characters in a same technique. As we all know that stream of consciousness means recollecting the multitudinous thoughts and feelings, favourable or unfavourable incidences throughout our life. In this novel all the male characters are working in a hotel kitchen, who are always thinking about the present, past and future foodstuff arrangement which is routinely a stream of consciousness. "The writer attempts the stream of consciousness to reflect all the forces, external and internal, influencing the psychology of a character at a single moment"(web). In Monica Ali's third novel *In the Kitchen*, Gabriel Lightfoot a forty-two year old man working as a Northern English Executive Chef in the Imperial Hotel of London, who always searches his identity crisis and sketches to begin an own restaurant in London but only has a pickle touch in London. But he is a mustard character who doesn't have company to congregate his ideas. As an administrator, whenever he collects new information or idea from the meeting, he focuses to proceed for his fantasy hotel. Will Gabriel sprints a hotel in London? Till the end of the novel, this question is often remembered by his family members, his friends and himself.

"He had to open the restaurant before Dad was too ill to travel. He would check with Jenny how long that would be. Get Dad to the opening. That was something he had to do. Get the restaurant on its feet, he'd be working all hours, Charlie would understand. They'd move in together. The restaurant would be going. They'd be living together. They'd have a kid. Good, he thought, good. Go to sleep" (115).

If a man is having an aim in life, he should definitely work out to succeed. But Gabriel as a women chaser always sprints behind women enjoying life with the recipes of love and sex. Also after seeing the death of Yuri a Ukranian porter, Gabriel reroutes his mind recognizing the insecure life of immigrant in London.

"WHEN HE LOOKED BACK, HE FELT THAT THE DEATH OF THE Ukrainian was the point at which things began to fall apart. He could not say that it was the cause, could not say, even, that it was a cause, because the events which followed seemed to be both inevitable and entirely random, and although he could piece together a narrative sequence and take a kind of comfort in that, he had changed sufficiently by then to realize that it not, on the whole, to be trusted?" (9).

Through the title *In the Kitchen*, Monica Ali has stunningly elucidates the prettiness and her experiences of her own kitchen.

"The Kitchen, along with the rest of the Imperial Hotel, was a product of the Victorian age. But while the lobby and function rooms, the bedrooms and bathrooms, the stairways and corridors and vestibules had been transmuted into twenty-first-century spaces within a nineteenth-century shell, the kitchen – despite numerous refurbishments and refittings – retained its workhouse demeanour, the indelible stamp of generations of toil. It was a dog-legs attached, the first containing the vegetable prep area, the other housing the industrial-size dishwashers, one each for plates, glasses and pans" (25).

In the Kitchen is a novel which discovers the unsatisfied tummy life of cooking people. Gabriel life is preoccupied with kitchen, Chefs, culinary delights and his factual devotion for his family. There are many different characters which can be accepted or

spitted for occasion. Gabriel love for women, is like a change of climate, which constantly changes accordingly. Lena and Oona are two way survivors who acquire bad and good for their fashionable life. They prostitutes their life for money and do help for their co-workers.

Both Lena and Yuri were having illegal practices during the time of Yuri's murder. To know about the buried fact of murder, Gabriel utilizes the technique of sex to Lena, a young skinny Belarussian Agency employee of the hotel which is the scrawniest summit of her. His fake love later becomes original, and feels as though he is the only bequest human in the world at no cost. They sense their rebirth with new strength and abilities. In a while his attraction to Lena takes wings. Even though Gabriel is very close to Yuri, he doesn't encompass any infuriation while possessing his lover.

Most of the women characters are shown as a slavery of sex and a fearless woman who encourages Gabriel for his ambition and helps him to take care of his family. Next he proposes to an English girlfriend Charlie, a singer in a local nightclub, who loves him and absconds him after discovering his innovative hoodwink character, who always entangled in squalid relationship.

"Charlie and the pianist shared a small stage, elevated a six inches above the floor. The song did not suit Charlie's voice, which was too light for it, too teasing. She lowered her eyelids and pressed her lips to the microphone as though it were the object of her every desire. A bald man at a table close to the stage rose to his feet and saluted her with his tumbler. 'you like her, then, do you?'" (40).

Only in the middle of the novel, Gabriel comes to know about his dying cancer patient father, a disorder mother who jogs away with a stranger and a powerless grandmother with dementia who always seems to be his well wisher. In order to wash and bury his filthy thoughts, he ineffaceably plants a full stop to build up his trademark. Setting his family background, Gabriel begins an onion farm against law in England with his same employers and subsequently closes due to his bad health.

Though Gabriel has attraction to women, he undergoes many risks for the sake of family, mentally and physically. After understanding the value of true love, he adores to devote his life for his family. Even in his busy circumstances, he arranges Jenny or Lena to take care of his father and grandmother.

"Nana swallowed her biscuit and dabbed her eye with a piece of kitchen roll. 'Cradle to grave, me and Gladys. There's not many friends as can say that. Come over closer, Gabriel, my eyes are not what they were. Gone and life me, she has. Mind you, I'll not be long behind'. Gabe patted Nana's hand. Ted rolled his eyes and said, 'Have another biscuit. Go on' Gabriel handed her the biscuit tin" (207).

At last he develops his family background, realises his squander of untainted life for drugs and alcohol and blocks his immoral attention for women.

In *In the Kitchen* Monica Ali has given much magnitude for the kitchen in which she has articulated like chalk and cheese clashes of cultures and the temporary contract of the workers.

"The restaurant was almost full. Gabriel paused at the edge of the dining room. To his side was the entrance to the cloakroom and the lectern where Gleeson or his head waiter greeted guests. Behind him the bar ran like a throat towards the belly of the hotel, the tables fanned out ahead. The diners leaned over their candlelit carousels, and the wine and the waiters flowed. The space was intimate and convivial, offering up both the illusions at once" (89).

In between the novel, Monica Ali has winded up the story by initiating many new dissipate characters who are not covet to the story. This signifies that Monica Ali has concedes her personal practices through these characters which could be her memorizing occurrences.

Several characters are recollecting the same stories which divert our mind to lethargic. Also there is no continuation in the story telling. It is jumbled with desecrate characters. If we take Gabriel character, the first half is fully about his hotel life, the second half is fully about his love and caring for his family. The writer should have brought alteration in the progress of his life. Moreover it would be better if she had concentrated little bit for the minor characters though out the novel.

Also in this novel, Monica Ali has said about her personal experiences related to identity crisis and self esteem which she undergoes in multi-national countries. Most of the characters like Mr. Maddox, Charlie, Lena, Jenny and his father have occupied a vital role, when compared to the characters like Oona, Benny, Nicole, Yuri, and Gleeson. Especially the female characters are gratis and no connection with their family life. On contrary to this, all the male characters are connected to culinary life. If an Indian reader reads the first part of the novel which is fully blended with male working in kitchen, they would have automatically expects much from women characters, concerning and uplifting their family members. But it is absolutely varies in this novel. Also the presentation of the styles, techniques, metaphors and similies are similar to her first novel *Brick Lane*.

"The sitting room had new oak floorboards and recessed lighting. The estate agent who showed him round described it as being 'part-furnished' but it was furnished enough for Gabe and he rented it on the spot. There was a long, low sofa, ultra-modern and ultra-comfortable, upholstered in green with matching scatter cushions that were precisely as hard as they looked. The coffee table was an oversized sugar cube" (45).

Thus the characters of Monica Ali's *In the Kitchen* are fully bound with stream of consciousness technique through which the story fails to bridge the characters in reflow. Moreover we can recognize her incomplete success, since Ali has not undertaken any diverse themes, styles, techniques and characters which are flexible only to certain situation while comparing with her previous novels.

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