



# Honour in the Shadows

Gender, Superstition, and Social Control

-Eva Chacko(X-K)



We regard the Moon as one of the most beautiful creations. The way its light illuminates the silhouette of the night; without it, we would all be blind soldiers walking into a lost war. But somehow, we forget to ascribe where the true glory and honour lie behind its divulging beauty: the Sun. The moon acquires all its light from the hidden gem we call the sun. This is how a typical ménage used to work and in some cases, still does. Why is it that a house's honour and purity are linked only to the actions of a woman? Why is it that, even after receiving no recognition, women are still expected to act in a 'respectful manner'? Why is it that honour seems to be at the fingertips of a man, while for a woman it is like approaching a blind eclipse?

These are the questions that tormented the minds of those poor, overlooked, and amazing women who were always treated as inanimate objects, laughed at endlessly by all those bigots in their mirth. There are endless examples showing the brutality that a woman must face if she breaks any particular 'societal norm'. All the glory, honour, and reverence that this institutional patriarchy boasts about is merely a seemingly beautiful translucent veil over an opulence of rotting lies. The truth is blindingly visible, but only for those who dare to open their minds, bringing to light this world filled with deception and lies.

*"A widow brings misfortune, especially at weddings or sacred rituals". "A woman gets raped because of the clothes she wears". "A menstruating woman is 'unclean' and brings bad luck".* The visceral system of male superiority is the reason behind the making of these stabbing words we call superstitions. This leads to women isolating themselves, feeling ashamed of a natural process, and growing up in extreme insecurity. Although these ideals and the mentality of humanity have largely improved, the heartbreaking reality remains that women still experience this treatment in various corners of the world.



Let's take an example: Sati. The historical practice of self-immolation of the widowed on the pyre of her husband. But why? Is it because of her fervent devotion and love towards her husband? Or is it because the male-chauvinist social order dictates so, and non-abidance to it would turn the society against her? This is a tragic example of how tradition remains wrapped in the chains of misogynistic ideologies.





*“All women become like their mothers. That is their tragedy. No man does, and that is his”*

This wonderful quote by Oscar Wilde perfectly reflects the so-called ‘societal norms’ that mothers and daughters are forced to abide by. Daughters watch their mothers constantly breaking apart but still wearing a smile on their faces, leading them to believe that this is ‘normal’. This is why it is crucial to break this toxic cycle and escape the generational conflicts faced by women.

Sexist traditional customs have destroyed the lives of countless women over the centuries and in some desperate cases, many still do. There can be no compensation for the hardships and afflictions that women have gone through. Every single day, they faced an army of daggers to their chests, yet they still managed to rise limping, but alive. Society sees the men on thrones, but the women are the ones wearing the crowns.



The Moon may shine with its borrowed light, but the Sun will always gleam with its own fire, burning the way with the power of truth as its sword. Let the world open its eyes to the resilience of these amazing women whose strength has been carved into their bones.

