



EXISTENTIAL FAILING IN DANIYAL MUEENUDDIN'S SHORT STORY "SALEEMA"

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Abstract

Daniyal Mueenuddin's short story, "Saleema" is a miserable protagonist's journey invoking the difficulties and complexities of existential struggles predominantly due to lack of meaning, apprehension between freedom and responsibility, isolation, the quest for authentic relationships, and the influencing social and economic factors. Grounding the core argument on theoretical underpinnings of existentialism as contended by Sartre and Frankl, the paper explores the murky layers of human existence, focusing on the story's protagonist's struggle in search for meaning and purpose of life. Navigating the thematic notions of despair and obscurity of communal expectations, the study underscores the protagonist's suppressed personal aspirations and her desires and societal constraints symbolizes deeper meaning of the existential void. The paper illuminates the nuanced portrayal of existential failing/failure, foregrounding the impacts of peripheral factors in individual's existential experiences which include cultural and communal forces on individual identity. The study also explores Saleema's internal conflicts, the choices she makes, and the consequences of those choices within the context of her cultural milieu.

Key Words: Existentialism, existential failing/failure, human quest, *Saleema*, and *In Other Rooms and Other Wonder*

Introduction

Literature reflects individual and collective psychological, cultural, social, political, and historical realities of life, navigating the complex nuances of existence, meaning and purpose of life. Daniyal Mueenuddin through his engaging fictional prism highlights the experienced veracity and reality concerning the struggle searching for meaning in life. In his *In Other Rooms and Other Wonder* (2009), Daniyal Mueenuddin dives into the obscure drapes of rural Pakistan in his fiction. His short story, "Saleema" offers a heartbreaking discovery of existential themes, concerning societal expectations and personal yearnings, aiming to navigate existential failing/failure. The protagonist's existentialist journey aims to create meaning through extra

marital affairs by pushing and extending herself to her limits, ultimately, craving what French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre calls “*authenticity*” which means to test her own self and ideas and experience the world for what it is. Approaching to the limits, acknowledging good and bad, happiness and pain, Saleema thinks that she could create meaning, but isolation, alienation, lack of freedom and responsibility, miserable relationships and other socioeconomic factors made her failed at existentialism.

Existential failure manifests when a character struggle with the devastating sense of meaninglessness, worthlessness, or disengaging with the surrounding world. Experiencing existential failing, Conservative beliefs, thoughts and restricted customs of society may be defied, challenged and crushed because individual confronts deeper internal conflicts. This rupture escorts and results in existential vacuum and catastrophe of self because the character questions their positions and roles in the tapestry of existence to get meaning and purpose. Existential vacuum is a sagacity of purposelessness or bareness, as long-established by the plight of monotony and world weariness.

Daniyal Mueenuddin's *Saleema*, serves as a canvas upon which the artist has painted tortuous strokes, depicting the universal human quest, finding the real purpose of her life. The complex labyrinth of existential struggles around Saleema who is entrenched in the convolution of societal expectations, familial obligations, and personal desires; serves as lens that navigates the nuances of existential failure. Saleema's journey becomes a microcosm of such human struggle where Mueenuddin weaves a narrative that resonates with the profound challenges that is: finding meaning, grappling with choices, and confronting the complexities of societal expectations. Hence the narrative intricately weaves themes of meaninglessness, the tension between freedom and responsibility, existential isolation, authenticity in relationships, and the shaping influence of social and economic factors.

Saleema, is born in northwest of Delhi at Muslim refugees area. At partition her family thievingly traveled to Pakistan in to a village that was cast of by a Provincial town called Kotla Sarar. At the age of fourteen, she escaped her miserable village existence where her father died of heroin addiction and her mother slept around with others for money, by tying knot to a suitor and shifts to Lahore with him. Saleema finds a job as maid in K.K Harouni house as her spouse became a drug addict. Cook Hassan at the household has got everything from her but soon his viciousness ended. Later on Ten years, Saleema next angled for the family's loyal and esteemed driver Rafik. Their relationships last for two years, Rafik genuinely love Saleema and Allah Baksh; the child they have together. One day Rafik gets a letter from his first wife who was pleading her husband to comeback to patch things up and mend their relation. Subsequently he decided to leave Saleema and chooses to return to his own. Left alone, Saleema was inhibited and left with no choice but to go back to her spouse who is still a drug addict. Meanwhile K.K Harouni dies and the leftover family decided to fire the unnecessary staff except the senior staff that is kept to work for other family members following K.K. Harouni's death. Since Saleema was not the senior she pleads Rafik to be with them and look after their son, he refuses despite her pleas. Saleema sinked into oblivion ends up dying and leaving her son behind to grow up and become a destitute street kid.

Research Questions

- How does Saleema failed at existentialism in Daniyal Mueenuddin's selected short story *Saleema*?
- What patterns of Saleema's journey replicates existential failing in Sartre's notion of the lack of meaning, freedom and responsibility, isolation, authentic relationships?

Research Objectives

- To identify and analyze how Saleema failed at existentialism and her journey failed to project deeper questions of human quest and existence in Daniyal Mueenuddin's selected short story *Saleema*.
- To explore the layers of existential failure in Saleema's journey which replicates existential failing in Sartre's notion of the lack of meaning, freedom and responsibility, isolation, authentic relationships within Daniyal Mueenuddin's *Saleema*, embedded in the rural Pakistani landscape.

Literature Review

Literature and humans share a deep connection, paralleled by the relationship among psychology, Economy, Cultural studies and literature. The former delves into human behavior and its origins, while literature sprinkles these behaviors in a fiction. Mueenuddin's stories go through realm of feudal lords, middle class and their domains, highlighting the complexities of society; hence several scholars have approached *In Other Rooms, Other Wonders* from post colonial, Marxist and feministic stand-points

Uplifting the downtrodden Women voice in Literature Hussain, Tanvir in his paper titled "Breaking the Silence: A Text Analysis of Daniyal Mueenuddin's Selected Three Short Stories" aims to spotlight the marginalized women who challenges the conventional norms of the society exploiting women and expose the double standards of the society as women have always been projected irrational, weak and unstable by juxtaposing Saleema revolt in story *Saleema*, Zainab Challenge In *Provide, Provide* and the anonymous female revolt in *Nawabudeen Electrician* with the set patterns of society and traditional gender roles. Grounding the argument on feminist and gender theorists, the paper aims to underscore society's hypocrisy and foregrounds the struggle of women challenging the traditional set of rules to give salvation to the female gender. Researcher has carried out textual analysis of three short stories to show that female characters are presented in a emblematic way where men are symbolized as powerful, masculine and independent and female as weak, fragile and dependent. As Self objectification has victimized women and deprived her of their basic rights. The study shows Rafik (Urdu synonym friend) but in the true sense of the word he is not. She is Saleema (Urdu synonym reasonable) in the true sense of the word she is reasonable. She loved Rafik till the end of the story as Rafik was the person who understood her in spite of the fact that he had also seen her traditionally i.e. a symbol of sex (Hussain 2021, 701). The Paper explicated that the society still put into practice the conventional and established gender roles, marked by the social practices in the short stories

where women have been projected as other who will acts within a prescribed place and space by the power gender.

Acknowledging women agency and identity Yousaf, Waqar et.al in their research paper titled “Postcolonial Feminist Analysis of the Short Story Collection in *Other Rooms, Other Wonders* by Daniyal Mueenuddin” seeks to examine female agency, to investigate their capability to defy the rules, claim their individuality, construct their own preferences within the restrictions and demonstrate the blow of patriarchy and subjugation on the existence of women in the chosen tales where they struggles and face injustice in the hands of these patriarchal societies. Explicating the short stories in the light of Postcolonial Feminism, this paper explore the blow of colonial legacies on the women’s life in the tales shaping gender norms and power structures in Pakistan and spotlights women as postcolonial subject life in postcolonial societies, struggle for their snatched rights and identity. Carrying out qualitative textual analysis by employing the concept of “Sisterhood” by Chandra Mohanty, this paper further examines that the psychological impact of subjugation on the women, reacting in their own way. Through the main characters in the short stories the study focuses to walk around diverse situations and responses of women where some of them resist against the oppression, while other accepts it as a part of their life.

Focusing from middle to the outskirts, spotlighting the verve of the alienated and subjugated—the “subaltern” group, who are baffling, by and large marginalized and left in periphery sidelined and pitied, Almas & Akhtar in their article “Subaltern Women: Shadows of the Other in *Other Rooms Other Wonders*” aims to underscore the condition of women in a patriarchal setup where they face the silencing of their voices and agency doomed to be a subaltern as portrayed in *In Other Rooms Other Wonders*. Foregrounding the arguments on the theoretical formulation of Gyatri Spivak, this paper explicates the mechanics involved in formation of women’s position as subaltern alienated from the mainstream as the male keeps the authoritative position as the regulator of possessions, whereas the opposites are put up with as “Other”, and are treated as “subaltern”. Nawabdin’s wife, Saleema and Zainab in Mueenuddin short stories acknowledges the whole lot that the society states them concerning their position in society (Almas & Akhtar, 2019, 77). Analyzing the text textually this paper highlights the untiring efforts of the character considered as useless but still worthy of shifting the focus from the upward class mobility to the deprived classes it highlights the lives of the servants and workers that is the “subaltern”, often side-lined, marginalized, or pitied in the patriarchal setups.

Mirroring the diverse shades of the characters; making a kaleidoscopic image, Anjum Butt et.al in their research paper “You are What You Own: A Transitivity Analysis of *In Other Rooms, Other Wonders*” attempts to analyze *In Other Room, Other Wonders* and *About a Burning Girl* by employing the processes of transitivity, concentrating on the structural features of language and considering the roles that a language plays in a society which describe their social understandings and experiences. This paper apt to construe the text using a frame of linguistics to portray the diverse facade of the lives of the character and haul out 109 sentence/clauses from the texts to distinguish Marxist themes such as class variations, corruption, fraud, commoditization, and Marxist feminism. The analysis of this literary texts that is transitivity analysis which highlights the percentage of each process type embedded that is material, mental, verbal, relational process and existential process which explicated that the most high-flying process type

dug out from the data is material development which alludes to Marx's (1970) saying, "it is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness".

Testifying Marxist vein in a narrative Anjum Butt et.al in their research paper "Distribution should undo Excess: A Marxian Deconstruction of in Other Rooms, Other Wonders" aims to explore the fundamental drives which furnishes class and social stratification. The study aims to investigate the main characters representing the opposing class structures in the text. This paper further highlights the look for power; hanker after affluence and desire for fraud and corruption that nourishes class difference and stratification. Further the researchers' attempts to explore lexical cohesion in the text to paint Marxist images throughout the narrative by reiterating repetition, synonymy, hyponyms, super-ordination, general nouns and collocation which results in lexical cohesion in the text, as it incites a duality and binary divisions between the advantaged and deprived testifies Marxist vein in the narrative. To validate the findings and confirming the patterns in the light of Marxists notions of Class struggle and stratification this research has Utilized the tools of literature and linguistics, and further examined the text by employing Marxist literary thought and model of lexical cohesion (1976 by Halliday and Hassan), to highlight the poles apart class structures (Bourgeoisie and proletariats)and entrenched social differences present in the rural setup Punjab, Pakistan for instance Jaglani and Zainab which highlighted class divisions and segregation portrayed by the characters which supports Marx's (1952) historical insight that the between two opposite classes human beings have always been engaged in tug of war around the history.

Exploring the core issues of patriarchal oppression and class differences in the cultural landscapes of Pakistan, the aforesaid researchers have explicated oppressed's suffering due to exploitation in Daniyal Mueenuddin's short stories. Discourses concerning subjugation and suppression of women in society such as patriarchy, traditions, male domination, and class differences have been explored *In Other Rooms Other Wonders*. Hence this paper endeavors to project the short story *Saleema* through the lens of Satre and Frankl theoretical formulation of existentialism to highlight the quest for meaning and purpose which in particular case may leads to existential failure.

Methodology

In fictional journeying, a theory is applied to explicate, foresee, comprehend and investigate a research problem. The current study is run aground on theoretical underpinnings of Existentialism as contended by Sartre and Frankl. Emerging as a literary and philosophical movement in the 20th century, Existentialism refers to a philosophy of existence, nature of human existence, its importance, significance and its meaning. It means for something to exist at all as divergent to not existing and what it means for something, as conflicting to nothing, to exist at all.

Present study holds qualitative research methodology that grasps an anthology of reasonable and natural perceptive pedestals on my observation and insights. *Saleema* has been analyzed textually to evaluate miserable Saleema failing at existentialism. Here we vessels a logical

assumptions about credible explications from the text. Acquiring logic of the conduct in specific culture and time, Text is interpreted as the individuals have to create fair verdicts and judgments of the human kind and world about.

Sartre's conception of bad faith explicates that what it is to be a human being is described by the problem of bad faith which demonstrates the various ways we escape from "absolute freedom." As contended by Sartre. Bad faith is present in almost all of our actions. Bad faith puts a reality out of sight from ourselves; self-deception which means lying to ourselves regarding ourselves. Generally, it maintains to refute the basic structure of human being, individual's character determines the way an individual sees the world and can change it in turn. We disagree with this by acting as if our characters are fixed and unchangeable. Furthermore it is an extensive dilemma of the twentieth ascending from dehumanizing individuals, losing conventional values and prevailing industrialization. A lot of people think life is meaningless, purposeless, and irresponsible. They try to load their existential vacuum with worldly and material things, pleasure, sex, power, or busy work, but they are misguided (Frankl, 1984). Meaninglessness underlies the mass neurotic triad of today, i.e. depression-addiction-aggression (Frankl, 1986, p.298).

Human existence divulges emptiness, abolition, loss, sin, isolation, desolation, meaninglessness, independence, existential anxiety and significance life and existence to be the fundamental meanings of existentialism. Existentialists assert that man is destined to be free and advocate people to admire themselves in such ways that gratifies and satisfies them. At its core Existentialism questions and centers on the meaning of human existence and importance of individual, spotlighting their liberty and individual pickings. It's the man who contours his way of living and creates his own way of expressing existence. Emphasizing man's ability to think autonomously implies that it's he who shapes the meaning, essence and purpose of life or existence. Rising above situations that lack gratifying meaning such as the existentially inspired concepts of misery, loss, and the obliteration of the individual, for whom there is no other system other than the individual approach of articulating existence allowing them to opt and establish their own beliefs and individual obligations.

Discussion

Saleema failure happens to be a failure in existential commitment as she refuses to face reality in a remarkably innovative manner possible. Hence, it is a rejection of the boundless potentials of human existence. Her contumacious rebuttal not only has a clear intention to get her out of the circumscriptive dimension of her life, but from the life itself and, specifically, from her existential commitment to a world where one should avail oneself of the right of the freedom of choice provided to everyone. She fails to identify that the one who certifies the transience of her life story with Rafik, or any other man, is she herself. She cannot comprehend the enormous possibilities of her personality because of her constant denial of the opportunities to choose and define her own existence. Another aspect of her existential failure is the lack of sense to exist within the criterion of the human life limitations imposed by time. Paradoxically, she is guilty of both being overly and insufficiently concerned with time.

A lot of people think life is meaningless, purposeless, and irresponsible. They are misguided as they try to load existential vacuum with worldly and materialistic things; bliss, sex, authority, power or full on activities (Frankl, 1984) As Saleema has been described as “*sensuous, unscrupulous and romantic*” (In *other room other wonders*, 2010, p.19). Opening her eyes in impoverished and poor family, Saleema had been witnessing her parents involving in the moral corruption and criminal actions since her childhood leading to sense of lack of purpose and emptiness in her life. Describing her background and her past before the driver Rafik, she said “*What shall I say? I was brought up with slaps and harsh words we had nothing, we were poor*” (In *other room other wonders*, 2010, p.35). Thus, her experience to miserable realities and harsh familiarities since her early days made her corporeal, a purposeless, sensual and isolated being lacking authenticity, leaving her with no choice but to follow the meaningless and worthless way of life unconsciously.

The protagonist Saleema has been forced to the defiance of independence to give meaning to her life as someone else was giving the meaning; the suitor. Saleema is a tale of a worthless girl who is taken to Lahore as servant maid of Landlord K.K Harouni after being a plaything in suitor’s hands to play with. “*Then a suitor appeared, strutting the village on leave from his job in the city, and plucked her off to Lahore*” (In *other room other wonders*, 2010, p. 17).

The Achilles heel of Existentialism is that eventually you have to answer yes or no if you created meaning. For Saleema the answer is ambiguously neither yes or no, this made her failed at existentialism leading to the Abyss of meaninglessness.

Saleema grapples with a pervasive sense of emptiness and a yearning for purpose. Her life appears to be an obscure boogie between fulfilling societal expectations and seeking personal fulfillment as she grips with an internal void, a profound lack of meaning and purpose. Mueenuddin deftly weaves Saleema's internal conflict, allowing readers to witness her existential quest. In her choices and actions, Saleema reflects the innate human desire to transcend mere existence and find significance in a seemingly indifferent world. Saleema, the protagonist, grapples with a profound sense of purposelessness. As “*Her thoughts ducked in and out of holes, like mice*” (In *other room other wonders*, 2010, 31). Being indecisive in her choice led to a confusion which triggered anxiety that eventually brings failure in existence. Furthermore her existence is colored by societal expectations, familial obligations, and a yearning for significance. Deep down her expected meaning of life was protection which she was lacking throughout the story as she “*now she was no one left to protect her*”. (In *other room other wonders*, 2010, 21-22) Saleema's internal struggles are poignantly reflected in the text, especially when she contemplates her role within the family and society. Saleema's existential quandary is palpable, hopeless and meaningless in her contemplation of the purpose behind her actions as

she left herself cry a few more tears, she could cry whenever she wanted, she thought of herself, alone, her husband on drugs, that dried-up stick who picked her out of village, when she thought he was saving her. She was still a girl, not just then, but now too. She cried harder, wiping her eyes with the corner of her duppatta. (In other room other wonders, 2010, 24)

Here she encapsulates Saleema's struggle with the lack of a clear purpose, emphasizing the universal human quest for meaning, and meet the essence of existential failure. In a moment of introspection, she questions the meaning of herself "*I suppose people looking in must wonder who I am*". (In other room other wonders, 2010, 27) and her labor, echoing a broader search for significance.

Saleema escapes to ignoring others, crying, anger and prostitution these choices of action led her to existential failure. Proving her existence, her presence and effect she asks other s to open a window for revealing her existence into the world which has been bulldozed by her choices, society, family and members of the house. as "*she asked if she could open her window, not so much because she wanted, as to register her presence*" (In other room other wonders, 2010, 28) Existential failing reached the core when she came to know about the pregnancy and was left alone by Rafik. While thinking in the abyss of existence "*Looking up into the cradle of branches in an enormous flame-of-forest tree, she thought, God, I'm nothing, look at how small I am next to this tree*" (In other room other wonders, 2010, 41) Here Mueenuddin has highlighted an existential narrative that delves into the depths of Saleema's internal conflict which leads to her surrender in giving her life a meaning..

The dichotomy between personal freedom and societal responsibilities has shaped Saleema's choices. At the heart of Saleema's journey lies the tension between freedom and responsibility. Her choices become crossroads where existential agency meets societal expectations. Saleema's actions guide us the labyrinthine choices she faces. As she says "*I'm trying to live here too, you know.*" (In other room other wonders, 2010, 24) The narrative unfolds within the tension between freedom and responsibility. She want to be a free bird but her responsibilities were the hurdles as she was a plaything at the age of fourteen her choice of being a prostitute although hailed from her mother led her to a failed quest for her existence. As she thinks of putting oneself on some ones choice is the meaning of a life but the experiences has made her realize the meaninglessness in it. Her choice of going with the suitor and sleeping with the cook Hassan fails as well that led to another existential failure when she says, "*and soon proved to be not only weak but depraved*" (In other room other wonders, 2010, 19) Saleema is at the crossroads of personal agency and societal expectations. Her choices become existential markers, illustrating the delicate balance individuals must navigate between personal freedom and the weight of communal responsibilities. The interplay between freedom and responsibility manifests vividly in Saleema's choices. As she contemplates marrying a certain man to fulfill societal expectations, *Saleema* underscores the tension between personal agency and societal duties. This tension becomes a battleground for Saleema's existential struggle, emphasizing the complex decisions individuals face in navigating the expectations of others. It illuminates the struggle between autonomy and duty as she contemplates marrying to fulfill familial expectations and encapsulates the existential conflict, underscoring the choices individuals face in navigating personal freedom and societal obligations. Her choices became a battleground between personal freedom and the demands of duty which leads to existential failure.

Saleema's journey is marked by a profound sense of isolation. Whether imposed by societal expectations or self-inflicted due to her choices, she grapples with an existential solitude. Her existential solitude becomes a poignant reflection of the human condition. As Mueenuddin says

“she thought of herself, alone, her husband on drugs, that dried-u stick who picked her out of village”. (In *other room other wonders*, 2010, 24) Mueenuddin skillfully paints the emotional landscape of alienation. Saleema's sense of isolation is palpable, whether self-imposed or a consequence of societal norms. The story paints a vivid picture of existential solitude, a theme resonant with the broader human experience. Mueenuddin employs Saleema's experiences to illuminate the pervasive nature of existential alienation.

Saleema's sense of isolation permeates the narrative, reflected in her detachment from both herself and the world around her. Here it captures the profound existential alienation Saleema experiences, offering readers a glimpse into the isolating nature of her existence. Her existential journey mirrored the alienation embedded in the human condition and theme of human estrangement. Leaving Saleema alone, Rafik has made her life more meaningless and isolated

Saleema's interactions with others become a crucible for examining authenticity. To her authenticity in relationships is “*defined not by constraint which she understood but by delicacy*”. (In *other room other wonders*, 2010, 26) Mueenuddin's *Saleema* intricately weaves a tale of authenticity and the existential struggle individuals' face when navigating societal norms in their interpersonal connections. The exploration of authenticity in Saleema's relationships becomes a microcosm of existential struggles faced by individuals navigating societal norms. It is when the only savior Rafik gets back from giving her the desired care and protection. Here we see her hopes sheds and fails at existentialism as “*my honor has always been perfectly safe in her hands. 'Honor.' Saleema began to cry. 'That's bad. You're tiring of me and this situation. Imagine how it feels for me.*” (In *other room other wonders*, 2010, p. 43)

Saleema is treated like a prostitute by the members of the house. The relationship with the members was purely materialistic and pleasure basis while she need someone to save and protect her.

“*I know what you all think,*” she began. “*you think I'm a slut, you think I poison my husband. Because of him I'm alone, and you all do with me as you like. I'm trying to live here too, you know, I am not a fool. I also came from somewhere.*” (In *other room other wonders*, 2010, 24)

It portrays Saleema's struggle for authenticity in her relationships and highlights the authenticity of their own connections and the compromises often made in the pursuit of societal acceptance. Her interactions with potential suitors and family members reveal the tension between conforming to societal expectations and staying true to herself. Even her choices have made her love relations, feeling less and materialistic as *Saleema* portrays “*Her love affairs had been so plainly mercantile transaction that she hadn't learned to be coquettish.*” (In *other room other wonders*, 2010, 31) it has shown the failure in getting authentic relation, ultimately leading to an existential crisis.

Saleema's existential odyssey is knotted with the socio-economic conditions of rural Pakistan. Class distinctions, economic struggles, and societal norms influence her decisions and perceptions of self. Mueenuddin's *Saleema* masterfully integrates social and economic factors into Saleema's narrative, shaping her existential experience. Class distinctions and economic

struggles influence Saleema's decisions, mirroring the broader societal forces that mold individual destinies. Mueenuddin embeds social and economic factors within Saleema's story, shaping her existential experience as she said “*What shall I say? I was brought up with slaps and harsh words, we had nothing we were poor*” (*In other room other wonders*, 2010, 38). Saleema subtly addresses the impact of class distinctions and economic struggles on Saleema's choices and perspectives and adds layers to the existential narrative, highlighting the external forces that mold and constrain individual autonomy.

Saleema failed at existence at the end of the story when she started taking drugs and left her husband, starts begging and died after some time leaving her child begged in the streets.

Within two years she was finished, began using the rocket pills, which she once has so much despised, lost her job, went on to her-oin, leaving her husband behind without a word.....she ended up begging... and the boy begged in the streets, one of the sparrows of Lahore. (In other room other wonders, 2010, 51).

The narrative profoundly portrays her escape and leaving the struggle to give meaning to her life. Choosing the path of killing herself by taking pills and heroin, Saleema has failed at giving purpose to his life which shows her life to be meaningless and purposeless. Her failure is failure at existential vows and commitments in a way that it represents a refusal and escape to confront reality, and thus it is a rebuff of the possibilities of human existence.

Conclusion

Saleema served as a portal in the rich drapes of existential failure. Mueenuddin's *Saleema* became a mirror reflecting universal human struggles, to traverse the intricacies of meaninglessness, freedom, isolation, authenticity, and societal influences. The study has uncovered a profound existential depth within Saleema's story, transcending cultural boundaries and the delicate dance between freedom, responsibility, yearning for authentic connections and the perennial search for meaning in the obscure tapestry of life. She serves as a poignant reminder of the universal challenges individuals face in reconciling personal aspirations with societal expectations. Saleema would rather have succeeded in her Existential quest if she would have proclaimed either yes or no because it was her choice of going either side. I wish she got out of the meaninglessness busy enjoying the fruits of her labor, feeling fulfilled and grateful for having something created what she set out to do but her death has stamped her quest for meaning. We have only the here and now. It's the only thing one will ever truly have. We are all serving factual life sentences of freedom. What we do with our freedom is the only real choice we will ever have.

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