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Depiction of Love, Friendship, Corruption, Honesty and Ambition of Protagonists in Chetan Bhagat's *Revolution 2020*

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Abstract:

Chetan Bhagat is undoubtedly a top-class fiction writer in modern fiction. Because of focusing on youth woes he has been adored as the role model in their hearts. The magic of his writings is he writes in a lucid and simple language with which he drags the attention of the youth. This paper is attempt of how three protagonists in the novel *Revolution 2020* put all their efforts in fulfilling their ambitions and dreams in their corresponding lives, their triangle love story and friendship, how one of the protagonists is corrupted whereas the another sticks on to honesty in an explicit manner.

Keywords: ambition, youth, corruption, protagonist, love

Introduction

Chetan Bhagat as viewed an icon, role model and a top-class writer in the sight of the present youth. He has written seven blockbuster novels so far namely – *Five Point Someone* (2004), *One Night @ the Call Centre* (2005), *The 3 Mistakes of My Life* (2008), *2 States* (2009), *Revolution 2020* (2011), *What Young India Wants* (2012) and *Half Girlfriend* (2014). Interestingly all most all novels of Chetan Bhagat are associated to the lives of contemporary Indian youth. Some of the major themes that are handled by Chetan Bhagat in his novels are – love, youth problems, career, ambition, work pressure in jobs, stress and pressure in the minds of students in their education, corruption and so on.

Chetan Bhagat has vividly portrayed the theme of love triangle, corruption and ambition of the three major protagonists in his novel *Revolution 2020*. It is the story of three childhood friends – Gopal, Raghav and Aarti who are the native residents of Varanasi, the holy city of Hindus where Lord Shiva's temple is situated and the holy river Ganga flows. While going through the pages of this novel, the reader may easily sense that it is a fine blend of the elements – love and friendship, corruption and honesty, having ambitions and fulfilling them. All the three protagonists belong to different classes – Gopal is from poor family background in spite of his father seem to be owning a good agricultural land. Raghav is from above middle class family whereas Aarti is from a well settled family. Each of these friends' ambitions are also different from each other. Gopal wants to earn much money as his uncle Ghanshyam has cheated his father by taking their land in a deceitful manner. His father, Baba is sort of submissive old man who has lost his spouse and looks after Gopal. The only wish of Gopal's father is he wants to see his son as an engineer in the life so that all the difficulties in the family will be cleared and for this reason he keeps on saving money not even caring his ill-health and undergoing operation. But the passion and ambition of Gopal is not to become an engineer, he desires to obtain a general degree like B.Sc. and earning money as early as possible. Unwillingly he accepts the wish of his father and prepares for AIEEE or JEE without keen interest. As a result of this sort of attitude he gets 52043 rank in the entrance

exam. With much disappointment Gopal reaches home and informs his father, Baba about his failure to secure a decent rank in AIEEE results. Since Baba's life-long desire to see his as a good engineer, Gopal is again persuaded to go Kota, a famous place where intensive coaching is offered to the aspirants of AIEEE or JEE. Gopal tries his level best to secure a worthy rank this time but he is constantly fighting off thoughts about Aarti who just considers him as a best friend and is in love with another protagonist Raghav. Gopal for many times tries to propose Aarti but every time she simply forbids him. Throughout the novel one can clearly notice deep love of Gopal who is really crazy about Aarti. Many times Gopal even tries to kiss Aarti but the latter pushes him away saying sternly,

“You will spoil our friendship. Don't get me wrong. You have been my best friends for years.” (pg. – 36)

Even this second time also Gopal remains unsuccessful and cannot get through the so-called entrance examinations AIEEE or JEE due to the reasons – since his favourite hobby is wasting time, filling the mind with troubling thoughts about Aarti and chatting with her for more time, doing friendship with Mr. Prateek and getting addicted to consuming liquor. Gopal fails to reach up to the expectations of his father which eventually results in his death. It upsets Gopal incalculably and at this juncture, luck favours him and he happens to meet with a suave marketing executive, Sunil who advises the former to open a new engineering college as Gopal owes the required land for which he has to pay the debt incurred by his father for his education. So he has resolved at once to sell this disputed land. By taking aid of Mr. Shukla, the local MLA and his assistant Mr. Bedi. Gopal's ambition or dream to earn much money has become a reality. With the help of acquaintances of the high profile leaders and by greasing the palms Gopal gets the university affiliations for opening his dream project, Ganga Tech Engineering College in which MLA Shukla is a sleeping partner and by whom it is actually funded. Thus Gopal's character in the novel 'Revolution 2020' is portrayed as a fine blend of a mad lover and good friend of Aarti, achiever of his dream or ambition in earning much money, also becoming as a corrupted educationalist in one way even he does not want to be called like that.

On the other side, the character of Raghav is well sketched out by Chetan Bhagat. In fact, through the character of Raghav the author intends to start a revolution. Raghav is from a well to do family and whose ambition in life is to change the world and desires to become a journalist. Raghav has been associated almost in every action with Gopal. Raghav seems to be very intelligent at his studies and is sure of getting a good rank in AIEEE. As expected by everyone he secures 5820 rank and that delights his parents immensely but not him. He just smiles and does not react more than that. This sort of feeling of Raghav clearly reveals that he is no more interested to study in a prestigious college and to become an engineer only for the sake of fulfilling the aspirations of his parents. Soon after completion of his graduation at BHU he is offered high profile jobs from well reputed companies like Infosys but he declines them and prefers to join the field of journalism.

Raghav's life time ambition and passion is to write for media and begins his career as a reporter in Dainik, a well reputed daily newspaper. In course of time he undergoes copious problems for being sincere, dedicated and honest. Raghav scoops the secret information about the Ganga Tech Engineering College and writes the same in Dainik boldly. He is expelled from his job due to a corrupt conspiracy. Later on he establishes a small press and starts a novel newspaper by name "Revolution 2020". With all his abilities Raghav wants to bring about a change in the system and country. In his words ---

“What do you say about a society whose top leaders are the biggest crooks? What do you do in a system where almost anyone with power is corrupt? India has suffered enough. From childhood we are told India is a poor country. Why? There are countries in this world where an average person makes more than fifty times that an average Indian makes. Fifty times? Are their people fifty times more capable than us? Does an Indian farmer not work hard? Does an Indian student not study? Do we not want to do well? Why, why are we then doomed to be poor?” (pg. – 205). This has to stop. “We have to clean the system...It could take Ten years. I call it Revolution 2020, the movement that finally shake the muck of India...When Indian will get justice and the guilty will be punished. And it will all begin in Varanasi” (pg. – 206).

Such is the mind set and inner feeling of Raghav. As it goes without saying “pen is mightier than sword”. Raghav writes the harsh reality of corrupted people and politicians which results his own small press is ruined in the hands of MLA Shukla’s men.

In spite of all these hurdles, Gopal never loses confidence in himself and in his abilities. None can prevent him from writing news for his ‘Revolution 2020’ again and later once again for Dainik daily. Raghav succeeds to achieve his ambition but he has to pay a big cost for his revolution. His character has been portrayed with all fine qualities – firm determination, honesty, commitment and genuineness etc.

Aarti’s character is depicted as she stands out as the glue which holds together the framework of the entire novel. She come from a well settled family and whose ambition is to become an airhostess. She looks like an angel and when she turns fifteen the Sunbeam School in which she studies talks about her stunning beauty as ‘she should be an actress’ or ‘she can apply for Miss India’ and so on. Right from school going days onwards Aarti ties both Gopal and Raghav together being their mutual friend. Interestingly, both of them have also fallen in love with the same girl. Very often she finds it hard to decide and come to a conclusion who will be her better half in the life.

She passionately dreams to become an airhostess but ends up becoming the customer service manager of a five star hotel. Almost up to end of the novel, Gopal eagerly wants to win her love whereas the latter mildly refuses and reminds him by saying she does not want to enter a relationship. Somewhere she likes Raghav and wants to become his soul mate but due to his busy schedule as a press reporter she is not treated well and exactly this makes her feel insecure and lonely. Taking this as an advantage Gopal succeeds in changing her mind to marry him. But later on Gopal changes this thought of marrying Aarti and he is also changed by the great revolution of Raghav’s and he once resolves to contribute his bit to the great revolution for bringing the transformation in India. In the end of novel she is purposefully ditched by Gopal so that she marry Raghav who strives hard to wipe out the rampant corruption in almost every sector in the country.

Conclusion

Revolution 2020 is a fine blend of love and friendship, corruption and honesty, ambition and its fulfillment of the three major protagonists namely – Gopal, Raghav and Aarti. Although Chetan Bhagat is successful in depicting all these elements vigilantly in the novel, it disappoints some sects of readers as they have more expectations on the title of the novel in particular. Bhagat would have done well if he added some more extra content on the theme Revolution, it would make the book unquestionably a worth reading one.

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