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**Resilience and Healing in
Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* and
Mohamed Al-Naas's *Khobz 'Ala Tawelat
al-Khal Milad***

Ahmed Shehata Sayed Semida

Lecturer

Department of English Language
Cairo Higher Institute for Languages,
Simultaneous Interpretation and
Administrative Science, Egypt
ashehata1978@gmail.com

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الصمود والتعافى فى روايتى جود المغمور للروائى توماس هاردى وخبز على طاولة الخال ميلاد للروائى محمد النعاس

المستخلص: تتقارب رواية جود المغمور للكاتب البريطانى توماس هاردى مع رواية خبز على طاولة الخال ميلاد للكاتب الليبى محمد النعاس من حيث تجسيد المعاناة النفسية والذهنية والبدنية التى تحاصر شخصية جود فى الرواية الأولى وشخصية ميلاد فى الرواية الثانية فضلا عن التشابه فى تجسيد قدرة كلتا الشخصيتين على مقاومة أو تجاوز أو التوافق مع بعض الظروف العصيبة شديدة التعقيد. تهدف هذه الورقة البحثية إلى تحليل فكرتى الصمود والتعافى كما جاءت فى الروائيتين من خلال لقاء الضوء على أسباب ومظاهر الغضب الذى يجتاح جود وميلاد فى مواقف مختارة وكذلك الفرص التى سنحت لهما لتحقيق درجة من الطمأنينة والإيجابية وتطوير الذات. تعرف الدراسة أولا مفهوم "الصمود" ثم تطبيق بعض خصائص هذا المفهوم على عملية تحول جود وميلاد من مرحلة المعاناة الى مرحلة التعافى. تبحث الدراسة أيضا مدى ملائمة النهاية المسأوية لشخصيتى جود وميلاد فى ضوء تطور كل شخصية عبر فصول الرواية وخطوط نسج الحكمة الروائية. يعتمد البحث على الجمع بين المناهج الوصفية والتحليلية والمقارنة. أسفرت التحليلات النقدية لشخصيتى جود وميلاد عن اثبات قدرتيهما على تحمل الغضب العائلى والتلمذة الحرفية القاسية والعوز المالى والنبذ الاجتماعى والنزاعات الزوجية وفقدان الأبناء من خلال التسلح بتطوير القدرات المعرفية والبدنية والمهنية والعاطفية لكل منهما وكذلك الاستعانة ببعض الدعم الأسرى مما ساعد كل شخصية على انتزاع بعض النجاحات المؤقتة التى يصاحبها السلام النفسى. وإذا كانت قدرة جود على التعافى قد ضعفت فى نهاية الرواية الإنجليزية خاصة فى ظل التدهور المنطقى لحالته الصحية والذى أدى الى وفاته، فإن الموت المعنوى لشخصية ميلاد تمثل فى تحوله إلى قاتل لزوجته فى نفس اللحظة التى كان فيها قاب قوسين أو أدنى من تحقيق التعافى على المستويات الشخصية والعائلية والاجتماعية والمهنية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المعاناة – الجلد – الصمود – التعافى – الإيجابية

Abstract: Jude Fawley in Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* (1895) and Milad al-Osta in Mohamed Al-Naas's *Khobz 'Ala Tawelat al-Khal Milad* [Bread on Uncle's Milad's Table] (2021) are encountered by psychological, mental and physical tribulations. However, they are characterized by their respective abilities to withstand, overcome or cope with strained circumstances. The present study scrutinizes Jude's and Milad's resilience by illuminating the causes and manifestations of their anguish and the chances they have to achieve tranquility, positivity and development. Methodologically, the paper sheds light on the definition of resilience at first. Then, it applies aspects of the definition to Jude's and Milad's resilience and their healing processes. The unhappy ending of each novel is also examined in light of character portrayal and development of the plot. The descriptive, analytical and comparative approaches are applied. The analysis of Jude's

and Milad's resilience shows that their equipment with familial support, spiritual consistency, emotional sincerity, and craftsmanship enable them to remain productive amidst familial outrage, cruel apprenticeship, financial hardship, social ostracization, marital disputes, and sorrowful loss of children. Whereas Jude's physical death is due to deterioration in his health, Milad's psychological downfall occurs at a moment of promising prosperity.

Keywords: anguish – endurance – resilience – healing – positivity

1. Introduction

Jude the Obscure (1895) is Thomas Hardy's novel that depicts the life of Jude Fawley, a villager and a working man, from his ambition in scholarship and love to his desperation in both and his subsequent physical death. Hardy employs the third-person omniscient narration to expose social problems in Victorian England with special focus on the personal misfortune of the impoverished due to inadequate institutions of marriage and higher education. Hardy's criticism of the religious institution that promotes marriage as a holy bond rather than a civilian one is also inclusive. The novel is associated with its exposure of "the inadequacy of rustic assumptions in the modern world" (Mattisson 370) as well. *Khobz 'Ala Tawelat al-Khal Milad* [Bread on Uncle's Milad's Table] (2021) is Mohamed Al-Naas's debut novel and the winner of the 2022 International Prize for Arabic Fiction (IPAF). The novel is narrated by Milad al-Osta, the central character who works as a baker, in the form of confessions about his attitude towards prevailing social and individual interpretations of femininity and masculinity in the Libyan community. The stream of consciousness technique is dominant, and flashback pervades throughout the novel.

The two titles of the novels are symbolical. Jude, the apprentice mason, is perceived by his local community as 'obscure' due to his dream to be a scholar at Christminster, a counterpart to Oxford University, regardless of his orphanage, financial destitute condition, and poor social rank. Thus, his quest for knowledge is denied by his contemporary villagers who traditionally prefer his involvement in craftsmanship. Similarly, Milad is criticized by his local community because of his violation of the conventional social and cultural milieu. The people of his village associate him with

al-Khal Milad [Uncle Milad], the fictional figure in a folk idiom among the Libyans who represents an image of a shameful 'anti-man'. The image disapproves of a man's content with his support of the emancipation of woman, performance of household activities, and fluctuation of authoritative manhood.

The setting of Hardy's novel is first located in Marygreen, Jude's birthplace village, where he witnesses physical and psychological suffering because of hard apprenticeship and failure in legal marriage. Then, it moves to Christminster, Jude's most admired city and the center of his quest for knowledge. It is also the place where he is acquainted with his cousin and future most beloved Sue Bridehead. The next station is Jude's life is Melchester where he positively resumes his spirit for learning but negatively hears about Sue and Phillotson's, his former schoolmaster, promise of engagement within two years at the moment his heart is attracted to Sue. Jude makes his following movement to Chaston to stay in the nearby of Sue and her husband before Sue decides to get separated from Phillotson to live with Jude in 'Alderbrickham and elsewhere'. The latter setting witnesses various forms of hardship Jude and Sue are subjected to. Finally, Christminster is once again brought to the forefront to witness Jude and Sue's personal, marital, familial, and social defeat. On the other hand, the setting of *Khobz 'Ala Tawelat al-Khal Milad* is mainly a Libyan village. Milad was born in al-Dahra, Tripoli, the only son among four sisters. At the age of 14, Milad's father and uncle decide to return to their father's home village, *Ba'r Hussein*, because they inherited a vast plot of land suitable for agriculture, building a house, setting up a bakery project, and starting a new life. The plot mainly develops in certain locations where Milad's dilemma is evident: (1) *al-kousha*, a bakery; (2) his father's house; (3) *al-barraka*, a room or a hut built of tin and clapboard surrounded by trees and favoured by Libyan bachelors; (4) an army camp; (5) Milad's house.

When the character of Jude is first introduced, he is depicted as a 'little boy' who has a 'thoughtful' attitude compared with the 'perplexed' attitudes of the blacksmith, the farm bailiff and the schoolmaster who all cannot find a solution for the schoolmaster's troubling cottage piano. The schoolmaster is moving from Marygreen to Christminster and he does not know what he can do with his piano. But, Jude, who speaks up, "blushing at

the sound of his own voice" (I.i.3), suggests that they can store the piano in his aunt's 'great fuel-house' until the schoolmaster can find a place to settle the piano in. Jude's advice is praised due to the "practicability of the suggested shelter" (I.i.3). Though the problem of the piano is not critical on Jude's behalf, his ability to tackle it hints at his early potentiality to overcome his shyness and handle troubles practically. Comparatively, Milad al-Osta is introduced as a househusband who enjoys housework and role-inversion with his wife, Zeinab, who works at an organization and supports her family financially. Milad is an advocator of women's rights as he denies their being oppressed in any form. Due to his upbringing as the only son in his family and his close attachment to his sisters during his childhood, Milad is characterized by exaggerated naivety and tenderness, which are contradictory to the Libyans' standards of masculinity.

Thematically, both Jude and Milad undergo social and psychological obligations that enforce them to act according to the cognitive norms of their societies. Jude has to give up his dream of scholarship because a craftsman's passion for learning is not sufficient to qualify him to be a university student in Victorian England. He has to follow the merciless rules of sacred and conventional marriage regardless of the discrepancy between Arabella Donn's, his first wife, instinctive desire for a husband and his own longing for spiritual compatibility with a wife. Even his true love to Sue Bridehead is broken down because it is not perceived by society as 'legal'. On Milad's behalf, he must be a rough child, a mannish teenager, a virile young man, and an oppressive adult. He should exploit all resources around him as well. But, Jude's and Milad's tender-hearted traits motivate each to adopt a different view of life based on fresh interpretations of certain notions like social responsibility, tolerance, persistence, professionalism, intimacy, love and respect. These traits lead to their incompatibility with the social obligations of the British and Libyan communities at certain moments. Thus, they are subjected to diversified forms of humiliating hardship. However, they are mostly successful at other moments in equipping themselves with knowledge and skills that contribute to their temporary resilience. The aid they receive from family and other acquaintances enhance their approaching healing too.

2. Methodology

This study starts with shedding light on the origin, coinage and definition of resilience. Then, it elucidates the challenging circumstance Jude and Milad are subjected to and the factors that enhance their impermanent serenity. Analyses on the personal, familial and social levels are inclusive. Throughout analysis, the closeness between Jude's and Milad's processes of resilience is illuminated. Finally, the paper discusses whether the conclusion of each novel is in line with the novelist's portrayal of the central character in the previous chapters. Because the process of preparing an English translation of the Arabic novel is still in progress, this paper relies on the ninth edition of the Arabic version published by Sefsafa Publishing House, Egypt, in 2022. The paper also adheres to the Latin numbering of the parts and chapters of the English novel as they appear on the original text.

3. What is Resilience?

Etymologically, the term 'resilience' is derived from the Latin origin *resilire*, which means jumping backwards, withdrawing and bouncing-back (Mokline and Ben Abdullah 219). Historically, the term "is found from the year 1430 in late medieval and early modern French as a juridical term for contract termination and, in general, for the restoration of the original legal situation" (Größling-Reisemann, Hellige and Tier 4).

Due to its ubiquity, the term 'resilience' attains several definitions across disciplines. For example, Ferreira, Marques and Gomes demonstrate that resilience "emerged as a construct in the physics field to describe the property of certain materials that allows them to absorb the energy of a given impact and then return to a normal state after that pressure is applied" (1). In psychology, resilience is "the process and outcome of successfully adapting to difficult or challenging life experiences, especially through mental, emotional, and behavioural flexibility and adjustment to external and internal demands" (American Psychological Association). This process can be viewed in terms of a human being's ability to achieve both adaptive and emotional resilience. Whereas the first is "the capacity to remain productive and true to core purpose and identity whilst absorbing disturbance and adapting with integrity in response to changing circumstances" (Robinson

14), the second means the ability “to stay calm, control one’s aggressive and withdrawal behaviour, and calm down in an appropriate period of time when faced with challenging tasks or difficult people” (Bernard 36). The required adaption can appear, according to Ungar, “in many different ways, ranging from persistence in one’s behavior when confronting stress to forcing systems to transform themselves in ways that result in entirely new regimes of behavior to avoid a stressor altogether” (9). It is also remarkable that psychological resilience and social resilience are inseparable. Graber, Pichon and Carabine explain the interconnection between these two kinds of resilience as they clarify that resilience is “a developmental and psychosocial process through which individuals exposed to sustained adversity or potentially traumatic events experience positive psychological adaptation over time” (8).

Comprehensively, resilience is the ability to: (1) “overcome serious hardship” (Hughes 2); (2) “withstand or recover from stressor” (Bhushan XXIV); (3) “cope with change and continue to develop” (Bousquet, F. et al. 40); (4) “resist being damaged or deformed by traumas or destructive forces” as well as “bouncing back or recovering from those traumas or destructive forces” (Harms 1). Resilience also captures, as (Graber et al. 8) maintain, “how people not only survive a variety of challenging circumstances, but thrive in the face of such adversity”.

4. Jude’s and Milad’s Resilience and Healing

Due to the pervasiveness of numerous personal, familial and social challenges Jude and Milad encounter, special analysis is devoted to four spotted journeys they go through from adversity to resilience: from familial outrage to support and success, from cruel apprenticeship to craftsmanship and professionalism, from stereotypical matrimony to adaptive conjugality, and from disruption to survival.

Jude’s and Milad’s intense psychological and physical pains are comparable in the sense that each protagonist receives a pour of blames from his living companion(s). Whereas Jude is blamed by his nearest relative, old aunt Drusilla, for what she perceives as his laziness and carelessness, Milad is blamed by his parents, especially his father, for his close attachment to his

sisters. At the age of eleven, the 'little boy' Jude Fawley has to exert great physical effort to help his aunt running her small bakery. He has to fetch water from a nearby well into the cottage every day and he cannot object his aunt's 'sudden outcry' while describing him as an 'idle young harlican' when she tries to make him hurry up (I.i.4). The adjective 'sudden' denotes a drastic change in mood of an old woman whose nerve is easily moved for reasons she cannot properly recognize. She cannot avow that Jude encounters physical hardship because he has to draw "the water with what [is] a great effort for one of his stature". He has to land and empty "the big bucket into his own pair of smaller ones" and his only relief is when he pauses a moment 'for breath'. Jude's suffering becomes unendurable as he carries his buckets "across the patch of clammy greensward" (I.i.5) whereupon the well stands in spite of his 'slender frame' and restlessness (I.ii.7). If the adjective 'clammy' signifies the 'dewy' nature of the grass and the possibility of Jude's dangerous slipping over it, the adjective 'slender' refers to Jude's physical unfitness to perform his duty. Thus, Jude's careful footsteps, which aunt Drusilla cannot justify, become justifiable. On another occasion and after Jude is 'turned away' from his apprenticeship in Farmer Troutham's corn field, Jude's aunt expresses her worry because Jude is going to spend "all the spring upon her hands doing nothing" (I.ii.11). At that moment, Jude's feeling is associated with the misery of his 'growing up' and the subsequent responsibilities that could burden his shoulders. He wishes that nature acts as a barrier between his enjoyable childhood and his responsible adolescence. Though Jude's early experience with his aunt is mostly enfolded with negativity, it positively contributes to the development of his character. Practically, he decides to modify his daily routine to include his assistance to his aunt during the morning and going into the village in the afternoon when there is nothing more to be done (I.ii.12). Emotionally, he comes to know about his cousin Sue Bridehead, who will be his only true love, through his aunt (II.vi.105-107). Financially, he sells his aunt's old furniture and belongings after her death when he faces pecuniary hardship.

In *Khobz 'Ala Tawelat al-Khal Milad*, Milad's parents play vital roles in his suffering as well as in his resilience and healing process. His father represents the patriarchal system which strictly adheres to the traditional perception of masculinity. He is annoyed when he sees delicacy

within the character of his son. His annoyance becomes anger when he knows that Milad usually stays with his sisters and listens to their gossip. His anger turns into fury when Milad informs him that he dared to touch his sister's hair while styling it with hairpins. He is enraged when he knows that his son buys his sisters' products for feminine hygiene and he slaps Milad in the face. The father's response is accompanied with his attempt to drill into Milad's mind that men should not accompany women because the two sexes are, symbolically, comparable to salt and leaven. He instructs Milad to accompany his sisters either as a guard or a father and he orders him to stay in *al-kousha* to work and study and never to go home except to sleep (35-36). After the passing away of the father, Milad recalls that his father slapped him in the face when he saw his nails polished with his sisters' nail polishing which Milad secretly stole, tried, and failed to remove (304). Milad's anxious relationship with his father is also implied in his disclosure that his father did not give him a hug during his lifetime (63) and did not dine with his mother throughout their martial life (71).

Milad's relationship with his mother takes an oscillating curve. Thematically, her conventional perspective of femininity and masculinity is always beyond her criticism of her son. Before Milad's marriage to Zeinab, his mother kicks him out of the kitchen because he is not allowed to do the kitchen work. She reminds him that he is a man and that he must act accordingly. She enlightens him that there is an "implied agreement between the two sexes" (57). According to this agreement, a man should irrigate and cultivate the land, whereas a woman should cook. The man should build and the woman should clean the building. The tools the man uses are those which help him in agriculture rather than in the kitchen. She concludes that any violation of this agreement should be settled to avoid subsequent social disorder. After Milad's marriage, his mother blames him for his washing dishes because she denies man's responsibility for doing the housework (56). She criticizes him for his involvement in the 'women's quarrels' between his elder sister, Saleha, and his wife too (98).

Despite Milad's uneasy relationship with his parents, he adapts himself to his father's coarse manners and his mother's blame. The adaptation is based on Milad's affirmation that his father, who has never declared that he loves his son, hides great love for him underneath his harsh

exterior (29). Milad's appreciation for his father is due to his acquiring the professionalism of baking as well as the moral of success through his father, who does not only teach him that baking is 'an art' but also that a man should live as he is. His father instructs him, "to live as you are is better than enjoying life within your hands while you are a liar, thief, fraud and hypocrite (34). Milad's search for identity throughout the novel is based on this moral. In parallel, Milad's mother shows flexibility and support on critical occasions. For instance, Saleha informs Milad that their mother had sold all her gold to financially support his furnishing his new flat so that his marriage to Zeinab is imminent (240). Moreover, Milad conveys his grief when his father dies (52-53) and he uses the motif of forgiveness to emphasize that he holds no grudge against him (281). Milad is also touched by his mother's death and he recalls that he cried like never before upon her death. He emphasizes that his mother was the tent's last pillar regardless of age (265).

Leading a journey from arduous apprenticeship to skillfulness brings Jude's and Milad's working experience closer. Each protagonist goes through the hardship of acquiring the basics of a certain craft until he is qualified. Equipped with the new qualification, each character has an opportunity to gain vocational success.

In an attempt to conquer his sense of helplessness after he is fired from work at Farmer Troutham's corn field, Jude devotes his effort to his maiden aunt's rustic bakery and he manages to turn it into a place for small bakery business. An 'aged' horse and a 'creaking' cart are purchased and Jude has "thrice a week to carry loaves of bread to the villagers and solitary cotters immediately around Marygreen" (I.iv.26). The three adjectives 'aged', 'creaking' and 'solitary' signify low speed movement, rough means of transportation, and far distanced destinations respectively. Jude's physical suffering intensifies when his daily routine is reported. He has to "get up at three o'clock in the morning to heat the oven, and mix and set in the bread that he distribute[s] later in the day" (I.v.27). He does not forget to exert more effort to visit a remote flour-mill near Cresscombe "to execute a commission for his aunt" (I.v.31) either. Nevertheless, Jude's experience in the baking business in Marygreen enables him to earn sustenance when he moves to Kennetbridge afterwards. Due to his catching 'a chill' after working under the rain while he had some stone-work of a music-hall at Quartershot, Jude

falls severely ill. As soon as he starts recovering, he has to 'try his hand' at baking cakes and gingerbreads which he can bake indoors. So as to promote the cakes, Jude adds his artistic touch through giving them the shapes of 'windows, towers, and pinnacles' and calling them 'Christminster cakes' (V.vii.301). In addition to the baking business, Jude learns the building craftsmanship and manages to obtain some "small blocks of freestone" and gets involved in "copying the heads and capitals in his parish church" (I.v.29). Moreover, when Jude is acquainted with "a stone-mason of a humble kind in Alfredston", he replaces his work in the bakery with his "learning the rudiments of freestone-working" regardless of the 'trifling wage' he receives. He also goes to a church-builder who allows him to work under an architect's direction. Thus, Jude becomes "handy at restoring the dilapidated masonries of several village churches round him" (I.v.29). The combination between the adjective 'handy', which shows Jude's skill, and the adjective 'dilapidated', which refers to the ruined structure of a building, hints at the hard objective Jude needs to achieve and the great experience he has managed to acquire to make his achievement true.

In Christminster, Jude accepts his work at the stonemason's yard after days of strolling and observing people's lives (II.ii.81). With his present work, Jude pursues his old dream of self-learning as he exploits his wage to buy a book or two regardless of his inability to afford himself a fire during 'raw and cold' weather. He buys 'a shaded lamp', 'pens', 'paper', and the 'necessary books' he has not been able to obtain due to his financial hardship. Symbolically, the lamp, a great-coat, a hat, and woollen gloves become his only means of feeling warmth (II.ii.81). In term of professionalism, Jude is once again described as "a handy man at his trade, an all-round man, as artizans in country-towns are apt to be" (II.iv.91). In Melchester, Jude is disappointed to hear about Sue and Mr. Phillotson's promise of engagement after two years. However, Jude restarts looking for work and he manages to 'edge' himself in "some carving at the cemetery on the hill" (III.i.129). Later on, he succeeds in getting engaged in the work he has loved the most; he is involved in 'the Cathedral repairs' and its requirement of the overhauling of its 'whole interior stonework'. Jude also has 'confidence enough in his own skill with the mallet and chisel' that he can finish his work, which requires years of labour, during his stay in Melchester. His confidence can be

interpreted as a sign of positivity and professionalism. Additionally, following their sense of being ostracized in Aldbrickham, Jude's family takes advantage of his 'adaptive craftsmanship' to enter on a shifting, almost 'nomadic', life which provides them with 'pleasantness for a time'. As soon as Jude hears of freestone work, he applies to such a work and he is careful to choose "places remote from his old haunts and Sue's". Once he finishes his work, 'long or briefly', he moves on (V.vii.298). Thus, Jude's family's only way to survive becomes their 'constant drift' from one place to another because "society is impossible to tolerate their so-called amoral life" (Yu-hua 654). In this way, Jude's life can be metaphorically related to "the intellectual and social restlessness" (Harvey 90) of the late nineteenth century.

In *Khobz 'Ala Tawelat al-Khal Milad*, Milad is taught how to produce excellent bread in *al-kousha*. The first piece of information his father, the master baker, tells him is that every baker has his own signature on the bread he makes. The father 'pulls' his son's thin body to show him his own signature. Thus, the signature is symbolically employed as a reference to the baker's identity. When Milad expresses his ignorance of signatures, his father calls him 'a mere child'. When the father asks Milad to sign the bread himself using a sharp razor blade, Milad expresses his fear of injury. The father's response is his statement that Milad will be injured if he holds the blade as a 'shivering girl' (21). The humiliating comparison motivates Milad to conquer his fear and immediately sign the bread. At that particular moment, Milad conveys his gaiety because his father has managed to turn his hatred for the dough into love and a desire for knowledge once he has allowed him to touch it and Milad has found it soft. The progress in Milad's character is boosted by his father's empowering words, "Milad! Someday, you will be the master baker" (22). Then, the father immediately realizes that he is becoming more passionate and he tries to conceal his passion by shouting, "Milad! Have not you finished cleaning, you stupid boy? Go directly back to your work and I need it done quickly" (22).

Milad's ability to withstand his father's harshness can be linked to his recognition that his father, who is very gentle with the bread dough and tough with people (20), is the best person who can teach him the peculiarities of bread making. In *al-kousha*, Milad has the chance to be acquainted with bread. He learns that baking is an 'art' rather than a 'duty'. This perspective

leads Milad to identify his kitchen as 'his artistic masterpiece' (44). He also recalls that he metaphorically 'flew joyfully', like a bird, towards his father as soon as the latter asked him to fetch him the baking materials so that they could start their baking tutorials (29). Milad's zeal for baking is boosted when he learns his father's unique recipe for baking 'excellent' bread. He comes to know that there are four main ingredients for preparing conventional bread: flour, water, leaven and salt. He finds out that there are other components for producing excellent bread: love, air, and time (30). The father-son dialogue in *al-kousha* is an imitation of a tutorial, especially when the father asks his son to bring a notebook and a pen when he comes to *al-kousha* onwards. Milad's overall assessment of his baking experience is positive as he emphasizes that his work in *al-kousha* has taught him patience, gentility, concentration, time respect, and good observation (29). Moreover, patience and persistence are two inner contributors to Milad's success as a baker. He reveals that he tried to produce a 'new' loaf of bread based on a recipe in an Italian book that belonged to his father and was stored for years in Zeinab's home library. Milad manages to solve the problem of translating the recipe into Arabic by seeking the help of Madame Mariam, an external contributor who knows the Italian language (10). Practically, Milad does not give up trying to bake this kind of bread regardless of the problems he encounters: the quality of the flour, temperature, and the duration of fermentation (10-11). The quantity of wasted dough does not bother him either. At last, Milad manages to produce 'an ideal' loaf of bread and his success leads him to jump joyfully (11). Moreover, Milad's preoccupation with baking leads him to make use of all opportunities that may advance his professionalism. While enjoying his honeymoon in Tunisia, Milad does not forget to upgrade his kitchenware by buying some pottery and cooking pots (45). Milad's eagerness for baking is also evident in his learning new recipes regardless of his remarkable fame as a master baker as he allows Madame Mariam to teach him the recipe for preparing the orange and lemon cake (45).

Milad's intimate relationship with *al-kousha* does not last long as considerable difficulties are encountered. His father decides to quit *al-kousha* and Milad's uncle, Mohamad, becomes the new manager. Milad's philosophy of management is replaced with his uncle's. Unlike Milad who prefers quality over quantity, specialty over conventionality, and diversity over

limitation, his uncle advocates economic production based on selling only two kinds of bread in large quantities using the least effort and minimum expenses. Milad is disappointed when he consults his father and finds him indifferent (47) and losing the spirit for baking (50). Milad's sense of alienation is worsened due to his father's death and his uncle's negligence. Milad goes to *al-kousha* every day, though he is not assigned any work. Consequently, Milad decides to quit *al-kousha* on his own (53). Later, Milad's cousin, Al-Absy, reveals that his father had oppressed Milad and his sisters to sell him their shares in *al-kousha* (280).

Thematically, Milad's revival of interest in *al-kousha* is given an opportunity after his uncle's death as Al-Absy admits his father's mismanagement. Al-Absy does not only criticize his lack of alertness in running *al-kousha* but also praises Milad as an innovative and experienced baker. He offers Milad the chance to be the new manager and to implement his own management philosophy in return for a certain percentage of profits (280). Al-Absy's negotiation with Milad opens the door for a promising partnership. Milad's response is his expression of 'the joy of existence' due to the possibility of regaining his job in his most favorable workplace. He also expresses his readiness to forgive those who have caused his misfortune over the years. Moreover, Milad considers the offer an opportunity to practically compensate his father for not bringing him grandsons. He decides to regain the outstanding reputation *al-kousha* had during his father's lifetime. He thinks of buying a bouquet of roses for Zeinab as well. He expresses his readiness to ask for her forgiveness because of the financial difficulty they have been subjected to. He believes life can be better on the personal and professional levels (281). Overall, Milad has a promising chance for compensation after dispossession.

From a gender point of view, Jude and Sue as well as Milad and Zeinab violate the social and cultural construction of masculinity and femininity within their local communities. Whereas Jude is tolerant with Sue's pursuit of asexual life, Milad copes with his role-inversion with Zeinab as he becomes a househusband and she is the liberal breadwinner for the family.

Jude is distressed when Sue tells him about her past relation with her lover years ago and her insistence on leading a 'sexless life'. Jude gets more anxious when she gets "further and further away from him with her strange ways and curious unconsciousness of gender" (III.iv.143). When he expresses that he cares very much about her, she replies that she cares about him as she cares about anybody she has ever met. During their following moments of 'long silence', Jude has an impression that she treats him 'cruelly' (III.iv.143). Then, he becomes 'so full of complicated gloom' when she tells him, "You mustn't love me. You are to like me – that's all" (III.v.149). She elaborates that people's recognition of man-woman relationship is based on 'animal desire' (III.vi.160). Jude-Sue dialogue remarkably shows that she is cautious to deal with him as a friend rather than a lover. Fortunately, Jude's suffering because of Sue's cold passion is temporarily lessened. His farewell with her in Marygreen after the death of his aunt Drusilla witnesses a critical moment of their physical closeness. At first, Sue expresses that she will not object if he kisses her with 'the spirit of a cousin and a friend' rather than 'the spirit of a lover'. Upon Jude's disapproval of her suggestion, they move apart for thirty yards. Then, they 'quickly run back', meet, and 'embrace most unpremeditatedly'. They also exchange close and long kisses. Their excitement is symbolically illustrated by her 'flushed cheeks' and his 'beating heart' (IV.iii.208). As the plot develops, Sue manages to take Phillotson's permission to quit his house and live with Jude in Aldbrickham. After the reunion of Jude and Sue, he feels wretchedness because of her perception of sexual intercourse as a dull martial duty. She emphasizes that she finds a supreme delicate 'delight' in living with him and that he should not 'attempt to intensify' this delight as she trusts him to set her 'wishes' above his 'gratification' (IV.v.232). But, Arabella's visit to Jude in Aldbrickham releases Sue from her sexual preservation, which Mrs. Oliphant describes as 'a pretended reserve' (Cox 270), and brings Jude's perplexity to an end. The visit excites Sue's jealousy and motivates her to agree to get married to Jude to prove that she is not a 'cold-nature' or 'sexless creature' (V.ii.256). She even allows him to kiss her 'freely' and returns his kisses 'in a way she had never done before' and her sole metaphorical comment is, "the little bird is caught at last" (V.ii.258). Later on, when Sue meets Arabella in the spring fair at Kennetbridge, Sue discloses to her that she is a mother to two children and the third is expected to come

soon (V.vii.300). Thus, while Jude is able to adapt himself to Sue's asexual life at the beginning of their acquaintance, she manages to adapt herself to satisfy his urge when she lives with him.

The character portrayal of Milad shows his advanced ability to cope with the hardship of housework. When he is first introduced, he states that he has already set the house to welcome a new guest. He has finished preparing an orange and lemon cake. He has cleaned the house and dusted the photos, paintings and furniture. He has glanced all windows and lamps (9). Then, he starts narrating his daily routine. He prepares breakfast for Zeinab and wakes her up at 6:30. He turns on the radio and searches for a song by Fairouz to prepare the atmosphere she likes (14). He irons her clothes. He gives her a lift to her workplace. He returns home to wash the clothes and utensils he used to prepare breakfast. He rearranges the living room, bedroom and other places disturbed by Zeinab. He takes care of plants (13-15). For Milad, the housework is not tedious work. His looking thoughtfully at it makes it enjoyable to him. On one occasion, Milad exclaims why women hate spreading laundry on the rope, though he finds it a good opportunity for tranquillity and contemplation. He turns it into an artistic activity with a certain sequence too (15). Moreover, Milad does not hint at annoyance because Zeinab used to make sure that the kitchen window is closed so that no one sees Milad while he is cleaning the kitchen and polishing the floor. She is afraid of the scandal that any one knows that Milad does the housework (56). Thus, the kitchen is metaphorically compared to a shell that hides the socially unacceptable martial life Milad leads and the closed window acts as a symbolical barrier that prevents outsiders from getting acquainted with the details of Milad's privacy. Moreover, Milad manages to adapt to Zeinab's character and lifestyle. He recognizes that Zeinab is not good at taking care of herself and that she lives in 'big chaos'. He criticizes her inability to realize that beauty lies in slowness and taking matters less seriously (13). He does not object to her smoking and he teaches her how to smoke (100). He knows that Zeinab has a strong personality and that she does not surrender herself to the current of life to drag her as it flows (164). He recalls his dissatisfaction with his wife's wearing a bikini on the shore during their honeymoon in Tunisia. Due to his attitude, Zeinab expresses her misfortune to marry a man who is 'stick-in-the-mud' like most men in her

homeland. In response, Milad agrees to allow her to do so on condition that no Libyan sees her (162-163). Milad's success in adjusting his life to suit Zeinab's interests can be related to his earlier emphasis that Zeinab is the centre of his life (22) in addition to his later metaphorical expression of willingness to live a thousand year as a chicken rather than to live as a cock that cannot fly except for seconds (83). He is able to classify Zeinab's character as in-between liberality and conservatism (129) and he apprehends Zeinab's adoption of her uncle's liberal thoughts (160).

Unlike *Jude the Obscure* which represents Jude's legal marriage to Arabella as well as his consanguinity with Sue, *Khobz 'Ala Tawelat al-Khal Milad* depicts Milad's romantic marriage to Zeinab. All these relationships seem analogous as they witness the two protagonists' equipment with love, sincerity and awareness to tolerate moments of personal misfortune and tides of social criticism.

Jude's legal marriage to Arabella as well as his civilian marriage to Sue is comparable to Milad's marriage to Zeinab since each relationship brings the husband under social fire. Once Jude and Arabella's banns are published, the people of the parish think he is a 'simple fool' who is about 'to sell his books to buy saucepans' (I.viii.52). Hence, Milad's failure as a scholar is publically foreseen. Later on, when Jude lives with Sue in Aldbrickham and after their repeated suspension of their legal marriage, the 'society of Spring Street and the neighbourhood' generally do not understand "Sue and Jude's private minds, emotions, positions, and fears" (V.v.287). The presence of the unexpected child, little Time, contributes to the mystery of their life as well. Even their pretended travel to London to persuade people around them that they got legally married is ineffective. Gradually, they feel that they are socially ostracized as the baker's lad and the grocer's boy do no longer show them their sign of respect and the neighbouring artizans' wives try to avoid talking to Sue and, consequently, "an oppressive atmosphere [begins] to encircle their souls" (V.v.287-88). Businesswise, the headstone and epitaph orders 'fall off' and Jude returns to 'journey-work' again (V.v.88). But, fortunately, Jude is offered a chance to "undertake the relettering of the Ten Commandments in a little church they've been restoring lately in the country" near him and Sue decides to assist him (V.v.289). Comparatively, Milad and Zeinab's marriage begins to gradually

crack once they are subjected to familial pressure due to their childlessness. The pressure motivates them to consult hospitals in Libya and Tunisia as well as to seek the counseling of experienced people. Throughout their suffering, Milad is described as patient to listen to multiple pieces of advice given by recommended people regardless of his dissatisfaction with their pitiful eyes (109-110).

Financial hardship is another obstacle Jude and Milad try to tackle. Due to Jude's little wage as an apprentice as well as Arabella's 'uselessness' in 'a town-lodging', Jude has to move to 'a lonely roadside cottage between the Brown House and Marygreen' so that he can make use of a vegetable garden and keeping pigs. The new cottage is far distanced and Jude has to 'walk to and from Alfredston every day' (I.ix.52). He has lost hope to receive Arabella's help because his suffering is nonsense to her. She had one target and she achieved it; she got a husband. Moreover, in spite of Jude's progress in his craftsmanship in Christminster, his realization of the impossibility of his joining scholarship negatively affects his work. The realization leads to his inability to 'proceed to his work' (II.vii.113) and, consequently, he receives 'a note of dismissal from his employer' (II.vii.117). With 'no money left in his pocket', Jude collects his belongings and decides to go back to Marygreen. His only means is walking for nearly twenty miles. In an attempt to cope with such an adversity, he persuades himself that he has 'ample time to contemplate' (II.vii.117). On his way back, Jude reaches Alfredston and 'pawns' his waistcoat and sleeps 'under a rick' that night. Then, he proceeds his walk as 'weary' and 'mud-bespattered' till he sees 'a trough of water' that enables him to bath his face. The verb 'pawns' stands for Jude's destitution, whereas the adjectives 'weary' and 'mud-bespattered' are evidences of his anguish. The presence of the trough can be interpreted as a symbol of hope given by nature to a person in need. When Jude arrives at his old aunt's cottage, he eats breakfast and sleeps in his old room 'in his own shirt-sleeves'. After he wakes up, he is overtaken by a sense of predicament because of his 'hell of conscious failure both in ambition and love'. As his virility prevents him from 'screaming' like a woman, he has no relief but to 'clench' his teeth in misery in a way that brings 'lines' about his mouth (II.vii.118). The visual image of Jude's face becomes a reflection of his heavy-heartedness. In Aldbrickham, Jude faces another monetary shortage

but this time he is assisted by Sue who sells his bakery products on a 'little stall' at the spring fair at Kennetbridge. She also arranges the products on a tray and sends little Time to sell them at the train platform (V.vii.299). Comparatively, Milad's need for financial aid while he is engaged to Zeinab is supplied through the protective mechanism of family support. Saleha informs him that their uncle, Mohamed, has expressed his happiness in witnessing Milad's marriage contract and paying for the expenses of Milad's wedding ceremony. Additionally, Saleha does not only arrange for Milad's getting a job in the pizza shop but also supports him financially (240). She acts as his advisor while he is buying furniture for the new flat as well (241).

Another resemblance between Jude and Milad is that each attempts to commit suicide after going through family disputes that result in a number of revelations. Jude is 'appalled' at the first night of his wedding when Arabella unfastens 'a long tail of her hair' which she hangs upon 'the looking glass' he has bought her. The shock can be interpreted as a manifestation of Jude's realization of the symbolical connotation between the tail and what Omosule refers to as Arabella's 'artificiality' (96). Additionally, Jude feels distressed when he knows that his wife worked as a barmaid in Aldbrickham. Jude, who wishes to be associated with religious scholarship, falls in perplexity when he thinks of the secular activities of the bar. However, Jude attempts to overcome his 'feeling of sickness' about his new discoveries on the basis that there is no "great sin in a woman adding to her hair" (I.ix.52) and that the influence of town artificiality can affect the simple life of the villagers. Furthermore, Jude gets stunned when he inquires about Arabella's expected date of giving birth and she carelessly informs him that she 'made a mistake' and that 'women fancy wrong things sometimes' (I.x.55). Instead of blaming her, he condemns himself because he hurried to save her reputation at a time he was not ready for marriage. On the following days and to rebalance his anxiety with tranquillity, Jude uses 'reading' as a barrier that saves him from psychological suffering while looking at the road to Alfredston, whose 'wayside objects' remind him "so much of his courtship to his wife" (I.x.60).

Jude's hearing the talk of one of Arabella's companions about him enables him to apprehend Arabella's vicious plan to get him as a husband through persuading him that she was pregnant. For Jude, the revelation is 'horridly unpleasant' (I.x.61). However, the peak of Jude's exasperation

comes as a result of Arabella's improper seizing his 'dear ancient classics' she finds on a table and her act of throwing them one by one upon the floor. Jude perceives Arabella's act as 'disgusting' because her "hands had become smeared with the hot grease" she was operating and her "fingers consequently left very perceptible imprints on the bookcovers". Intensified by her visual image of vulgarity, Jude angrily catches "her by the arms to make her leave off" and he does not "relinquish his hold" until she gives him a promise "to leave the books alone" (I.x.63). Jude's physical violence against his wife signals a drastic change in his character as he realizes the inevitability of defending his remaining dream of learning threatened by a vulgar wife. In response, Arabella attempts to smear Jude's reputation through going into the highway, pulling her hair into an unpleasant disorder, and 'unfastening several button of her gown'. She talks to a number of pedestrians who stare at her 'extraordinary spectacle'. She persuades them that Jude has humiliated her, prevented her from going to the church on Sunday mornings, torn her hair off, and pulled her gown off her back. The smearing words in addition to Arabella's visual image of disorder lead Jude to go out to 'drag her in by main force'. All of a sudden, Jude loses his heat and believes that her words should not bother him because their lives are ruined "by the fundamental error of their matrimonial union: that of having based a permanent contract on a temporary feeling which had no necessary connection with affinities that alone render a life-long comradeship tolerable" (I.x.64).

A few hours later, Jude tries to drown himself in an icy round pond but the attempt fails and he feels that "peaceful death abhorred him as a subject" (I.x.65). When Jude goes home, he discovers that Arabella has written a note informing him that she has quit the house and will not return (I.x.66). Then, he receives a letter from her suggesting her travel to Australia with her parents and he has no objection. The gentility of Jude's character is evident on two subsequent occasions. He attaches all the money he has to the letter he sends to her. Then, when he hears that there is an auction at her father's house, he packs "his own household goods into a waggon, and [sends] them to her at the aforesaid homestead, that she might sell them with the rest, or as many of them as she should choose" (I.x.66). Thereafter, Jude moves to settle in Alfredston where, after few days, enters a broker's shop to

find for sale a portrait for him he had previously given to Arabella as a gift after their marriage. Jude buys the portrait and burns it when he goes home. Symbolically, getting rid of the portrait signals Jude's perception of "the death of every tender sentiment in his wife" as well as "the conclusive little stroke required to demolish all sentiment in him" (I.x.67).

Milad and Zeinab's marriage is endangered by Al-Absy's informing Milad that he saw Zeinab alone in her manager's car (81). Though Milad has no evidence for her betrayal, his trust in her fidelity is shaken. Due to Milad's suspicion of Zeinab, he asks her to stop going to work. As a result, she opens the fire of speech at him. She tells him that she worked very hard to get her current position and neglected herself to enable him to get comfort and stay jobless because he is afraid of the world that chases him. She repeats that she endured work hardship and cannot give up all what she gained. She asserts that she provides him with food, drinks, and the money he spends on his cigarettes. Finally, she decisively gives a clear-cut 'no' answer to his request. When Milad argues that he uses his own money to buy his cigarettes, she informs him that he spends his money on his spinster sisters (84). Milad and Zeinab's dispute ends with Milad's slapping Zeinab in face because he realizes that she insults his sisters (86). On another occasion, Milad decides to follow Zeinab to her work and carefully keeps an eye on every car that comes out of the enterprise where she works. When he discovers that Zeinab comes out into her manager's car and that they sit together in a Café, he dares to approach them and asks Zeinab to go home with him. At home, they exchange accusations. She claims that he does not deserve to be 'a man' and that she pities him whenever she sees him doing the housework. She frankly tells him that she is filled with 'indignation' towards him. On his behalf, Milad accuses her that she did not love him and that she married him to enjoy her life by manipulating his kindness (208-209). At the end of their dispute, Zeinab slaps Milad in the face, goes into her bedroom, and locks it behind her (210). Milad's reaction is his attempt to commit suicide by throwing himself out of the roof of the house, but the attempt fails because Milad falls upon the soil of the garden and his legs are broken (211).

Zeinab's attitude towards Milad drastically changes once she hears his painful cry. She hurries up to rescue him and she wails until the ambulance arrives. She forgets their quarrel at once and starts drying his sweat before he

loses consciousness (211). During his stay in the hospital, Zeinab regularly feeds him with the food she prepares at home. She exchanges smiles with him. She touches his little figure to inject tranquility into his vessels. She suggests she can take a holiday for a week to give him necessary care (269). Milad is also happy because Zeinab narrates memories of both her travels and the alleys of the city to enable him to pass time. She sings to him and helps him to stand up and walk again. She waters plants and carefully bathes his skin with a sponge to prevent water from harming his splint (340-41). Thus, whereas Jude's attempt to commit suicide is not followed by his reconciliation with Arabella, Milad's similar attempt brings his irritable relationship with Zeinab back to its harmonious frame.

Jude and Milad face the calamity of losing children. At first, Jude gets perplexed when Arabella sends him a letter disclosing that there is a boy, called little Time, born of their marriage many years earlier (V.iii.263). In response, Jude decides to surpass any possible suspicion about his blood bond with the boy and agrees that the boy lives with him and Sue especially after Sue's passionate words about the boy. Jude's decision is based on his willingness to protect the boy from social 'evil influences' even if his financial standing is not satisfactory (V.iii.264). Upon the arrival of the boy, Jude goes further with his ability to withstand this strained situation as he suggests that he and Sue will "educate and train him with a view to the University" so that Jude can 'carry out through him' what he "could not accomplish in his own person" (V.iii.268). Jude and Sue also determine to add 'the legal form' to their marriage so that their care for the child is made 'easier' (V.iii.269). They go to a 'Superintendent Registrar's Office' instead of the church and sign 'the form of notice' about their marriage (V.iv.270).

Jude's relationship with little Time is subjected to a catastrophe. One day, the boy visits Jude and Sue in their workplace in Aldbrickham during the school-hours while crying because "some boys had taunted him about his nominal mother" (V.v.289). When the family returns to Christminster, Sue has a long dialogue with the boy that is dominated by their shared sense of wretchedness due to their inability to find a shelter until Sue and the children only are offered a room for one night. After several attempts to solve the problem, the boy is depressed because of his and his mother's 'failure' to find a room in another house in addition to the 'unavailability' of a room for his

father in the house they have to spend the night at. Thus, the boy is seized by 'brooding undemonstrative horror'. When he asks Sue about what they are supposed to do, she replies 'despondently', "I don't know". Then, the boy expresses his sympathy with his father who went to search for a room under the rain. Then, Sue affirms that what they all have are 'trouble', 'adversity', and 'suffering'. The boy is intelligent enough to recognize that his father 'went away' to give children 'room' and Sue does not deny the fact. The boy goes on to wish to be "out o' the world than in it" and emphasizes that Jude's children are the major cause that the family "can't get a good lodging" (VI.ii.322). He expresses his disapproval of children because they make trouble to their parents. Upon Sue's explanation that children are the offspring of 'the law of nature', he mentions that children never ask to be born. He sympathizes with Sue because she is not his biological mother and he is hypersensitive to cause her any trouble. He frankly states his wish, "I wish I hadn't been born!" (VI.ii.323). Little Time generalizes his wish as he proposes, "I think that whenever children be born that are not wanted they should be killed directly, before their souls come to 'em, and not allowed to grow big and walk about" (VI.ii.323). All of a sudden, the boy, metaphorically, 'jumps up wildly' as soon as Sue informs him that the family is expecting another baby. The boy goes to 'burst out weeping' and cries 'in bitter reproach' that Sue is 'wicked' and 'cruel'. He numerates a list of their troubles and walks up and down 'sobbing' because the family will increase in number amidst their financial and healthy suffering. In the following morning and due to the boy's 'aggravated despondency that the events and information of the evening before have induced in his morbid temperament" (VI.ii.323), it is discovered that little Time has killed his brother and sister before committing suicide.

During the several attempts to desperately rescue the children, Jude keeps back "his own grief on account of Sue". When she blames herself because of her talk to little Time, Jude tries to console her by informing her that "the doctor says there are such boys springing up amongst us- boys of a sort unknown in the last generation – the outcome of new views of life. They seem to see all its terrors before they are old enough to have staying power to resist them. He says it is the beginning of the coming universal wish not to live" (VI.ii.325). Due to Sue's misfortune, she gives birth to

a prematurely child who is born a corpse (VI.ii.330). After the death of Jude's all children, he moves to a lodging in the direction of Beersheba where he affirms to Sue the inevitability to make their marriage 'legal' due to his sense that he belongs now to "that vast of men shunned by the virtuous- the men called seducers" (VI.iii.332). In spite of their suffering, Jude and Sue achieve "an improvement in their pecuniary position [since] Jude unexpectedly found good employment at his old trade almost directly he arrived" (VI.iii.332). In contrast, Zeinab becomes pregnant after several years of marriage. As soon as Milad comes to know about her pregnancy, he decides to divide his working hours between doing the housework during daylight and arranging the baby's room in the evening. But, unfortunately, Zeinab catches fever and subsequently loses the long-awaited baby. Meanwhile, Milad tries to look stronger for Zeinab's sake since he believes that a sufferer's success in controlling his sadness may give hope to all sufferers around him (112).

5. Conclusion

Jude the Obscure can be brought closer to *Khobz 'Ala Tawelat al-Khal Milad* since the theme of resilience is at the core of each. Though Jude and Milad are challenged by diverse forms of psychological, mental and physical crises, they attempt to remain positive as children, teenagers, young lovers, and adult husband. Whereas Jude suffers from his aunt's rebuke, Milad is distressed by his father's cruelty and his mother's blame. However, Jude develops his aunt's bakery into a small business during her lifetime and makes use of her furniture at a moment of hardship after her death. Comparatively, Milad acquires through his father the professionalism of baking and receives through his mother the financial aid for marriage. Jude and Milad have physical and psychological pain due to cruel apprenticeship until they become handy as craftsmen. In contrast to Jude who is primarily pressed as a baker and stone mason until he is known for his skilled work, Milad overcomes the oppression practiced by his uncle and turns into a unique bakery manager with a qualitative philosophy. Equipped with tolerance and adaptiveness, Jude justifies Arabella's superficiality and copes with Sue's sexual reserve before she shows flexibility to his urge. Similarly, Milad is used to dealing with Zeinab's liberality and breadwinning. Jude and

Milad are similar in their failing attempts to commit suicide due to marital disputes but they are different in their subsequent reconciliation with Arabella and Zeinab. Unlike Jude who is quit by Arabella, Milad restores his affinity with Zeinab. Whereas Jude loses his three children because of the psychological complication within his elder son in addition to a fourth baby who is born premature, Milad loses his long-awaited baby due to Zeinab's fever while she is pregnant. However, Jude and Milad continue supporting Sue and Zeinab psychologically. Consequently, Jude and Milad have the ability to achieve temporary healing either through sustaining their positivity to those around them or maintaining their own life attributes. However, if Jude's physical death is the result of his sickness that is logically paved for, Milad's psychological downfall is not paved for. Neither Milad and Zeinab's betrayal nor Milad's subsequent act of murdering Zeinab in cold blood seems adequate because of Milad and Zeinab's faithfulness to each other for years as well as their advocacy of forgiveness and reconciliation after they slapped each other in the face on two different occasions. Moreover, the murder occurs at a moment when Milad can potentially enjoy financial stability, psychological tranquility, and mental relaxation. Most of the characters who contributed to his dilemma are either dead or have no current relationship with him. The worst scenario for Milad and Zeinab could have been their separation or divorce rather than an act of murder. All in all, Milad's healing is shot at the heart when his prosperity is imminent.

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