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Are Couples Really Happy after Divorce? An Analysis of the Negative Post-Divorce Effects in Hanif Kureishi's Short Story *Midnight All Day*¹

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Abstract

This paper examines the negative post-divorce effects on the separated couples in Hanif Kureishi's short story *Midnight All Day*. In so doing, it focuses upon two negative aspects related to the post-divorce phases. First, it looks closely at how Kureishi's fictional male character Ian feels frustrated, unhappy and fragmented in the wake of his divorce from his wife Jane, even though he finds at once a new lover Marina. Secondly, the paper also discusses another disturbing negative aspect of Ian's life after the break-up with Jane – the negative aspect linked to his parental responsibility towards his daughter. The paper debates that Ian's the situation is actually almost all the separated couples and their children in the contemporary world. He has a daughter, who stays with her grandmother in London. Whenever he sees a small girl in the street and whenever he thinks of her, he recalls at once his daughter and seems to suffer profoundly from the view that he is unable to fulfil his proper parental responsibility for her and be a good father, a good model for her emotional and social development as in a stable family.

Keywords: Divorce, Postdivorce Effects, Hanif Kureishi, Romantic Love and Identity.

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In recent decades, the rate of divorce has rapidly increased at an alarming level and still continues to rise in the early decades of twentieth-first century across the world. This annoying soar in the divorce rate worries scientists, sociologists, politicians and religious leaders as one of the most challenging problems of the contemporary world, which, they think, obviously threatens the very basis and fabric of what we call traditional family and society, as well as the future of human civilization (Murphy, 1985; Hoem, 1991, White, 1991; Bumpass, Martin and Sweet, 1991; Kiernan and Mueller, 1998; Amato, 2000; Ermisch and Francesconi, 2000, Böheim and Ermisch, 2001; Chan and Halpin, 2001). In fact, divorce has been an irrefutable fact of life as being personal and common throughout human history, and it usually takes place when life becomes unbearable for the couples in their emotional and physical relationships at home due to some possible reasons such as domestic violence, abuse, adultery, infidelity, lack of communication, economic problems, alcohol and drug addiction, the end of romance, differences in faith and cultural background, constant shifts in the perception of marriage and family and so on (Kitson, Babri and Roach, 1985; Dowling and Gorell-Barness, 1999; Roberts, 2000; Amato and Previti, 2003 and Amato, 2010). Having taken these reasons and many others into consideration as for the escalating trend in the divorce rate, what is generally seen particularly on the personal level is a strong desire or demand to escape from unpleasant living conditions in the relationship between husband and wife in the family and eventually to achieve a sense of happiness and freedom separately in their lives (Gilbert et all, 1998; Hawkins and Fackrell, 2009). Some researchers and people think that the immediate answer to this claim is “yes”, and divorce, they believe, may solve difficult problems in the relationship of the couples and eventually make them joyful in their new lives. What is more, they also argue that today divorce is no longer a disturbing, devastating and negative issue which not only affects the lives of the couples afterwards but also questions the basis of societal norms because modern societies, in their views, have “learned how to deal with divorce and adapt” themselves to this new situation caused by the increasing number of the divorce (Glaeser, 2014, pp. 2-3. For a detailed argument, see also Wolfinger, 2003). For example, Judith Viorst, American author and journalist, debates that “One advantage of marriage, it seems to me, is that when you fall out of love with each other, it keeps you together until maybe you fall in again” (Qtd. in Hawkins and Fackrell, 2009, p. 9). As for love, which is supposed to keep the couples together, moreover, William Butler Yeats, Irish poet and writer, also states a similar view: “I think a man and a woman should choose each other for life, for the simple reason that a long life with all its accidents is barely enough for a man and a woman

to understand each other; and in this case to understand is to love” (Qtd. in Hawkins and Fackrell, 2009, p. 9). Both Viorst and Yeats suggest is that one of the strongest cement which keeps the couples together is the romantic “love”, and when “love” in marriage ends, life becomes miserable and unhappy, which usually leads the couples to divorce. In their views, therefore, divorce avails the frustrated couples of chance to acquire again not only “love” and romance but also happiness and freedom with someone else later in their lives.

However, researches on the lives of separated men and women, along with their children, show that whatever benefits divorce brings to life, unfortunately, cannot prevent separated couples and their children from being negatively affected afterwards in their new lives (Hetherington, Cox, M. and Cox, R., 1976; Parish and Taylor, 1979; Adams, 1982; Demo and Acock, 1988; Jasinski, 2003; Ahrons, 2007; Hawkins and Fackrell, 2009). This paper debates in Hanif Kureishi’s short story *Midnight All Day* that whatever happiness and freedom the couples seek to acquire in their new lives in the wake of divorce cannot remove themselves thoroughly from the disturbing psychological negative post-divorce effects. In so doing, the paper examines in the story two negative aspects related to the post-divorce phases. First, it looks closely at how Kureishi’s fictional male character Ian still feels frustrated, unhappy and fragmented in the wake of his divorce from his wife Jane, even though he finds at once a new lover Marina: that is, he has difficulty in adjusting himself emotionally and physically to the new life. He strives to have a good time with his new lover, but Ian, as Kureishi represents him, seems unhappy and confused in his new life because it appears in his rumination and talks that Ian is psychologically haunted by the “shadow” of his wife, which obscures his vision of life and endangers his relationship with Marina in the future, even though he tries to hide it on the surface (Kureishi, 2010, p. 203). Finally, the paper also discusses another disturbing negative aspect of Ian’s life after the break-up with Jane – the negative aspect linked to his parental responsibility towards his daughter. In fact, Ian’s the situation is almost all the separated couples and their children in the contemporary world. He has a daughter, who stays with her grandmother in London. Whenever he sees a small girl in the street and whenever he thinks of her, he recalls at once his daughter and seems to suffer profoundly from the view that he is unable to fulfil his proper parental responsibility for her and be a good father, a good model for her emotional and social development as in a stable family.

As soon as the story of *Midnight All Day* opens, the reader immediately learns at once that Ian and his new girlfriend Marina have been in Paris for ten days, and it is instantly sensed in his behaviours, talks, feelings and thought that he is restless and unhappy. For

example, Ian sits alone in the room of his closest friend and business partner Anthony's flat in Paris, while waiting for Marina who is applying unguents over her body, so that he listens to Schubert's Sonata to get rid of his restlessness and then glimpses himself in the wardrobe mirror and sees himself as "a character in Lucian Freud: a middle-aged man in a thin, tan raincoat, ashen-faced, standing beside a dying pot plant, overweight and with, to his surprise, an absurd expression of hope, or the desire to please, in his eyes" (p. 203). As Kureishi represents him, Ian seems very complicated, tense and uneasy in his view because on the one hand, he has "desire to please" himself with his new girlfriend; on the other hand, he is very anxious for his ex-wife Jane's debilitating psychological and physical conditions. Ian knows that Jane does not feel well after his abandoning her and is thus taken to hospital. Though they are physically separated, he is still very much concerned about her situation because he is sure that the condition in which she suffers is obviously derived from his broken relationship with her, which frustrates her, and he wants to talk to Marina about it, yet she does not want to hear about Jane and about her psychological problem. But there is something whether we call it love or responsibility for her, which still keeps Ian under Jane's influence, and thus he is certain that "unless he did[told Marina about Jane], his wife would continue to shadow him – both of them [Ian and Marina] – darkening everything" in their relationship (p. 203). That is, Jane's "shadow" will continue to disturb him psychologically, and he is also convinced that it will darken and rupture the relationship between Ian and Marina. In his stressed situation, therefore, Schubert's Sonata becomes a means of "relief" and consolation despite the fact he does not fully "understand" the piece (p. 203). Even Ian's anxious state negatively affects his relationship with Marina, so that the narrator asks the questions: "What was between him and Marina? Had they only dreamed one another? He did not know, even now. All he could do was find out by living through to the end every sigh and shout of their stupid, wonderful, selfish love. Then they would both know if they were able to go on" (p. 203). Ian strives to escape from his boredom caused by his divorce and the shadow of Jane which follows him wherever he goes and whatever he does. Moreover, he is not sure whether or not he is going to be able to consummate his relationship with Marina since she, like Ian, is uncertain and ambivalent in her view concerning the future of their relationship: that is, they are both frustrated and confused in their vision and thus unable to assure each other in their relationship.

This frustration and confusion are also clearly seen in the conversation between Ian and Marina, while they are talking about job and money. They are short of money, and Ian

looks for a way to find money to buy food and clothes. When Marina tells Ian about her “dream” which was “to come to Paris and to live and work,” Ian tells her:

“We’re living in Paris now,” he had replied. “Sort of.”

She said, “I didn’t imagine it would be like this. In these conditions.”

Her bitter remark made him feel he had trapped her; perhaps she felt the same. As they walked back, in silence, he wondered who she was, the layer upon layer of her. They were peeling and scraping, both hoping to find the person underneath, as if it would reveal the only useful truth. But in the end you had to live with all of someone else (p. 204).

First, this quotation is important as for the unknowability of a person as in the modernist perception of identity in which the more we plunge into the deep layer of a person, the more we get lost within the complexity of the person because what Virginia Woolf calls in her essay “Modern Fiction” “the dark place of psychology” does not guarantee the “useful truth” about the life of a person. Secondly, that Ian finds Marina mysterious and unknowable gives us an impression that she is ambiguous and unhappy in her new life with Ian, and thus she seems unable to find what she had dreamt as to her future life. Hence the relationship between them appears ambiguous, and thus Ian seems a bit disappointed and unable to get what he always longs for – an ideal “romantic love” which would enable him to forget Jane (p. 211). Once he tells Marina, “I love you,” for example, she just replies sarcastically with the tip of her mouth, “That’s good” (p. 204). It is visibly dreadful situation particularly for Ian because “He had yearned for days and months and years for her, and now could not remember if they were speaking or not” (p. 203). The reply, “That’s good”, is not enough for Ian; he urgently desires something more, probably a passionate love and promising relationship with Marina, yet it seems impossible in their relationship. In *Midnight All Day*, Kureishi illuminates through the unsettled relationship between Ian and Marina that it is not always the case for the separated couples to find the “romantic love” once again after divorce. As seen in the new life of Ian, it is obvious that divorce wounds the psyche of the separated couples one way or another, so that it is not easy for them to forget the past and its experience at once.

This negative effect caused by divorce is also seen in Ian’s work-life because the image of Jane constantly haunts him Ian and occupies his mind, crippling not only his sense of a new romance and relationship with someone else but also his work performance to earn his living. For instance, Ian and his friend Anthony starts a film production company, but Ian loses his energy and enthusiasm just after his divorce from Jane; he becomes very lazy and irresponsible: simply, he does not know what he is doing:

...Ian had not been to work for almost three months. He had instructed Anthony to freeze his salary and had walked about the city drunk, talking only to the mad and derelict, people who did not know him. If you made yourself desperately sick you had to live in the present; there was nowhere else. But killing yourself was a difficult and time-consuming job and Anthony had made him stop doing it. *Ian did not know whether he could go back to work. He had no idea what he was doing.* This was partly why Anthony was coming to Paris, to extract a decision from Ian.

Ian could not forget how generous Anthony had been. It was at his insistence and expense that Ian and Marina had travelled to Paris and stayed in his apartment.

“Go and see whether you two want to be together,” he had said. “Stay there as long as you like. Then let me know.”

“Everyone’s advised me to give her up and go back to Jane. They keep telling me how nice Jane is. I can’t do that, but they think I’m a fool ...”

“Be a fool and to hell with everyone else,” Anthony had said.

As Marina dressed now, *Ian knew they were close to a permanent break. They had had their time in Paris and the distance between them was considerable.* In the past few days she had talked of returning to London, finding a small flat, getting a job, and bringing up the child alone. Many women did that now; it seemed almost a matter of pride. He would be redundant. It was important for her to feel she could get by without him, he saw that. But if their love, from a certain point of view, seemed like a dangerous addiction, he had to persuade her that they had a chance together, even though, half the time, *he did not believe it himself. He did not want to fight; everything was going to hell and that was the fate he had to submit to.* But a part of him was not ready to submit. Believing in fate was an attempt to believe you had no will of your own and he did not want that, either (p. 205. Emphasis added).

In contrast to the common perception that divorce gives the couples a second chance to catch romance, happiness, freedom, and independence in their new lives, this quotation shows that it is not case for all the couples all the time in general and for Ian and Jane in particular. As Kuresihi represents him in the excerpt above, Ian appears negatively affected by his separation from Jane, which psychologically and physically shatters and crushes him, and thus he has no idea of what he is doing not only as for the business he runs with Anthony but also as for the relationship with Marina. Although he is physical away from Jane and is supposed to enjoy his new romance with Marina, his mind is always occupied with Jane: “Everyone’s advised me to give her [Marina] up and go back to Jane. They keep telling me how nice Jane is. I can’t do that, but they think I’m a fool.” Ian obviously fluctuates between two crumbling positions – his inability to forget Jane and his failure to acquire a new romance and love with Marina, which is supposed to make him happy and joyful in the wake of his divorce. Eventually, Ian accepts his defeat: “he did not believe it himself. He did not want to fight; everything was going to hell and that was the fate he had to submit to.”

In addition, his sense that he will not able to win the favour of Marina debilitates Ian further in his vision of a prosperous future with Marina since she does not assure him about

her love for him, or she does not assure him that they could be together and lead together a happy life with love: that is, he is unable to see any hope in his future life concerning his relationship with Marina:

...They loved one another, but could they live together? This was the ordeal of his life. If he was unable to make this work, then not only had he broken up his family for nothing, but he was left with nothing – nothing but himself.

He thought of what she had to take on: him grumbling about how awful everything was, and groaning and yelling in his sleep, as if he were inhabited by ghosts; his fears and doubts; his sudden ecstasies; his foolishness, wisdom, experience and naivety; how much he made her laugh and how infuriated she could become. How much there was of other people! If falling in love could only be a glimpse of the other, who was the passion really directed at? They were living an extended, closer look at one another (p. 206).

Kureishi represents Ian in the quotation above in a way that probably Ian was unhappy with Jane because of the fact that she, as he tells us towards the end of the story, “never seemed to like” him (p. 209). Hence he constantly considers his relation with Marina based on love and ponders that “They loved one another,” but the crucial question is: “could they live together?” This is the ordeal of his life. Then the reason behind his divorce could be the fact that Ian and Jane did not like each other, even though they are married and have a daughter, and thus he seeks “romantic love” with Marina: “If he was unable to make this [living together] work, then not only had he broken up his family for nothing, but he was left with nothing – nothing but himself.” As implied in the quotation, Ian might have had a loveless marriage with Jane, which may be one of the reasons behind their divorce as in many divorce cases in the contemporary world. What Ian thus pursues in his relationship with Marina is “love” and “passion” which will visibly cement the relation between them as husband and wife in their future family in spite of the fact that he finds it very difficult with her.

Ian strongly demands “love” and “passion” in his relationship with Marina, which he admits that he did not experience with Jane: “If he were to love her, he had to be transformed from a man who could not do this with Jane, to a man who could do it with Marina. And the transformation had to be rapid, before he lost her. If he could not get along with this woman, he couldn’t get along with any of them and he was done for” (p. 208). As debated above, however, Ian is unable to strip himself of the “shadow” of his wife and thus often “recalled sitting in the flat with Jane, having returned from the hospital with their daughter. He had taken a week off work and realised then how little time he and Jane had spent together over the past five years. Once, their fears had coincided; that had been love, for a while. He saw

that they had had to keep themselves apart, for fear of turning into someone they both disliked” (p. 207). Even Marina is unable to remove him away from the “shadow” of Jane. She notices his uneasiness in his talk, behaviour and thoughtfulness and asks him: “‘What’s bothering you today?’ Marina said, when they were drinking their coffee. ‘You stare into the distance for ages. Then you jerk your head around urgently, like a blackbird. I wonder what sort of worm it is you’ve spotted. But it’s nothing, is it?’” (p. 207) From the beginning of *Midnight All Day*, Ian wants to talk to Marina about “his wife”, even though she does not want to hear of Jane, and eventually he manages to tell her: “‘She is in hospital. She took pills and alcohol ... and passed out. I believe she did it after I told her about the baby [Marina is pregnant by Ian]. Our baby. You know’” (p. 209). As seen in the quotation, Ian feels conscientious responsibility for Jane because why she is in hospital is because of him and because of the news that Ian and Marina will have a baby: that is, she feels abandoned, deceived and left alone with a daughter, and it is not an easy period for a woman to normalize her life in the wake of divorce since it gives her the feeling of worthlessness. Thus, Ian is under a heavy psychological burden with the view that she may harm herself as a result of his leaving her alone: “‘It’s a terrible thing to do, to others, to our daughter in particular. I was surprised by it, as Jane never seemed to like me. She must be deranged at the moment. She will have to realise that she can’t cling to me for ever. I don’t want to go on about it. I wanted you to know, that’s all’” (p. 209).

What Ian tells Marina about his wife and why she is in hospital also brings about another crisis between them:

‘I feel sorry for her,’ she said. She started to weep. ‘To have lost a love that you thought would continue for ever, and to have to recover from that. How terrible, terrible, terrible!’

‘Yes, well –’

She said, ‘How do I know you won’t do the same to me?’

‘Sorry?’

‘How do I know you won’t leave me, as you left her?’

‘As if I make a habit of ... that sort of thing?’

‘You’ve done it once. Perhaps more. How do I know?’ ...

She went on, ‘I fear, constantly, that you will tire of me and go back to her.’

‘I’ll never do that, never. Why should I?’

‘You know one another.’

He said, ‘After a certain age everything happens under the sign of eternity, which is probably the best way to do things. I haven’t got time now, for vacillation.’

‘But you are feeble,’ she said. ‘You don’t fight for yourself. You let people push you around.’

‘Who?’

‘Me. Anthony. Your wife. You were always afraid of her.’

‘That is true,’ he said. ‘I cannot stop wanting to rely on the kindness of others.’

‘You can’t survive on only that.’ She was not looking at him. ‘Your weakness confuses people (p. 209).

This quotation is interesting in several ways in terms of the aftermath negative effects of divorce. First, the divorce gives rise to the crisis of confidence in the new relationship as seen in the relationship between Ian and Marina. Marina is afraid that it becomes a kind of habit of Ian to desert his wives, so that she is scared and cannot fully trust Ian whether or not he is sincere in his love for her: “How do I know you won’t do the same to me?” Secondly, whatever he does, Ian is unable to get rid of his feeling for Jane after divorce; her image continuously haunts him, and thus he often not only vacillates between his feeling for Jane and desire to acquire the “romantic love” of Marina, yet this vacillation profoundly frustrates him and jeopardize his new romance with Marina as she says to him: “How do I know you won’t leave me, as you left her?” In *Midnight All Day*, Kureishi might suggest two views. First, the post-divorce period is really complex and problematic for the separated couples when they come to begin a new relation with someone else. Secondly, the high rate of divorce and its negative afterward-effects across the world apparently erodes the sense of confidence, fidelity and patience among individuals in society. When this solid ground of confidence, fidelity and patience disappears in life, it is not easy not only to keep the existing relationship intact between the couples but also to establish a new relationship with someone else. Finally, generally speaking, it is women who suffer more than men in the wake of divorce particularly in a patriarchal society where, once compared to women, it is easy for men to begin a new romance and relationship. Moreover, women are traditionally and culturally more vulnerable than men in the sense that women are often regarded not only as the guilty ones but also as disadvantaged in the patriarchal traditional society. Simply, those women who get divorced from their husbands are viewed as bad women. In the story, Marina is afraid and thus wants to be reassured in her relationship with Ian.

Another negative effect of divorce Kureishi represents in *Midnight All Day* is related to the parent-child relationship. In the story, Ian misses very much his daughter who is with her grandmother now in London and feels very sad that he is unable to fulfil his parental responsibility for her. In fact, the condition of Ian’s daughter is similar to that of many children of the broken families across the world in the early decades of the twentieth-century (Demo and Acock, 1988; Dowling and Gorell-Barnes, 1999 and Amato, 2000). In the story, Ian got divorce from Jane a while ago and finds a new “romantic love” with Marina (p. 211). Now he has a good time with her in Paris and first enjoys freedom and “romantic love” for a while with his new lover, yet as debated above and as he confesses to his friend Anthony at

the very end of the story, Ian is “full of regret” and says to Anthony ““how unhappy I’ve been so much of time”” (p. 211). While he is waiting for Marina to come out of bathroom where she applies unguents over her body, for instance, Ian turns the music up to be free for a while from his “unhappiness”, and the voice of the music conceals “the voice that came from a nearby children’s school. They reminded him of his daughter, who was staying, at the moment, with her grandmother in London” (p. 203). In his subconscious, Ian has a paternal/fatherly feeling or love which strongly keeps the link alive between him and his daughter as seen almost in all fathers after divorce; the voices of any children displaces his paternal feeling in the Freudian sense, making him sad and miss her more than before.

Ian’s paternal feeling strongly arouses again, which actually never leaves him alone in his vision throughout the story of *Midnight all Day*, while he is walking alone as thoughtful in the streets of Paris, concerning the relationship with his new lover, as well as with Jane and his daughter. The way Kureishi represents Ian as for his feeling for his daughter in the story is, in fact, the feelings of many absent fathers in the fragmented families across the world in the wake of divorce. As many researches clearly evidence (Allen, 2002), indeed, a father is as important in the life of a child as a mother in a stable married family life, and the relationship is not one-sided but double-ones most of the time in that the father plays crucial roles in the social and emotional development of his child, while his relation with the child makes him as a father not only feel more happy, self-confident, psychologically satisfied, important and mature but also enjoy closer, richer and warmer father-child relationship in his life (Cummings and O’Reilly, 1997; Sternberg, 1997; Pruett, 2000; Allen, 2002; Lamb, 2002 and Rosenberg and Wilcox, 2006). Researches indicate that the parental absence obviously brings about negative effects to the life of Children. David B. Lynn (1974) argues that “The research on the relationship between father absence and the generation level of the child’s adjustment reveals that the loss of a father for any reason is associated poor adjustment, but that absence because of separation, divorce, or desertion may have especially adverse effect” (p. 279). Some other researchers go even further and assert that children of separated families become more vulnerable and more hurt psychologically in their lives, so that these children are willing to divorce when they get married. David H. Demo and Alan C. Acock (1988) suggests two general conditions for such children. The first one is that “children reared in households where two biological parents are not present will exhibit lower levels of well-being than their counterparts in intact nuclear families”, and the second is that “The adverse effects on youthful well-being will be especially acute when the cause of parental absence is marital separation, divorce, or desertion” (p. 621).

Likewise, Ian seems to have realize what his daughter misses due to his absence, along with how he is bereft of the beauty of being together with his daughter after his leaving his wife and daughter alone (Kureishi, 2010, p. 206):

As he walked, I saw a smartly dressed, middle-aged man coming towards him, holding the hand of a girl about the same age as his daughter. They were talking and laughing. Ian presumed the girl was late for school, and her father was taking her; there was nothing more important for the man to do. Close, encouraging, generous, available – Ian thought of the father he had wanted to be. He knew children needed to be listened to. But these were ideas he would have to revise; he could not, now, be his own father, in another generation. There would be a distance. He imagined his daughter saying, ‘Dad walked out. He was never there.’ He would do his best, but it was not the same; he had failed without wanting to (p. 206).

In this quotation, Kuresihi suggests a couple of negative effects as for the father-child relationship through Ian’s contemplation in the streets of Paris. First, when he sees a middle-aged man not only “holding the hand of a girl about the same age as his daughter” but also “talking and laughing”, Ian comes to notice how he misses the chance to bring up his daughter and thus feels sorry for being deprived of such close and warm relation between himself and his daughter, and he suddenly thinks of how he wanted to be an ideal father. Secondly, Ian accepts that there should be a good communication between father and child in that there will be a dynamic interaction, leading up to the positive developmental outcomes – emotional, moral, and social growth – for the child. Finally, the implication made by Ian is that father and child should be together in a “stable”, “settled” and happy marriage and family. Once he imagines “his daughter saying, “Dad walked out. He was never there””, Ian accepts his failure as a father since he is physically far away from his wife and daughter and unable to keep the unity of his family, even though he still tries to hold his emotional bond with his daughter. Keeping his emotional tie with his daughter enables him to see what he actually wants in his life: “a stable and happy life”, in which there will be “the romantic love” with a woman and children: “As he walked back, Ian thought that he wanted to be at home, in a house he liked, with a woman and children he liked. He wanted to lose himself in the mundane, in unimportant things. Perhaps those things were graspable now. Once he had them, he could think of others, and be useful (p. 212).

In conclusion, Kureishi artistically deals with a complicated and problematic subject of the contemporary world through his representation of the life of fictional character Ian in *Midnight All Day*: divorce and its afterward effects. As written in the story, divorce does not always bring happiness and freedom to the life of separated couples but makes it more

intricate and difficult on the personal and common level later in life, so that those who are on the brink of divorce should reconsider their decision once again and then act accordingly. In the case of Ian as discussed above, he seems to have had three problems which negatively affect his life and relationship with someone else in the wake of divorce. The first one is that he is unable to take totally his wife Jane out of his life. Whether it is an on-going love between them or it is a kind of responsibility and human sentiment which he may feel for her, Ian is negatively influenced by the experience he has with Jane, so that wherever he goes and whatever he does, her “shadow” never leaves him alone and darkens his life and his vision of the future; both his identity and sense of the future are noticeably fragmented and crippled, so that uncertainty, ambiguity and vacillation constantly surround and visibly confuse him. Secondly, his paternal feeling for his daughter also always occupies his mind, shatters his identity and psychologically devastates his vision of life throughout the story in the sense that now he is assured that he is unable to carry out his paternal responsibility for his daughter, be a model for her and enjoy the bliss of life in “a stable and happy” family life. What is more, why he may also feel sad about his daughter is that his daughter, unlike children of “stable and happy” marriages, misses the chance of improving her emotional, moral and social development together with her father and mother. Finally, the third problem is that the condition Ian seems to have confused and fragmented in his vision and identity due to the “shadow” of his wife and daughter makes it very difficult for him to start a new relationship Marina who he thinks will make him happy with her “romantic love” in his new life. In the story, it seems that Ian’s life will continue in such a way until he has “romantic love” and is settled in his life.

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