

Nurturing Bonds of Resilience: Motherhood in for the Love of a Son by Jean Sasson

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ABSTRACT

Mayana's and her granddaughter Maryam's stories as portrayed in *For the Love of a Son*, eloquently capture the remarkable tenacity that characterises maternal love and resolve. Mothers' enduring strength is demonstrated by Mayana, who deals with cultural expectations and obstacles in the Khail tribe, and Maryam, who manages a turbulent marriage and the devastating loss of her son. Their experiences serve as living examples of the strength of maternal love, selflessness, and the unwavering resolve of parents to care for and protect their children despite unfathomable hardship. These stories are powerful reminders of the resiliency that endures across generations and even the most challenging situations.

Keywords: Motherhood, Resilience, Gender, Culture

INTRODUCTION

Motherhood is a profound journey that often tests the boundaries of love, patience, and strength. The bond created when a mother gives birth to a son is one-of-a-kind, intense, and enduring. Mothers navigate a world of delights, frustrations, and a great sense of duty because to this strong bond. The strong bond between a mother and her son and the incredible resilience that results from this relationship are explored in-depth in this article about motherhood.

One of the purest and most unconditional kinds of love is that which a mother has for her son. It has no limits, is unflinching, and endures the test of time. Mothers take on the role of protector and nurturer of their sons from the moment of conception, giving them the care and encouragement they need to grow. The foundation of maternal resilience lies in this constant love.

Children are profoundly impacted by a mother's love and fortitude. Mothers' love and guidance tend to give children more self-assurance, emotional intelligence, and a sound moral compass. Children develop their own lives and relationships on the strength of this support and resiliency. *For the love of a Son* has additional tales to tell about the quiet of Afghan women, their unwavering devotion to, and willingness to make sacrifices for, their offspring.

The research article, tries to embark on a poignant exploration of maternal resilience through the narratives of Mayana and her granddaughter, Maryam. It tries to uncover the deep resilience and unwavering will that characterise the essence of motherhood through their unique but interconnected journeys. Mayana's narrative, situated in the cultural and societal boundaries of the Khail tribe, offers

valuable perspectives on the perseverance mothers' exhibit in the face of cultural expectations and misfortune. The unending maternal love that spans generations and borders is further demonstrated by Maryam's experiences in America, which were characterised by domestic abuse, the kidnapping of her son, and the difficulties associated with international jurisdiction. By highlighting the incredible sacrifices, inner strength, and resilience that these mothers make, the paper seeks to shed light on the universal aspects of maternal resilience.

Societal Expectations and Motherhood

The life stories of Mayana and Maryam, as told in *For the Love of a Son*, provide a fascinating account of motherhood and the incredibly strong resilience those results from it. Mayana's story starts with an early, forced marriage at the age of 15, which leads to motherhood and the delivery of female children who society scorns. The struggles that mothers could experience in a complex environment are illustrated by Mayana's narrative. The beginning of Mayana's quest is the onerous expectation of generating male successors within the Khail tribe. The section examines how these expectations impact her mothering, the unnecessary strain imposed on her, and the social stigma associated with her failure to have sons. "Those wives who did not bear sons were scorned and ridiculed. Mayana alone was known as the mother of daughters, a terrible slur in a culture that only values male children" (Sasson 39).

Even though Mayana is the most beautiful of her husband's four wives, her life ultimately turns out to be the furthest thing from the perfect existence one may hope for. After her husband passes away, Mayana's life spirals out of control as she is subjected to abuse by her stepson, the new chief of her tribe. Mayana's ability to endure and persist highlights the tremendous strength mothers frequently possess. "Mayana had enjoyed unexpected happiness with Ahamed Khail. His genuine affection for his youngest wife and their four children had been so conspicuous that it was offensive to his earlier families. Now that Shair was the head of the Khail tribe, my grandmother will be ruled by her stepson who had detested her from the first moment she had arrived at the galah" (42).

The significant sacrifices mothers make for the welfare of their children are beautifully illustrated by Mayana's profound devotion to them, even when they are denied access to basic essentials. Her actions show how enduring motherly love is and how far mothers will go to safeguard and take care of their children. Mayana is torn between getting remarried and enduring Shair Khan's strict rule. After her husband's passing, she is not allowed to have any contact with the Khail family according to Sharia law. If she were to remarry, Shair Khan would gain full custody of her children, and she would be permanently separated from them. A moving example of Mayana's mother resilience is her resolve to refuse being married again, even if it means sacrificing her own freedom. She decides not to break her bond with her kids and instead to put up with the challenges placed before her. Her decision demonstrates her steadfast dedication to their welfare and her readiness to make sacrifices for them. "Cultural law demanded that her children remain under the control of Shair Khan if she remarried so she would disappear from the galah and never be allowed to see her daughters and son again" (47).

Mayana puts her children's needs and feelings ahead of her own, enduring the pain of witnessing her daughters suffer from neglect. This selflessness emphasises how maternal love and sacrifice have an enduring quality.

My father's three beautiful sisters had all recently died as well. All three sisters had good health shortly before they died and the Afghan mountains buzzed with gossip that the three beautiful khail

daughters were poisoned before they could reach the age of inheritance. Few dared question their deaths, for they were only female, of no account, loved only by their mother and brother. (65)

Mayana's life takes on a sole aim throughout this tragedy: surviving for her son Ajab, who is away pursuing his education. She must continue because of her love for Ajab despite losing her daughters. This illustrates the tremendous fortitude and resiliency that moms discover in their offspring. Mayana finds that even under the worst of circumstances, her will to secure Ajab's future and well-being serves as a motivator. "Grandmother Mayana felt she had failed her daughters. Now they were gone for ever, and there was nothing she could do but mourn their loss so deeply that her son feared for her sanity" (66).

The story of Maryam's resilience, when compared to her grandmother Mayana's experiences, highlights the enduring strength that spans generations. Maryam's narrative demonstrates her incredible fortitude in the face of long-term domestic violence and sexual assault. She is subjected to daily rape by her spouse, exhibiting remarkable resilience and inner strength to withstand such horrific events.

Maryam's life is greatly enhanced by the arrival of her son Duran, demonstrating the strength and resiliency that come from being a mother. Despite the difficult circumstances surrounding her son's birth, she was able to find happiness and love in him, which is a testament to her everlasting dedication to his welfare. "When my precious baby burst into the world the thousand hardships and tribulations I had suffered with his father were temporarily forgotten. My love for my son was greater than I had ever dreamed it might be" (271).

Maryam's choice to leave her violent spouse shows a fearless and brave act of fortitude in the face of obstacles and social shame attached to such behaviour. Her inner strength is revealed by her will to defend both herself and her child. Nothing compares to the love a mother has for her kid. It is unaffected by laws or compassion, daring to do anything, and mercilessly destroying everything that is in its way, as remarked by Agatha Christie. Maryam experiences additional hardship when her husband Kaiss comes bearing false impressions and hollow promises to reconcile with their child. She approaches this issue with caution and scepticism, putting her child's welfare ahead of any false attempts at reconciliation. Her resilience is clear.

Maryam's maternal resilience is highlighted by her commitment to protecting her child from harm, despite the influence of her abusive and manipulative ex-husband. Her unwavering dedication to her son's welfare emerges as a major motivator in her life. Maryam's decision to leave her violent husband shows a fearless and brave act of fortitude in the face of obstacles and social shame attached to such behaviour. Her inner strength is revealed by her resolve to defend both herself and her child.

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The experiences of Maryam and Mayana highlight how maternal resilience endures and changes over time. These two women are united by their unwavering determination to protect and nurture their children, despite the differences in their particular challenges. Mayana and Maryam both face societal and cultural pressures that can exacerbate their hardships. Mayana confronted traditional expectations and gender roles within the Khail tribe, while Maryam dealt with the stigma of leaving an abusive

marriage. Both women are incredibly selfless and willing to give up things in order to provide for their kids. This recurring theme is demonstrated by Mayana's choice to put up with difficulties in order to maintain her relationship with her son, Ajab, and Maryam's courage to protect Duran illustrate this common theme. Mayana and Maryam's experiences despite being painful, demonstrate their capacity to turn hardship into strength. Their ability to bounce back from setbacks allows them to put their kids' futures first.

In conclusion, *For the Love of a Son* demonstrates the enduring and potent force of maternal resilience by drawing comparisons between Mayana and Maryam. These women's unwavering love and determination, in spite of the many obstacles and situations they encounter, demonstrate the enduring strength that mothers possess to protect and provide for their children, even in the face of abuse and adversity.

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