



University of Tehran's

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Suffering Little Children

by: Amir.H Nazemi

A Transcendental Storytelling:
Kimi no Na wa

by: Sorour J.

A Closer Look at "The Ones
Who Walk Away from Omelas"

by: Sorour J.

In The Name of GOD



«Genesis» is what comes to mind as we drop the ink in our newfound path.

We hope that this small group of students from the University of Tehran can attract not only the attention of Iranian students who have continuously honored us with their support but perhaps, we'll be able to present our ideas from this small corner of the universe to students all around the globe.

And we hope that we'll be capable of introducing Iranian students to the wonders of the world beyond our great nation and show a glimpse of our vast and beautiful country to other students beyond its borders.

As much as every first step is courageous, there are also many bumps in the road that will end in small and big mistakes. It's our desire that you see beyond these mistakes and help us become better by understanding your point of view and ideas. We are not above criticism, and we shall never be.

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A Closer Look at

The one who walk away From "Omelas"



SPOILER ALERT

“The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas” is an award-winning short fiction by the famous science fiction writer **Ursula Le Guin**. It is set in a utopian city named Omelas, where they sacrifice a child’s life to ensure their prosperity. The child must be kept in a cell, barely fed, never leaving the confines of the basement. But this “scapegoating” – the act of punishing an innocent person for the greater good – pushes some people to make a decision: to walk away from Omelas.



The story begins with a joyful depiction of the Festival of Summer. The morning air is crisp. A procession is moving, smiles painting everyone’s faces. The joyous clang of bells rings against the serene background. Yet, this is just a normal day in Omelas. Even Le Guin compares Omelas to a fairytale, “long ago, far away, once upon a time.” But this prosperity comes at a price. A child must be imprisoned, and not even a kind word should be spoken to that kid.

Facing this dilemma, the people of Omelas react in different ways. Most of them adapt to this condition and get on with their lives.



But on the other hand, after visiting the child's prison, we see some people choose to abandon their life in Omelas, and they do not ever come back.

Ursula does not give much information about those who walk away. In fact, she only talks about them in the final paragraph, despite the novella's title. We can't know for sure why they walk away and what they hope to see. However, it's not hard to think of some reasons. In our life, we face the same dilemma. Maybe not of this proportion, but the idea that our happiness is rooted in another one's misery isn't that alien. And some of us may choose to leave, just like those in Omelas, to cope with this moral question. It might be out of self-righteousness, or maybe it is because we seek our absolution – to free ourselves of guilt.

Whatever the case, leaving doesn't answer this dilemma. If Deserters of Omelas act out of defiance, they surely must know that leaving doesn't merit them the desired outcome – which is a city not born from outrageous cruelty. And if they walk away to ease their ever-present conscience, no amount of leaving will ever relieve them of their burden. They all bear a collective responsibility to that child. They owe that kid a life, and bailing out doesn't change anything in the end.

In the end, leaving seems like a rather simplistic answer. And reading too much in it may turn to be futile. Here is an indisputable fact; that a child is brutally tortured. Ironically, maybe those who stay in Omelas have made the right decision. Or perhaps, there is no right or wrong.



They just are.



Amir.H Nazemi

on the suffering of the world:

Suffering little children



Gassed

John Singer Sargent - 1919

When can one be considered a truly happy person? By examining the life of the man, not much consistent happiness can be found. This makes us ask ourselves: does happiness really exist? While the pleasures of the world pass quickly before man's eyes, the pain and suffering linger on much longer. Also, the effect of pain on man's heart is more profound than of joy. Pleasures of life, both physical and spiritual, pass by the man's eyes so suddenly and briefly, making it rare and, its rarity makes joy and happiness more valuable to the man. One will try to compensate for this lack of quality by increasing the quantity of pleasure. By jumping from a whim to another, the man is doomed to run on a hedonistic treadmill in this capricious journey. This process seems unnecessary, therefore making it more like a problem that requires to be solved. In this writing, we examine the origin of pain and joy, trying to understand human life more clearly and hopefully reaching a solution for this problem.



It is tempting to consider pain as a passing phase that appears at a certain stage of life and diminishes after a while, only to return at a later period of life. One must be aware that the pain is a feeling of discomfort caused by not satisfying his need. And needs are fundamental appurtenance of life. One can only deny the existence of needs in their life either by exterminating life, death, or going beyond life and claiming to be divine, omnipotent beings. In other words, only a dead man and God can't have any need, and since the object of study is the suffering of the man, we can assertively claim that need is an objective truth peculiar to all living beings.

Furthermore, the suffering is caused because these needs are not being fulfilled. Whether financial, emotional, or spiritual, these needs, if not satisfied, will cause immense suffering in the man's life. Naturally, one will try to solve this issue either by limiting the actual needs just as Diogenes the Cynic did or by distracting oneself from these needs with over-indulging in other irrelevant activities. Although we can clearly define pain and suffering, as we just did, we can't define happiness easily. The best thing we can come up with is that happiness is a state of momentary and unstable satisfaction due to either lack of pain or ignorance of pain. So one can boldly claim that there's no happiness and a happy person has slightly deviated from the norm, that is a life constantly filled with suffering, or even worse that they are not aware of it.

The certainty of pain and suffering human's life must not convey this message that the pain is a bad event and suffering a torment. On the contrary, pain is a good thing, and it is alarming us of something which went wrong. Inconvenience accompanying the suffering directly results from a certain problem that needs to be solved and eliminated. So one can say that suffering is the mother of all innovations. Inventions

were created because a human was in need and was suffering from that particular need. Hence the creation of a new device or discovery of a new method occurred. It's not hard to find similar instances in history.

Clearly, the suffering caused by different needs is the main reason behind important movements in human history. So doesn't it make more sense for humans to increase their sensitivity towards pain? In today's society, suffering is looked at as something to be frowned upon, and usually, people look at a miserable person with a sense of pity. On the other hand, happiness is the main goal for almost everybody. Yet that doesn't exist, and happiness is only an absence of pain or lack of understanding of pain. It's not a surprise to see drugs and alcohol make someone happy. In fact, they don't make anyone happy, they don't solve or take away any problem, but they make the person forget about their issues.

Instead of distracting oneself from the pain, one simply should meditate and reflect on it. Cultural traditions and religious beliefs that emphasize achieving happiness and having a happy life don't consider that by shying away from pain and suffering, they are stopping the progress of humanity. This stagnation and lack of movement will prove to be the end of human life. Not only it won't end the suffering, but it will also make people more ignorant of these pains, which is honestly worse. This way, one is suffering but doesn't know why and the social norms and religious beliefs will prevent him from pondering further and figuring out the real reason for his suffering. Instead, by increasing his sensitivity towards suffering, he will become aware of it much faster, and by deep reflection upon suffering, he can find its roots and then use his intellect to find a solution.






Sorour J.

A Transcendental Storytelling

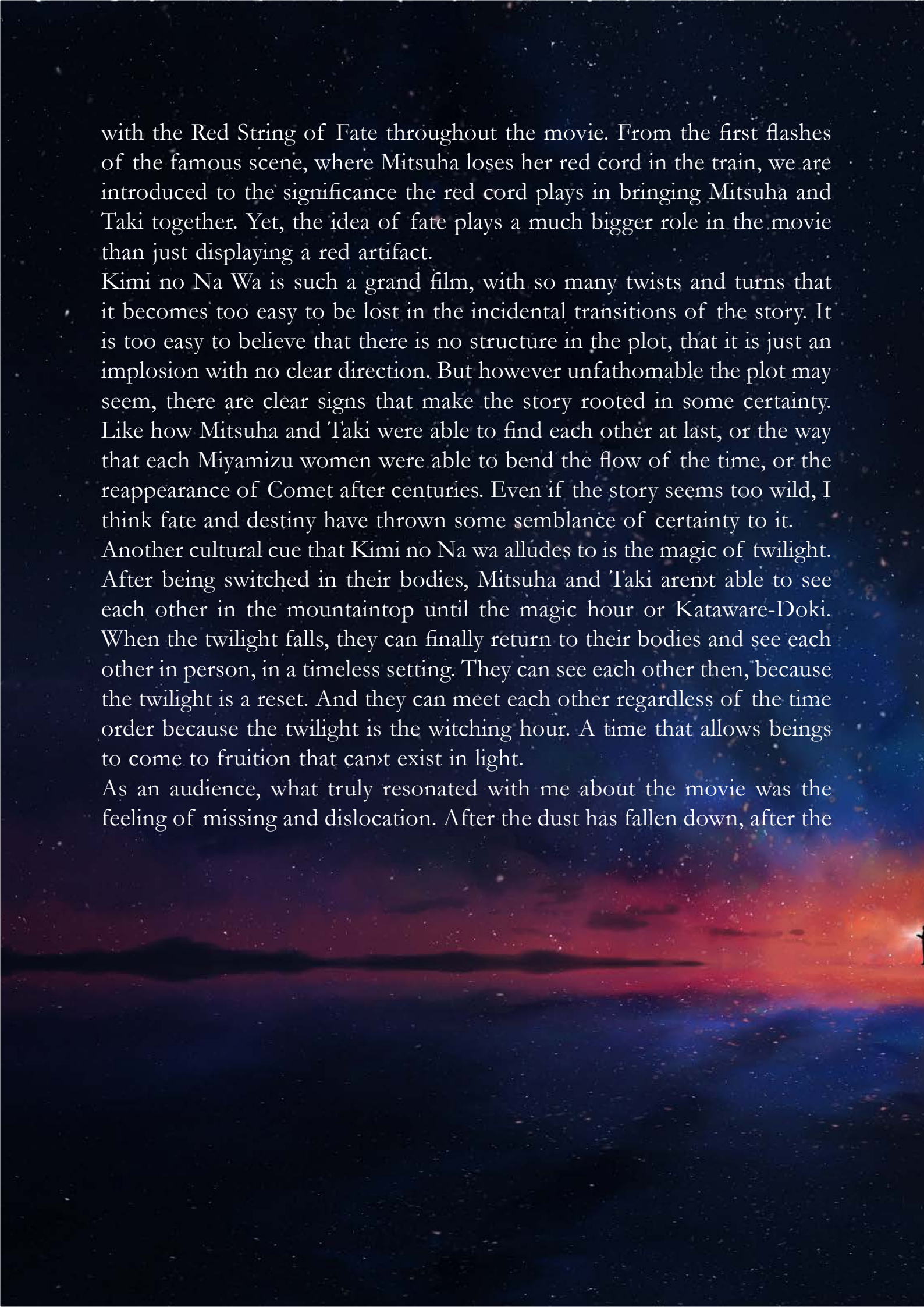
Kimi no Na wa



It is too grand, too transcendental to call upon words. The haunting beauty of Itomori lake, enclaved by twinkles of houses' lights, silences every observer. Any intelligible sound, even the breathless whispers, is drowned in the circular, central, and centripetal lake. As an audience, you intrinsically know that tonight is too sacred to summon words. Mitsuha should've known better too. She should've known that any careless word can be granted in the face of the unfolding rebirth. But the unruliness and defiance of a teenager cannot be chastised either. We've all been there, done that. So when she wishes upon the stars to be a «handsome boy from Tokyo in her next life,» life doesn't disappoint her.

This is when we are plunged into *Kimi no Na wa*'s rabbit hole, a place where the end is indistinguishable from the beginning. For those who may not be familiar, *Kimi no Na wa* (translated to *Your Name* in English) is a 2016 Japanese anime directed by Makoto Shinkai and is the highest-grossing anime film worldwide of all time. It follows two teenagers, Taki and Mitsuha, trapped in a mind-boggling, time-warping body swap. And the story follows their journey of unraveling the mystery of their body-switching to untangling the phantasmagorical twist of time.

Kimi no Na wa is riddled with Japanese cultural cues. The story toys



with the Red String of Fate throughout the movie. From the first flashes of the famous scene, where Mitsuha loses her red cord in the train, we are introduced to the significance the red cord plays in bringing Mitsuha and Taki together. Yet, the idea of fate plays a much bigger role in the movie than just displaying a red artifact.

Kimi no Na Wa is such a grand film, with so many twists and turns that it becomes too easy to be lost in the incidental transitions of the story. It is too easy to believe that there is no structure in the plot, that it is just an implosion with no clear direction. But however unfathomable the plot may seem, there are clear signs that make the story rooted in some certainty. Like how Mitsuha and Taki were able to find each other at last, or the way that each Miyamizu woman were able to bend the flow of the time, or the reappearance of Comet after centuries. Even if the story seems too wild, I think fate and destiny have thrown some semblance of certainty to it.

Another cultural cue that Kimi no Na wa alludes to is the magic of twilight. After being switched in their bodies, Mitsuha and Taki aren't able to see each other in the mountaintop until the magic hour or Kataware-Doki. When the twilight falls, they can finally return to their bodies and see each other in person, in a timeless setting. They can see each other then, because the twilight is a reset. And they can meet each other regardless of the time order because the twilight is the witching hour. A time that allows beings to come to fruition that can't exist in light.

As an audience, what truly resonated with me about the movie was the feeling of missing and dislocation. After the dust has fallen down, after the

warped time was set to chronological order, the story didn't contend itself with an abrupt ending. Because it couldn't carelessly set aside the residual feelings as if nothing happened. And the protagonists' quest to find closure brought a bittersweet feeling to the surface. How many of us are roaming in life, searching and wandering, for something to finally put our turmoil to rest? Taki and Mitsuha, after all the drama, were left with such a deep, unknown yearning much bigger than themselves. Their peering glances, their dissociation with their surroundings, their looks behind their shoulders are painfully real to me as a human.

While their search had a sweet ending, the same cannot be said for other people. Sometimes, I muse how many people must've had a crazy story like Taki and Mitsuha that didn't end well. In turn, how many people haven't experienced the same roller-coaster but haven't reached the peace within either. At the same time, I believe the never-ending quest to find something to complete us is what makes us human. And no matter how far we reach, no matter how old we become, we'll always be locked in the paralysis of longing and yearning.

Whatever the case, *Kimi no Na wa* is the story of life. It is, in essence, a film about the possibility of steadfast, heartfelt emotional connection to transcend logical impossibilities. And with skillful animation, deft and intricate storytelling, it shocks no one that it has been named one of the best animes in history. And if it wasn't named as one, the movie's true beauty wouldn't stop it from being remembered and revered.



God Speed!
Edmund Blair Leighton - 1900

Sir Gawain & the Green Knight

Unknown

Soon as the siege and assault had ceased at Troy,
the burg broken and burnt to brands and ashes,
the traitor who trammels of treason there wrought
was tried for his treachery, the foulest on earth.
It was Aeneas the noble and his high kin
who then subdued provinces, lords they became,
well-nigh of all the wealth in the Western Isles:
forth rich Romulus to Rome rapidly came,
with great business that burg he builds up first,
and names it with his name, as now it has;
Ticius to Tuscany, and townships begins;
Langobard in Lombardy lifts up homes;
and fared over the French flood Felix Brutus
on many banks all broad Britain he settles

then,

where war and wreck and wonder
betimes have worked within,
and oft both bliss and blunder
have held sway swiftly since.

...



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