



Self-Conflict Reflected in Kiera Cass's "The Selection"

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Abstract

Self-conflict is the struggle occurring within a character's mind. The dilemma posed by internal conflict is usually some ethical or emotional questions. Indicator of self-conflict would be a character's hesitation or self-posing question like "what was it I did wrong?" A narrative is not limited. Conflicts may not always resolve in narrative, which may or may not occur at end. Conflict in literature refers to the different drives of the characters of forces involved. Conflict may be internal or external. It may occur within a character's mind or between a character and exterior forces.

Keywords: Self-Conflict, Kiera Cass, "The Selection"

In this novel *The Selection*, there is a character named America Singer who plays an important role as well as the heroin of this novel. When the play opens the narrator's mother received a letter in the post she felt like receive something great. The letter is about to become rich. As a Five, America's family has to work hard to survive, so the Selection is one of the golden opportunities to change their life by participating in the Selection.

America Singer is a young lady who lives in a country called Illea. America Singer is a Five, the number of the caste is for musician. America's life changes because of the competition called The Selection. In the Selection, the girl of this country will be selected for a crown and become the princess. But for America Singer the competition is a nightmare because she has already had a boyfriend named Aspen, but she should do it for her family because they need to win the compensation.

The source of her conflict is incompatible roles. Her family always wants her to join the selection but she does not know what she really wants. America has an important thing that she really wants, she wants to get to married a man whom she loves, and the Selection makes her dreams get away from what she really wants. The narrator wants to help her mother by taking part in the selection, through that the family will get paid for the participation of America, but something is holding her back though she won't say what it is.

The Selection is the process in which the next queen of Illea is chosen, for that thirty five girls are selected from the country's population who then compete to marry the current Prince Maxon Schreave. America's family convince her to apply, but she doesn't think she is good enough for the Selection. When America's family ask her to participate the selection, she refuses to accept it, but later when Aspen asks her to participate the selection she starts to think about it. But in reality she doesn't like to participate the Selection, from there the inner conflict of America has started, the major conflict is to take decision about the Selection.

As a Five, the wish of America's family is quite natural. And the Selection is one of the wonderful opportunities to change their entire life. The Selection is a path that leads them



to a peaceful life and they don't want to bother about their future that's why her family is forcing her much to participate it. Generally everyone will have the same conflict in such situation when someone forces them to do, what really they don't want to do. The same situation was also faced by America now so she seems like confused about taking decision about the Selection and she cannot find out that which life she really wants whether to accept the Selection for her family or to ignore the opportunity for marrying her lover.

Now Aspen is in unstable mind and he cannot openly tell her why he wants to drop out America. And he cannot able to give her the valid reason, without give the reason he is ready to drop America. Here Aspen had the self-conflict about revealing the truth or reason of breaking up with America. Because of this decision of Aspen, she is in the top of the confusion about the Selection as well as Aspen, she has felt dying internally because she cannot express her feelings or emotions to anyone.

After losing her lost hope she is ready to accept the fate and making herself ready to face the new chapter of her life that is the Selection. But the thoughts and feelings for Aspen of America are not vanishing out and that continuously disturb her mind each and every second.

Because of the rejection of Aspen she is totally broken, and she does not have any second chance to make her cool. She feel as if, the total situation was turned against her, and these thoughts are make her heart broke more. Even though during the send-off, the last minute on the stage also she is searching for Aspen in the crowd and she speaks within herself how the rejection will give the pain to someone after deeply loving for almost two years. America is given her family an emotional good bye when Aspen suddenly starts bounding toward her. Still America was too upset about the Brenna Butler who is with Aspen during the send-off; however America ignores him and departs.

The self-conflict about the Selection is over when she enters the palace, but before the last minute itself too she has had the conflict within her about the entire thing which she happened to face the very recent days. Before entering the palace she had the conflict about the Selection whether she wants to participate or not but after enters the palace, her conflict is turned to whom she wants to choose whether Aspen or Prince Maxon.

After entering the palace another major conflict arises from her mind. With all the pain and stress America enters the palace, and she does not have any expectation and interest. The thought about Aspen is not fade away; still she is suffering from the thought of his old boyfriend Aspen. America's love and feelings for Aspen is not decreased. Even though she is in the palace she cannot controls her mind from the thought of Aspen. From the first day onwards she has started to recollects all the past memories of Aspen.

Whenever America happens to spent her times alone she mostly will think about her past and she will question herself why he has rejected her and what is the matter he tries to convey her at the last minute on the stage, when she has depart for the palace, and will think about her losing in the short period of time and also compare the life of both, as a girl of Five as well as the Three at the Palace. And she feels that far away from her family because now



she is in the palace. And she feels the pain of separation from the person she has loved is like as if spending one day in the palace one year.

Even though America had lost her last hope about getting back her love for Aspen, still she rewind the last look that she received from Aspen from the stage on the day she left from Carolina. Again she has started to imagine his good bye in a positive way and take it as a sign of his love for her. She has the major conflict about Aspen at the palace whether to hate him or love him that made America more complicated in the palace.

After America tries to focus her concentration on the competition by consoles herself through the advice which she gives herself, there was another challenge was waiting for America that Aspen's re-entry to the palace as a guard. With his memories she suffered a lot means how it would be like? Because the person she loved a lot is near to her as a guard now. America's reaction to Aspen is obvious, so she tells Maxon that he is just friend from her home town. And Maxon feels happy about that and he has planned to post him as a guard of America in front of her room when she leaves her maids at night.

When Aspen was joined in the palace as a guard again America's mind started to longing for the love of Aspen and it also leads her to get conflicted about his entry as a guard. But she does not show that she is well known him, instead she has just read his name badge and called him as "Officer Leger" (276)

After America came to know about the visitation of Aspen she had another conflict whether to reveal the truth to the Prince or not. Because she was afraid of Maxon that, if she reveals the truth that Aspen is the man who ill-treats America in her past, he may give punishment to him. Even after Aspen leaves America by saying that he will not be able to continue with her any more, still she tries to support Aspen by hiding the truth from Prince Maxon. Even though she decides to hide it from the Price she is not steady with that decision so there is another self-conflict is arisen the mind of America Singer.

Now the self-conflict is doubled by the presence of Aspen at the palace. The first one is whether she shall reveal the truth about Aspen to Maxon or not and another one is feeling guilty about Prince Maxon that she has felt as he is her close friend now. At the same time America does not like to hurt Aspen by revealing the truth. And her mind forces herself to reveal it to the Prince.

The feeling of Aspen is again started to blooms in the heart of America, even though she tries to make her mind focus on the Selection, she cannot maintain the courage. America is melted, and all her courage is gone when she meets Aspen again in the palace. Aspen tries to approach her very closely even he is not afraid to kiss her, at first America tries to stop him from this kinds of action but later she couldn't refuse it. And she has felt that moment is one of the best moments ever had in the palace. That one second she deeply goes back to her past lovable moments with Aspen in Carolina.

At that moment America also experienced the conflict that there are many things started to occupy the mind of America about Maxon as well as Aspen. By using this chance Aspen has started to apologize for the fight that they had the last time in the tree house. He also explained that he was just helping Brenna after she tripped, which is one of the



ridiculous explanation ever to America. Still those things are working that America was started to believe him and melting by his explanation.

After these explanation from Aspen, America started to change her decision again. When Aspen has crossed his limits America tries to stop him but she is half-hearted because once she loved Aspen and now also that made her to allow him. Even though she feels little crush on Prince Maxon she turns that all to Aspen and she is very eager to know about the mind of Aspen what he is thinking and why he likes to start their relationship once again. There is another conflict arisen in the mind of America and she tries to overcome from all the feelings for Aspen but she sinks into those feelings again.

She questions herself if there is any clue behind the incident happened in the last night. And she cannot believe herself because she only forces herself not to continue with the thought of Aspen. After all she changes her decision and motive within one night that makes another conflict in the mind of America.

After the another attack takes place in the palace by the rebels, there are many girls who do not like to stay at the palace and, they are afraid about the attack, so some of the girls leave the palace. Things have returned to normal within few days, and America feels a lot closer with the other girls after such a traumatic event. Prince Maxon does not like to keep anyone in the palace without their will, so that he permits the girls to leave as their wish.

For that prince Maxon is to take the decision about the Selection and he is in the situation of making decision so fast, and so that he decides to decrease the number of the selected girls to six. That time America's conflict is increased and doubled, because she worries about the elimination as well as her family and she also thinks about the quarrel with Prince Maxon last night, so that she strongly hopes that she is one of the girls those who are sent back to home. But luckily America is selected as one among the qualified six girls to final.

This makes Aspen to doubt about the relationship between America and Prince Maxon, because when he asks America about her relationship with him, she tells him that nothing is between them except friendship. But America do not understand the reason, why still Maxon allows her to stay at the palace. America thinks that he may send her home because of the quarrel between them at the garden.

America asks him about why she is still staying at the palace for that Prince Maxon honestly gives answer to America by his kind actions because of that kindness she cannot hold back her tears no more. At that moment also America again thinks about Aspen and she has felt ashamed by her present situation and stresses herself about taking decision about regarding her future.

When America and Maxon cleared their mind by talking with each other the previous night they both felt like free from all the burdens. Now America is totally confused about how to handle Aspen and how to convey her decision to him. And she tries to express her decision by saying that whatever they were or right now but they couldn't be here. And he had asked about her words before she told him that she couldn't stop loving him. She is in



more trouble in answering the question of Aspen, but she tries to make comfort him by her calm answers and make him to understand her present situation.

Even though she is in the final moment to reveal her decision about her future, she cannot hide her feelings for Aspen. At the same time she said tells he is the one and only main reason to this situation because he only forced her to participate the Selection that only made the problem as a huge one. Because of him only she vanishes all her dreams about her future with him. Now she tries to express her feeling for Maxon that will not be worked out because of him now also she is suffered a lot. Even though Maxon has taken much care about America, she cannot do the same for him because of the thought and love of Aspen.

Now also America talks to Aspen like, the Selection is only holding her back from him because she is afraid of the Selection, and also tries to instinct his mind that she was in the part of Selection now and she needs to avoid such kind of secret meetings like now. Because of that instant change of America, Aspen thought and asking her that she chose Maxon over him. But the answers of America is little difficult to understand by Aspen that she is not chosen either Aspen or Maxon but herself and chose for her future.

Based on this novel, we can assume the self-conflict of the major character America Singer. America Singer can keep the secret on something that happens in her life and she resolves her problem itself without asking for opinion to everyone. She has a good heart and she wants to make others happy, but she has felt doubtful about taking decision about joining the Selection as well as choosing her life partner to put her heart to a man. These two situations are the most self-conflicted situations of America Singer.

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