## The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas

This story talks about a society of people where everything is basically about contentment and happiness. This imaginary society is viewed as a perfect society but yet it depends on the torment of a child that is viewed as ugly in the society. These people in Omelas would be living their happy life without that child in their society. This child is used as a symbol to show that people only care about their happiness even if it involves the misfortunes of others. All through the entire story, there is a symbolic use of scapegoat to reveal to the reader what society looks like today. Knowing that children were sacrificed in this society to maintain the happiness of the community reveals how awful the society they were living in was. We are left to wonder how people can be happy while other people are suffering. This was referred to as survival for the fittest. Sometimes we can see bad things happening but there is nothing we can do about it. Other than thinking about it and feeling bad there is nothing we can do to change the situation. The few people who try to make a change are ridiculed by their society (Ref-AU8DB2).

Le Guin states that her story is based on the dilemma of American conscience and that she was thinking particularly about the real situation that is in the Economic System of America. The rich people end up getting the good side of profit in that economic system. An example is that rich people make millions of money more than their employees. The people who live in Omelas subjected an individual in a contrasting situation to a group of people to justify evil deeds for a greater course. The people of Omelas are strange and individualists. They make a child lead a miserable life so that they can determine the difference between the lives they are living and that of the child. This is so that they can view their lives as of high quality and full of joy and happiness (Ref-AB1CD2).

They exchange this child for happiness. They are entirely to blame for this child’s miserable life. This child’s responsibility is to sit in that basement and live in distress and unhappiness so that the rest of the town can lead an opposite life. The excuse for this kind of activity is that the child is psychologically traumatized and is too mentally disturbed to have an appreciation for a high-quality life and that is why he is left in the basement and ignored. All these people believe that their happiness, the softness of their relations, the wellbeing of their children, the beauty of the city, the knowledge of their scholars, affluence of their harvest, and even the kindness of the weathers of their sky was wholly depended on this child's misery. They believed in investing in misery and the returns of this misery were believed to be happiness. These people were investing in another person's suffering to experience a high-quality life filled with good things.

Without the pain and the misery of that child the people who lived in Omelas would be gone. This story easily relates to the story of Jesus in the Bible. Jesus had to be crucified so to save humanity. The boy’s misery saved the town from their misery and they lived in abundant happiness. Those people leaving Omelas going to better places can be compared to a story found in the Bible that talks about a holy city, a city separated from sin. Most of these people believe leaving Omelas is indeed the right way to correct this situation. One cannot determine who the good people are and who the bad people are since those who left did not make an attempt to change the life of that child. They just left leaving the child behind to suffer. Them walking away reveals that they do not want to associate themselves with that anymore but they are still bad people for leaving the child behind instead of leaving Omelas with him. These people are however as guilty as the people who they left in Omelas.

The child is referred to with the word it. No person has the permission to utter kind words to it. Although the child has memories of sunlight and his mother's voice he has been separated from the rest of the society. When the Omelas people finally find out about the child they behave differently not how a normal society would behave after finding out about such a situation. They have been convinced that the well-being of the entire city depends on the child's misery and that the child’s freedom will cause the good things in society to disappear. This causes them to choose the happiness of the city over the wellbeing of this child. All they did was come up with excuses to cover the suffering of this child and ended up getting divided into groups. The first group was those that believed that that child’s imprisonment was for a good course. These are the people who are only thinking about themselves and are living their lives to the fullest with the aim of making the most out of their lives to compensate for the suffering of that child and then there is a group of people who decide to leave Omelas and never return to disassociate themselves from that child’s suffering (Ref-A1B7C3).

Le Guin’s story demonstrates an ethical theory known as utilitarianism. This theory emphasizes the well-being of the majority compared to the minors. It claims that a situation is morally justifiable if it ensures the benefit of a larger group of people. Though utilitarianism logically sounds right, it causes flawed implications when it is put into practice. An interpretation of the story is that it is a symbol of the exploitation happening in a capitalist society. In the present day, the issue of exploitation is visible across the world. An estimated 40.3 million people are suffering modern-day slavery with 24.9 million people in forced labor. We, however, entertain these kinds of injustices in society when we purchase cheap clothes, buy packaged food, or even electronic devices without thinking about the weight of our actions. If we realize it or not, our well-being and our convenience mostly depend on the children who are in the basement and this stands for the exploited workers and the underprivileged (Ref-DJ49KL).

The relationship between this child living in misery and the people of Omelas can be used to demonstrate the relationship between certain sectors in today's society. An example is, all the services and products enjoyed by consumers and those that capitalists benefit from are produced through the hard work of laborers whose only benefit from the whole process is a small salary that is not even enough to cater to the needs of their families. The main problem is that the societal bad characters are meant to comply with social norms. This is illustrated in' The Ones who Walk Away from Omelas' through the justification of the child's misery fueled by tradition and culture with the belief that that child's suffering would bring about the happiness of the people living in Omelas. However, there is a small group of people who do not want to associate themselves with the kind of things happening in society. These people however just leave to find better societies instead of just fixing whatever is wrong in their society.