

**SOCIOLOGICAL DYSTOPIA IN PHILIP K. DICK'S *FLOW MY TEARS, THE POLICEMAN SAID***

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**Abstract**

*Philip K. Dick (1928-1982) was an American Science Fiction writer. The present paper attempts to reveal Dick's pendulum vision that retains close resemblance with the reality. Although Dick portrays illusory dystopia, his frightening narration provides glimpses of the future that would come true. In Flow My Tears, the Policeman Said, Dick points out social disorder and loss of values that lead the society towards downfall. The addiction to drugs create terrible hallucination of alternate lives where human beings crave for their real identity. The author also criticizes incestuous and homosexual relationships as one of the major reason for degradation of society. The anxieties of celebrity life and the protagonist's struggle for regaining the lost identity has been intertwined with the Police General's plight of losing his sister-cum-wife. The administrator's monopoly and manipulation of the governance has been represented as the root cause of misery of sociological dystopia. An attempt has been made to show the parallels of real and unreal which help human beings retain sanity and rationality.*

**Keywords:** Science Fiction, Dystopia, Real and Unreal, Drugs, Identity, etc.

Sociological Dystopia reflects oppressive societal control through rigid, autocratic and technological form of government. It projects gloomy hallucination of the future that portrays a society as an illusion of an ideal world. It highlights contemporary social affairs, degradation of values, addiction to drugs, alternate lives and the advancement of science and technology and its adverse effect on the society. The society is usually governed by the upper class which prepares propaganda to force people respect the administration. People are doomed in constant horror where they live in a degraded state. They are kept under continuous inspection and compelled to follow similar outlooks.

Dick in *Flow My Tears, the Policeman Said* (1974) depicts the themes of celebrity life, addiction to drugs, value of love, meaning of identity, incestuous and homosexual relationships and shows how these factors become responsible for the plight of sociological dystopia. The plot revolves around Jason Taverner who is the protagonist of the novel. He is presented as a genetically enhanced pop singer and television star who suddenly loses his identity. Physical and emotional suffering of the characters is one of the major features of sociological dystopia. Accordingly, along with the protagonist, other characters in the novel too undergo severe distress.

The protagonist is presented as a celebrity with millions of fans. He believes that the fans are the life-blood of his existence. On the contrary, his beloved, Heather Hart, who is also a celebrity, has a kind of dislike for fans. The different perceptions of both the celebrities reveal the craving for popularity and associated anxieties of such a life. Although, Jason has affection towards Heather, he flaunts his status through a luxurious car which he considers as a mechanical heart that throbs only for him. Here, Dick compares machine and human where machines have gained upper hand. It indicates that machines have replaced emotions in humans, which has become a major cause of emotional suffering.

Jason's attempts to make Heather realize their own ordinariness despite being celebrities reflects Dick's hold on reality. It can be observed that Heather's dislike for fans is ultimately dislike of one's self. The real and unreal run parallel where Heather foresees the future agony that Jason is presently incapable of. Heather tries to make Jason aware about their ageing and consequent end of their glory. Her frustration reveals that the celebrities cannot lead ordinary life, as their personal life gets seized by the public. Once the glamour gets perished, a celebrity is doomed to live like an ordinary person. It shows the physical as well as emotional suffering of celebrities which continues to hike throughout the novel.

Jason and Heather represent the celebrities who are addicted to drugs. The influence of drugs overpowers Jason to such an extent that he does not even accept the reality of ageing. It can be seen through his expression 'Sixes don't grow old' (6). Here, 'Six' stands for an elite group which consumes a mind altering drug. The drug has genetic enhancement power which stabilizes the ageing process. Jason gets engulfed with the drug and his celebrity status to such an extent that he ignores Heather's warnings about their growing age. He always talks and boasts of being a 'six'. The drug gives them another identity which is hidden from the present world. Dick focuses on the addiction to drugs and its devastating effect on human life. He points at the split personalities and the subsequent disorders arising out of it.

Although Jason does not have any kind of dislike for fans, as is the case of Heather, he still craves for solitude. He craves to stay at his house in Zurich which stands for his privacy. However, Jason's materialistic attitude gets reflected through his habit of carrying heavy cash. He usually plays at black-jack tables and wins with the advantage of being a 'six'. Heather is also one of the members of 'six' family, but she appears frustrated with her life. She suspects Jason's involvement in other women. Her past life appears miserable and

fearful. The addiction to drugs creates alternate lives which in turn becomes the source of their suffering.

Marilyn Mason is another example of physical and emotional suffering in the present sociological dystopia. She too craves for being a celebrity like Jason Taverner. She desires to get trained and launched by Jason in the music industry. In order to achieve her target, she threatens Jason of committing suicide if he denies to train her. Jason's frustration with Marilyn exposes his external affairs, as he fantasizes about her being pregnant due to him. Dick highlights the dark side of celebrity life where women are sexually harassed and some of them even use their body as a ladder to success. Marilyn's awful and miserable condition reveals the reality behind the curtain. The world gets attracted towards celebrity life, but one cannot observe the plight of celebrities. Jason's suffering begins with Marilyn's entry when he encounters the attack of a strange creature. He tries to uproot the creature from his body, but Marilyn makes him aware that 'Nothing is going to get them out' (14). It reveals that, once someone gets trapped in the vicious circle, it becomes difficult to get away from it.

Another portrait of physical and emotional suffering can be observed in the form of Kathy who works as an undercover agent for police. Jason finds a talking toy in Kathy's house which converses with him and reveals his real identity. He gets surprised with the capabilities of the toy to identify him, where no living being can do so. The talking toy represents replacement of human emotions by machines. It denotes the emotional suffering of human beings. Despite being undercover agent, Kathy helps Jason by removing the micro transmitters from his forged documents. However, Jason rebukes Kathy for trapping people in order to fulfill her selfish gains. He finds a black and white cat in her house and relates it to the empathetic emotions humans have developed towards animals. The cat stands for replacement of human companion that helps Kathy to negotiate with isolation. It can be seen through Jason's question to Kathy, 'What do you get from him that you don't get from human beings?' (45). Jason doubts Kathy's loyalty towards her husband when she reveals her attraction towards him, 'You're magnetic than Jack. He's magnetic, but you're so much, much more' (48). It exposes disloyalty in marriage institution of sociological dystopia.

Kathy's physical and emotional suffering surmounts when she gets confused between her delusions of past and present reality. The layers of real and unreal intermingle, both for Kathy and Jason. Kathy feels becoming sane and observes Jason as a product of her delusions. On the other hand, Jason feels that he would regain his lost identity. Dick tries to emphasize that, it is the sanity that makes Kathy realize the truth. She gets assured about her love for her husband - Jack. She tries to defend her deeds as desperate attempts to get reunited with her husband. She proclaims herself as a part of cosmic role and tries to justify her actions, even sleeping with other men. However, Jason discards Kathy's ideas of possessing two men at the same time. He criticizes her moral and ethical downfall. Dick uses this technique throughout the novel where he intermingles real and unreal to make us aware

about the consequences of our deeds. The parallel threads of real and unreal enables the protagonist to identify and choose the real and act rationally.

Jason's physical and emotional suffering becomes worse when he experiences the ordinary life which he always tried to keep aside by using his 'sixness'. He never had any objection about ordinary life and people except their inability to overcome the confined circumstances. Due to Kathy's irrational behavior, the boundaries between the real and the unreal get blurred, for Jason finds it difficult to become rational. His craving for regaining lost identity can be seen through the following expression, 'I've got to get myself out of this, I've got to find my way back to my own world!' (60). The inner urge to retain the lost identity enables Jason to overcome Kathy's trauma and approach his beloved Heather Hart. But, as the characters are doomed under constant delusions and horror, Heather too denies to identify Jason. It makes him frustrated, as he fails to convince Heather too about his identity.

Can't she see that my knowledge of everything about her means something important?... Who would know these things? Obviously only someone who had been very close physically with her for some time (65-66).

The miseries of sociological dystopia torment the protagonist to such an extent that he curses his circumstances and craves for his real identity. It can be seen through his depression where he says, 'Nobody remembers me. And I have no birth certificate; I was never born, never ever born!' (66). He fantasizes himself revealing his present miserable situation on his own TV show. Although, he gets rid of Kathy, she rejoins him and leads him to Mr. McNulty, a police officer. Mr. McNulty makes Jason aware of the death of Kathy's husband and her consequent psychotic delusions. Jason finds that Mr. McNulty is manipulating Kathy for his work and consequently, she has learned the same. This can also be observed as one of the major characteristic features of sociological dystopia where the authorities administer vicious rule.

Mr. McNulty can be seen as an authority who manipulates the masses and make them suffer both physically and emotionally. He provides a new identity to Jason as Mr. Tavern - a Diesel Engine Mechanic, as he does not find any information related to Jason Taverner in the police data base. It annoys Jason to receive a fake identity, but Kathy considers it as a good sign for Jason, as the altered identity can save him from the police. Jason takes a sigh of relief as he gets at least an identity, although a fake one. However, his search for real identity remains undisclosed. He is proud of being a 'six', but the fear of getting disclosed makes him ordinary. Dick focuses on ordinariness of all humans, where everybody is equal and possesses similar states of mind despite being socially uncommon. Jason's fortune appears to be lost in despair, as he is unable to find any ray of hope to regain the lost identity. Wessel draws attention to Dick's temporal dialectic of identity and alterity where he tracks the breakdown of the postmodern society. He says:

One can assess the degree of casual independence of two events only by continuously observing them as one moves through time. Here, we arrive at what may be the central theme of Dick's work, which has inexplicably received little critical attention: that of the dissociation of memory, consciousness and identity. Inevitably, the presence of amnesia breeds suspicion of the occult common cause because the amnesiac cannot see what is happening beyond the curtain of time (53).

Dick intertwines Jason's story with that of the Police General – Felix Buckman to denote close resemblance in their fate. Although being a brother and sister, Felix and Alys develop incestuous relationship. Alys Buckman appears as a drug addict who can go to any extent to achieve whatever she desires. Felix's fear of Alys shows her insane behavior that makes him think to get rid of her. The corruption in the system of this sociological dystopia can be seen through Felix's favor to a political prisoner where he rescues him in exchange of an antique piece of stamp.

Dick projects Ruth Rae as the epitome of physical and emotional suffering. She has a kind of dislike for animals. She has developed her own reasoning that animals have very short span of life which creates a lot of pain after their loss. On the contrary, Jason's loss of identity can be seen as more painful aspect of life. Ruth believes in basic human instincts which make people fight for survival. She represents a woman who marries for twenty first time, yet gets abandoned after few months of marriage. Dick criticizes the marriage institution and emphasizes on a bond rather than a system.

The physical and emotional suffering is doomed over the characters in such a way that it becomes mandatory for them to be a victim. Felix becomes aware of Jason's innocence, as he does not find any reason to hold him responsible for Alys's death. Yet, he believes that it is Jason who willingly came to his attention and it is his destiny which has trapped him. He reasons that Jason has chosen the large and visible role, instead of being an ordinary. It can be observed that the ordinariness gets manipulated by the power.

Felix's emotional and physical suffering torments him to such an extent that it makes him burst out in tears, but he could not understand the reason behind his agony. He tries to console himself that a man cannot cry like a woman over certain sentiments. His tears can be understood with Freud's psychoanalysis. According to him, it is the society that determines the roles of masculinity and femininity. The process begins right from the childhood where a boy gets prevented from shedding tears, whereas a girl is allowed to cry. It purges women's emotions, but gives rise to mental disorders in men. Hence, Felix's tears can be considered as an outburst of his suppressed emotions.

The unreliable vision of human actions is another major feature of sociological dystopia. It can be observed throughout the novel where the characters experience strange incidences due to alternate lives. Jason awakens into a hyper real world which makes him recall his past life. He remembers the struggle in earlier days of his life. Jason, a celebrity



with millions of fans gets rejected by everybody where nobody identifies him. He suspects his own as well as others' sanity, as he is unable to find any signs of his real identity. He gets frustrated with the fear of loss of identity. He gets trapped between the real and the unreal that makes him stranger to everyone. Dick focuses on importance of one's identity and his trade mark question 'What is Real?'. Scholes and Rabkin aptly comment on his mixture of absurd explorations with existential anguish in following words:

Dick has turned science fiction into an elegant and harrowing mental game, in which traditional ethics and traditional metaphysics are both called into question. Of any particular act it is often equally hard to say whether it is good or bad. What Dick makes us understand is that events produce anguish for those involved in them, whether they are dreams or "realities," and where there is anguish there must be sympathy. But he almost always prevents sympathy from turning into sentimentality (104).

The amalgamation of real and unreal engulfs everyone to experience delight and sorrow simultaneously. It can be seen through Jason's happiness after receiving the police pass with which he can roam anywhere without any restrictions. He does not want to return to Kathy, although she helped him to overcome the trap set by the police. Moreover, he finds himself in dilemma about his beloved, Heather, too. So, he decides to catch another girl who could provide him a safe residence. Accordingly, he approaches a club where he surprisingly finds one of his past mistresses - Ruth Rae. He recalls her obsession with sex and sexy vocalists. He also remembers her dislike for animals and compares her with Kathy who loves animals. As per the delusion, Ruth too denies to identify Jason who anticipates the proceedings as a form of his unreal parallel life.

Ruth's actions and thoughts appear unreliable as they create only chaos. It can be seen through her negative approach towards love where she wants to get dissolved with it. She considers grief as the most powerful and noble emotion of human beings. She believes that grief is the final destiny which makes everybody aware of loneliness and death. On the contrary, it can be observed that even after the negative circumstances Jason continues to fight for his survival and identity. It appears that Ruth is not afraid of death but grief makes her experience death and life simultaneously. Dick employs two diverse approaches towards life where Ruth wants to feel the grief and experience tears, whereas Jason believes that grief needs to be avoided. It is observed that Ruth keeps proclaiming grief as the channel which reunites everyone with the lost one. Palmer strongly points out satirical and socially critical aspects of Dick's novels where he comments on Ruth's character. He states:

There is a lot of the teacher in Philip K. Dick: ardent, rueful, idealistic, hopeful. He passionately wants to say what he has learnt, what we need, where we have gone astray. He finds opportunities to do so, particularly in his later novels. The discourse of Ruth Rae on love and grief in *Flow My Tears* (1974) (ch. 11, 101-103) is an instance. This is a character who is at first presented

satirically (the pleasure-loving Las Vegas type who has been married 21 times); the fiction then abruptly, clumsily but strikingly has her utter this humane wisdom (37).

Although Jason has been submerged in grief with the loss of his identity, he decides to fight for his survival. The trust and deception, the real and the unreal intermingle to pave the way for choosing the rational. In a way, Dick's dystopia resembles the reality and provides concrete solutions to overcome the disorders.

Another incidence about the loss of values in sociological dystopia can be seen through an old man - Mr. Mufi's homosexual relationship with a teenager. Although, it is considered as a crime and an act of disgust, the revised laws of engaging a child of twelve of either sex by an adult of either sex saves the old man from legal execution. In another incidence, Alys tells Jason about the social orgasm that takes place through phone grid lines which destroys the senses of brain. She reveals her own involvement in it and asks him to experience it. Here, Dick emphasizes degradation of social ethics and morality. He criticizes homosexuality as a social disorder.

Alys's behavior too appears unreliable as her actions seem mischievous. It can be observed through her knowledge of Jason as a famous singer where she shows her collection of his albums. Jason gets overwhelmed to see the concrete way of regaining his real identity. He gets desperate to find out the source of her information about him. She tells Jason that he has already visited her house in the past. Further, she offers him a drug called 'Mescaline' which puts him under the illusion. He attempts to find out the reasons behind others' inability to identify him, where Alys can do so. She asks him to wait for the realization of truth which will embrace him on its own.

Alys's unreliable actions makes Jason suffer whatever comes his way. Jason experiences the intolerable effect of the drug on him. But, Alys keeps recalling Felix's being in-charge of forced labor camps where he discovered new laws and saved the lives of black people by closing the camps. Felix was a Marshal, but got demoted to General for supporting the rebel students. Jason finds himself unable to respond, which makes Alys move for a counter drug for him. He decides to get rid of her and tries to run away from the house, but fails in the attempt. He tries to play his albums, but finds them too as blank. It makes him get tormented, as he loses the only record of his identity. The drugs create hallucination of parallel lives which makes life miserable in sociological dystopia.

Another incidence of unreliable vision of human actions can be seen through the incidence when Jason decides to contact Felix, as he wants to reveal the reality behind Alys's mysterious death. However, he realizes the futility of his actions once he fails to connect with him. Suddenly, he gets surrounded by his fans. He gets wildly delighted to regain the lost identity. It can be seen through his expression where he says that, 'My reality is leaking back' (188). He wonders about his existence after the consumption of the drug given by Alys. He considers the drug as a source of his existence and his twenty years career as a product of

hallucinations. It makes him realize that the effect of the drug might have finished once he woke up in the hospital. He suspects that somebody might have ceased giving him the drug which resulted into temporary loss of his identity, whereas Alys's drug redeemed everything for him. The addiction to drugs and resultant miseries shows the plight of sociological dystopia. Dick has witnessed the devastating effects of drug culture which gets reflected through the present portrayal.

Jason too comes up with a lot of unreliable actions which can be divided into two segments: real, wherein he sustains original existence as a celebrity and unreal, influenced by the hallucinatory drugs. After sensing the initial signs of regaining the lost identity, he rises in fury and speaks loudly about his real identity. He does not bother about public reactions, as he wants them to get acquainted with the anxieties of celebrities. Dick focuses on the real life of celebrities which appears glamorous to the outer world but within lies the commonness. Jason gets astonished with Mary's incredible pottery and invites her for promotion of her business on his TV show. But, she denies his offer as she loves seclusion. She makes him aware about the plight of his own celebrity life. It shows the miseries of being uncommon. Dick highlights the advantages such as peace and security in being a commoner.

Alys's unreliable actions reveal that she might have stolen the drug KR-3 from the special laboratory which is yet to be brought in practice. It is revealed that the drug damages human brain's ability to differentiate between the real and the unreal. A person affected by the drug gets forced to perceive unreal universes and act on intersecting reality and fantasy. It is concluded that everybody might have dragged into Alys's percept system as she passed into alternate worlds. She was involved with Jason as a wish-fulfillment performer. It can be understood with Freud's theory of 'wish fulfillment', wherein the suppressed desires get fulfilled by the subconscious mind (187-200).

Sociological dystopia finds its essence in concentration camps. It enslaves entire classes of its own citizens. Kathy's husband, Jack represents one of the victim of forced labor camps. Here, the suspects and criminals are kept in concentration camps and get tormented with overload of intolerable work. Due to the loss of identity, Jason too gets scared about his being sentenced to forced labor camps. So, he decides to forget for a while about his lost identity and fight for survival. He tries to convince himself about his uncommonness being a 'six'. His attempt to regain the lost identity highlights the significance of one's existence. His craving for the lost celebrity life and fans can be seen through the following lines:

Among all those thirty million people, he asked himself, isn't there one who remembers me? If 'remember' is the right word. I'm talking as if a lot of time has passed, that I'm an old man now, a has-been feeding off former glories. And that's not what's going on (20-21).

The circumstances become worse to such an extent that Jason doubts his own existence. It can be seen through his following expressions:



*I don't exist*, he said to himself. There is no Jason Taverner. There never was and there never will be. The hell with my career; I just want to live. If someone or something wants to eradicate my career, Okay, do it. But aren't I going to be allowed to exist at all? Wasn't I even born? (21).

People live dehumanized and fearful lives in sociological dystopia. Jason gets tormented with the loss of identity, but the question of his existence horrifies him. He finds himself unchanged but becomes unable to find out the reasons behind his unfamiliarity to others. He decides to get duplicate identity proofs and fight for his existence. Meanwhile, he observes the compulsory sterilization of black people which has drastically lowered their population. Although, he has lost real identity, his racist views expose the envy between black and white where the inferior ones are doomed under constant horror.

Alys can be seen as a prominent character who lives dehumanized and fearful life. After examination of her dead body, it is revealed that she might have perished due to overdose of drugs. As Felix is aware of her likeness of 'sixes', he does not suspect Jason to be responsible for her death. Alys's involvement in phone orgy, where many people get involved in public orgasm shows the glimpses of her dreadful life. Felix gets terribly shaken with Alys's death, as she was vital part of his life. He gets overpowered by agony and bursts out in tears. Dick intertwines the plight both of Jason and Felix as they have lost the dearest to them. But, as the title of the novel denotes, 'the tears of policeman', Felix's loss cannot be retrieved, whereas Jason could gradually regain his identity. Felix gets frustrated with Alys's death which makes him too lead a fearful life. It can be seen through his expression: 'I'm like an animal... Like a laboratory rat' (227). His behavior appears insane when he threatens to kill Jason and teases him to run away. On the other hand, Jason decides to overcome his fearful existence, as he does not want to be hunted anymore. Felix's treatment of Jason represents manipulation of regulations by the authorities which is one of the significant features of sociological dystopia.

Another example of dehumanized and fearful existence can be observed through Felix's eyes. After realizing Jason's attempts to get rid of Alys's case, Felix undergoes a dream in his artificially induced sleep. He finds himself as a child in a countryside where he rides a horse and observes several men approaching him on horses. He finds all the men moving towards his house in search of Jason. He hears Jason's dreadful scream as the men attempt to kill him. He feels utter grief for Jason, but could not do anything to save him. When he awakens from the dream, he experiences a strange kind of isolation. The meaning of his dream can be understood with the help of Freud's *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*. He states that 'the dreams are mental phenomena and its proof can be found in 'hypnotic phenomena' (84-95). The inner urge to kill Jason makes Felix to see him dead. On the contrary, it is the sanity and reality that makes him cry over Jason's agony.

Sociological dystopia keeps people under continuous inspection and puts complete ban on individual freedom. It can be seen through Jason's encounter with Kathy who is a

police informer. She prepares duplicate documents in order to assist policeto capture the suspects. She gets manipulated by a police officer - Mr. McNulty in exchange of her husband's freedom from forced labor camps. Although, she calls Jason as 'psychotic; a split personality, Mr. No one and Mr. Everyone' (34), she herself appears to be a mentally disturbed person. It can be seen through her recurring dilemma and delusions. Kathy's confusion between attraction towards Jason and her dead husband Jack whom she assumes to be alive in forced labor camp reflects chaos of her mind. She influences Jason to such an extent that he compares himself with the inhabitants of forced labor camps.

Jason is the major prey who gets scrutinized constantly. His short lived happiness comes to an end, once he finds the micro transmitters planted on him. He manages to discard the devices but gets scared of being tracked by the police. He gets confused which makes him abuse Ruth who in turn beats him out of fury. After a while, both of them apologize each other for their misbehavior. It can be observed that the plight of the characters in sociological dystopia is taken to extreme end. Jason's agony continues when Felix issues orders for his arrest considering him to be feeling safe after the removal of tracing devices. It can be observed that Felix takes advantage of Jason's miserable condition where his false perception becomes responsible for Jason's agony. He suspects the possibility of a mischievous group working behind Jason's loss of identity, but Jason's miserable condition surprises him as nobody attempts to rescue him. He gets wildly delighted to get hold of Jason, as he considers it to be the victory of his insight. He compares himself with Byron who fought for freedom of Greece, whereas he fights for a coherent society. He considers order, structure, harmony and rules as vital aspects of his life. Dick focuses on the social disorders and tries to make us aware about the reality by providing subsequent ways of retaining sanity.

The vicious administration in sociological dystopia can be seen through Felix where he pretends to be a 'seven', the next version of 'six' and tries to deal with Jason very cunningly. Jason gets surprised as Felix identifies him to be a member of 'six' family. Felix plans to trap Jason by convincing him about their similarity. However, Jason ascertains Felix's malicious plan and becomes cautious with disclosure of information. He reveals that Heather Hart is another member of 'six' family. Felix gets surprised to know that the famous singer too is a 'six'. He blames the disloyalty of 'sixes' which leads them towards their downfall.

The manipulation of governance is another significant feature of sociological dystopia. It can be seen through Felix's torcher to Jason for revealing his real identity. Felix gets annoyed with his inability to find out the truth, as Jason could not respond to any of his attempts. Jason finds himself helpless which can be seen through his whisper: 'I don't exist' (143). The search for identity and existence leads Jason to nowhere, as he gets trapped in every situation. The importance of family in one's life and the present scenario of dismantled familial life can be seen through Felix and Jason's contradictory views. Felix asks Jason about his family and children where Jason reveals that he does not have anything to be

identified as a family. On the other hand, Felix discloses information about his son who is kept at Florida. He regards the love of children as the strongest form of love. Dick criticizes the family structures where children are kept away from the parents which create adverse effect on their upbringing.

Jason becomes successful in catching another woman as Ruth who takes him to her house. But, he feels swallowed in a vacuum, as he does not find any way back to his identity. He enquires about another woman of his acquaintance Monica Buff whom Ruth reveals to be her sister-in-law. Ruth expresses her dislike for Monica's criminal behavior. She gets surprised to find Jason's affection towards an ugly girl like Monica. However, Jason makes Ruth aware that his likeness of Monica is a result of her sense of humor. He compares Ruth with Monica, but realizes it is unfair, as he is using her for his personal gains; the way Kathy used him and McNulty used Kathy. This highlights the manipulation of individual freedom in sociological dystopia.

Generally, a sociological dystopia features a protagonist who usually feels trapped and struggles to overcome the negative circumstances. Jason too undergoes the similar experiences as he finds Alys's skeleton. He gets shocked with her sudden and unexpected horrible death, as the skeleton appears to be thousand years old. He loses the only hope with Alys's death, as she could have helped him regain his lost identity. He runs out of the Buckman house along with his albums even after the security cop fires bullets at him. It makes him get assured of Alys's death, as the cop too witnesses the skeleton. He becomes unable to distinguish between real and unreal.

Jason comes across another woman named Mary to whom he urges for his help. She reluctantly agrees to help him, as she gets scared of him. He observes her fear about him and tries to make her aware about its harmful effects. She appears to be a commoner who loves isolation, but he insists her to accompany him. They discuss about his strange experiences and loss of identity. She gets delighted to be in the company of a celebrity and out of curiosity, finds one of his latest song 'Nowhere Nuthin...' (184) at the coffee shop. It gives Jason another ray of hope to regain his lost identity. Although Jason is fighting for his identity and survival, he helps Mary to overcome her loneliness and anxiety about the world.

Sociological dystopia portrays negative vision of the government which is vicious and indifferent. It can be seen through the manipulation of Alys's death records. Felix decides to trap Jason and Heather to be responsible for Alys's death. On the other hand, Jason decides to meet Heather as he has regained his lost identity. But his rejoice suddenly turns into grief, as Heather arrives with a scary news:

TV PERSONALITY SOUGHT IN CONNECTION

WITH DEATH OF POL GENERAL'S SISTER (216).

Jason gets shocked with the news, as he again gets confused between reality and hallucinations. He finds himself helpless, as the delight of regaining the lost identity turns into the plight of getting hooked for Alys's death. Heather too gets furious with her inclusion

in the case. She makes Jason aware about the end of their careers. However, Jason blames Heather for maintaining homosexual relations with Alys. As Jason and Heather do not find any other way to overcome the trouble, they decide to surrender to the police in order to avoid further grief. In a way, they become victims to the trap set by the malicious administration.

On the other scenario, Felix gets disturbed even though his grief ends with the terrible dream. He feels alone which makes him approach a black man named Hopkins. He gives him a drawing of a heart pierced by an arrow and hugs him desperately. It symbolizes Felix's repentance over his wrong trial with the innocent Jason. Hopkins realizes Felix's depression which he decodes as a sort of impulse or inspiration. He comprehends that Felix might have done something out of his irrational impulse without thinking of the results which has become the root cause of his suffering. Felix recalls John Dowland's music poem, 'Flow, my tears...' (239) which stands for purgation of his emotions. He decides to get his son Barney and keep him in his company forever.

Dick reveals the fates of all the prominent characters in the epilog. Jason gets released from all the charges for not being guilty and regains his celebrity status. The Buckman house gets sold to a lesbian organization. The experiments with the drug KR-3 get abandoned due to its toxic qualities. Kathy learns and accepts her husband's death and gets admitted to a psychiatric hospital. Ruth gets married for 51<sup>st</sup> time but dies with an overdose of alcohol. Heather abandons her career and goes missing. Mary's pottery wins international award. The university students give up their revolt and willingly enter forced labor camps. Felix gets assassinated after his retirement for exposing the police apparatus through his autobiography. The forced labor camps get closed forever and the rank of Marshals too gets abandoned. Alys's cartoon art popularize her as the foremost authority of the century. Alys and Felix's son Barney joins New York Police but gets paralyzed in an accident. He becomes successful tradesman. He dies of old age with little memory of his father, but no memory of mother. Jason dies of old age without being noticed by many people. But, Mary considers him a celebrity and most important person in her life.

The overall reading of the novel validates the significant features of the sociological dystopia as portrayed by Dick. The author leads the characters and the happenings to the extreme end which horrifies everyone. The search for lost identity and existence is thrust area of the novel. The author awakens human beings to introspect the same. Dick criticizes the social disorder, improper law system, loss of values, degradation of ethics and the addiction to drugs and alcohol. The manipulation of individual freedom by the authorities creates insecurity among the masses. People lead their lives in constant horror and hallucination. The illusion of ideal world creates agonies for the inhabitants and they are forced to respect the government. The burden of possessing similar outlooks leads to chaos. But the parallel threads of real and unreal open the choice for selection of the rational one. The dystopia

appears disastrous, but Dick pulls back everything from the brink making everyone aware of the reality. Thus, sanity gets retained.

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