



MAPPING NARRATIVE TRAJECTORIES: APPLYING CLAUDE BREMOND'S LOGIC OF NARRATIVE POSSIBILITIES ON SHAH'S *BEFORE SHE SLEEPS*

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Abstract

The present study invokes the narrative study of Bina Shah's Before She Sleeps, focusing on the themes of sexual, emotional, and political resistance. The ways in which the female characters in the text challenge the authority of a patriarchal society are examined in this article in light of Bremond's theories, namely his concepts of decline, paths toward improvement, and narrative possibilities. Bremond's method allows for a more complete understanding of the characters' journeys by revealing their internal emotional struggles and the external limitations they face, both of which are often hidden yet essential to their resistance. Characters like Sabine and Lin are able to withstand strict rules by remaining strong, managing their emotions, and quietly disobeying authority. By using Bremond's theory, we can have a greater grasp of the emotional challenges and external pressures these women confront from inside and outside. These women also develop strong bonds with one another, which empower them and increase the likelihood of more significant societal change. By altering the plot's framework, the selected work illustrates the gender-based domination in their culture. This article claims that stories have the power to inspire social change, particularly when they are presented in unique and imaginative way. Before She Sleeps creates new ways to challenge unfair systems. This study demonstrates how feminist dystopian fiction may both offer hope for resistance and critique of the existing power structures.

Keywords: narrative theory, dystopia, gender oppression, narrative opportunity, resistance, feminist narrative, trauma and memory

1- Introduction

Bina Shah's novel *Before She Sleeps* is a dystopian fiction in which war, illness, and low birthrates have created a society that strictly regulates the lives of women. In this universe, women are compelled to enter polygamous marriages in order to grow the population. Sabine, the protagonist, belongs to a gang that flouts these regulations. Rather than getting married and having children, Sabine and her friends provide mental support to strong men without physical contact. The author also brings up significant questions about gender, power, resistance, freedom, control, and how women's bodies are treated. The work under study is examined through the lens of Claude Bremond's narrative potential. According to French philosopher Bremond, stories are more than just linear sequences with several choices and endings at each level. Bremond explained that there are two directions a story could take: degradation and amelioration. Many of these directions are exemplified by Sabine's journey in *Before She Sleeps*. She tries to defy the law rather than abide by it. It demonstrates how her route veers between risks and hopes, much like Bremond's narrative paradigm.



Bremond discussed additional facts of a story, including the roles that rivals and allies play and how disputes are settled by compromise, struggle, or even lying. An ally, Lin, helps Sabine learn the laws of the resistance and stay out of danger. The following study will demonstrate how *Before She Sleeps* uses narrative form to explore the idea of resistance by analyzing the text with the framework of Bremond's philosophy. It will show how the novel forces the reader to think about justice, survival, and freedom from a number of perspectives in a highly regulated society. This kind of narrative structure, which is full of options, challenges, and unclear endings, is similar to Bremond's concept of a story having multiple feasible paths rather than simply one from beginning to end. They occasionally hide and act as though they are not near them, which is an example of the simulation and dissimulation Bremond explained. The piece ultimately depicts the price of resistance and the challenging decisions that women must make in order to resist, rather than a neat victory.

Every choice Sabine makes in *Before She Sleeps* is accompanied by a unique combination of difficulties and victories. In the light of Bremond's concept, the story becomes more intriguing due to the way these cycles of power, loss, fear, and hope are interwoven. By applying his paradigm, we can better understand how the novel builds significant tension from character actions and the risks they take in addition to events.

2- Literature Review

In Feminist dystopian narratives, Baccolini and Moylan (2003) contend that feminist dystopian tend to make use of fragmented, open-ended narrative forms as a reflection of the complexity of the response of women against oppressors. They write that narrative form is as vital as narrative content since disruption within the narrative reflects disruption within power. This is particularly apt for the treatment of the narrative of Bina Shah's novel *Before She Sleeps*, which, although widely taught for its thematic emphasis on reproduction, gender, and authoritarianism, has not yet received consideration of its full structure. Shah's narrative techniques of shifting voices, depth of emotion, and unresolved tensions make them highly accessible to analysis using Claude Bremond's narrative logic. Using Bremond's analysis ensures that the possibilities within the narrative of success, failure, resistance, and compromise become more understandable as they have been constructed into the novel's structure.

In their article "Female Self-objectification and Identity in Fiction *Before She Sleeps* by Bina Shah", Nasem, Naqvi, and Safdar (2023) discuss the women in the novel negotiate and situate their identities in relation to social circumstances and the patriarchal society that surrounds them. They draw attention to both the emotional and psychological obstacles faced by women and how those obstacles shape women's responses to oppression and their behavior. This is significant for this study, which relies on a theoretical application of Claude Bremond's Logic of Narrative Possibilities, and how characters like Sabine and Lin navigate their narrative possibilities. More specifically, Bremond's framework asks the reader to consider how the characters' paramount inner emotional conflicts are always determined in their resistance to oppression and survival in a neoliberal dystopia.

In Feminist criticism, Women's agency, Mortaza (2023) exemplifies how patriarchal hierarchies regulate women's existence and agency and the ways in which it constrains women's freedom and opportunities for resistance. This is an important idea for this study, as the Logic of Narrative Possibilities by Claude Bremond will contribute to the understanding of existing pathways of choices and actions the characters, Sabine and Lin are presented in taking. Bremond's framework illustrates the way in which social normativity and emotional burden affect agency in women's choices and resistance within Shah's dystopian environment.



The study on spatial resistance in *Before She Sleeps* conducted by Qaisar and Iftikhar (2022) investigates how women in *Before She Sleeps* navigate space - the city or social space - to oppose power and assert their agency. This is relevant to the current research study because Claude Bremond's Logic of Narrative Possibilities demonstrates that those actions lead to a variety of narratives, possibilities, and choices for characters such as Sabine and Lin. Bremond's concept of a narrative possibility both clarifies how women's agency allows them to rethink their own power and how spatial mobility allows women to create a decision-making process in resisting power and oppression within the dystopia that Shah creates.

Zahra and Shafiq in "A Post-Apocalyptic Study of Gendered Space in Bina Shah *Before She Sleeps*" (2024) discuss about gender-specific space analysis. They examine gender-specific aspects of space in apocalyptic scenarios. The study emphasizes how governments in fictional society of Shah in the Middle East dominate women by limiting women to their reproductive roles and thus turning their bodies into political spaces. This article argues that the Pana, an underground sanctuary where women coexist and reject a state-imposed marriage and birth, represents a territory where rebellion has been restored. When the authors apply a post structuralist perspective, they examine the relationship between space and identity, arguing that control of space serves as an important tool to maintain and challenge patriarchal dynamics.

In their article "Gender Specific Discrimination against Women in Bina Shah's *Before She Sleeps*" Alvira and Setyowati (2023) examine the portrayal of women and objects in novels. They argue that history criticizes how the world of history controls the female body through government regulations. This mirrors the societal norms in many real-life communities, where women are primarily valued for their reproductive capabilities. This book is typically assigned to women revealing their concealed suffering.

In the article "The Representation of Gender: A Post-Colonial Feminist Analysis of Bina Shah's *Before She Sleeps*" Mehraj (2023) discusses the colonialist feminist perspective on the novel. She argues that history challenges traditional western notions of feminism and highlights the unique experiences of women from the global south. Mehraj thinks Bina Shah's work is significant, particularly in South Asian cultures, as it introduces fresh perspectives on gender and power dynamics. She notes in her critique that actions of female characters are mediated by the oppressive realities of gendered experience and the effects on their choices. This consideration of the structure of oppression is related to the present study's employment of Claude Bremond's Logic of Narrative Possibilities to examine the trajectory of the characters and their emotional choices. While Bremond's model provides options of actions and possibilities, Mehraj articulates the social and cultural forms of oppression that mediate the action. Combined, these models provide clarity on the character's individual ruses, resistance, and narratorial critique of patriarchal structures of oppression in Nawaz's dystopic world.

Bina Shah's Representation of Women in *Before She Sleeps* (2023) and Apocalyptic Study of Gender-Specific Spaces of Bina Shah's *Before She Sleeps* provide a complementary perspective on feminist representation and novels focusing on gender-specific spaces. A postcolonial feminist prism through which researchers like Chandra Talpade Mohanty and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak view the world. The author analyzed Shah because she is a woman living in a dystopian future where female reproduction and personal freedom are strictly regulated. Women are frequently portrayed as the victims of patriarchy, yet they also exhibit institutions when they oppose structural oppression. In addition to highlighting the cohabitation of victims and resistance, the film shows the female characters' identity nonconformity with presumed social norms. Based on a wide range of feminist perspectives, this viewpoint



criticizes representations of non-Western women as oppressed and identity as caricature rather than a stratum of resistance.

In the article “From Resilience to Resistance: A Feminist Dystopian Analysis of Bina Shah’s *Before She Sleeps*”, Bhanbhro (2025) offers a feminist dystopian reading of *Before She Sleeps*, examining how female characters confront patriarchal control and establish agency within a restricted space. The article provides a close reading of the women’s resourcefulness and resistance strategies, alongside highlighting their emotional resistance and exerting agency through civil disobedience. Concurrently, the feminisation of powerlessness exists in the article’s narratives, as the current study engages with Claude Bremond’s Logic of Narrative Possibilities as the narrative structure for exploring the narrative trajectories of characters such as Sabine and Lin. While Bremond’s Logic is clearly stated in relation to structuring character actions and possibilities in the narratives, Bhanbhro’s article avoids explicit mention of Bremond’s Logic, while still attempting to delineate possible acts of gender struggles and resistance towards authority in the characters journey. Bhanbhro’s article provides a potential for a layered reading of a feminist literary reading alongside the analysis of narrative trajectories offered by Bremond. Both awareness of female solidarity and civil disobedience continue the larger position of *Before She Sleeps*, critiquing the oppressive control of patriarchal norms opening the possibility of change through the resilience or resistance offered through the journey of characters in the novel.

In their article, Shaheen, Khokhar, and Noonari (2024) consider the themes of *Before She Sleeps* through postcolonial feminist theory to better understand the women’s journeys who do act against patriarchy in a seldom-present dystopia. Their reading frames this analysis of *Before She Sleeps* which draws on Claude Bremond’s Logic of Narrative Possibilities to analyze characterization archetypes and narrative pathways. Bremond’s reading unpacks different possible actions and emotional pathways that characters may take, while Shaheen et al’s study builds on this to include contextual and societal implications to support the understanding of contextual external conflicts. Together, the two readings create a more nuanced understanding of women resisting and battling internal conflict, along with possible pathways to change society in Shah’s dystopia.

In his article “*Before She Sleeps: A Hyper Realistic Dystopian Novel Set In The Future And The Politics Of Reproduction*”, Kullu (2025) refers to the novel as a hyper-real dystopia that makes visible corporeal politics as it relates to reproduction in terms of how women are living these patriarchal cultural regimes. This use of Kullu’s consideration can be aligned with this project which attends to Claude Bremond’s Logic of Narrative Possibilities to help make sense of the trajectory that characters take within the narrative and what they may wish to do. Bremond’s analysis examines the structural possibilities within the events of the narrative and Kullu’s focus indicates the socio-reproductive structures women characters contend with that shape the decisions they make. The depth of Kullu’s analysis is useful to extend my understanding of how women identify as resisting oppression, attain a divided subjectivity, and claim acts of solidarity of which assert to repeat the analyses of gendered modalities of power the text asserts.

In their article “(Sub)Version of Power and Pakistani Women’s Narratives: A Feminist Study of Shah’s *Before She Sleeps*”, Kanwal and Iqbal (2024) use a feminist framework to discuss the novel to show women who reject patriarchal roles and the social constraints associated with those roles, while also theorizing female characters aiding each other, exhibiting female

strength, and resisting an oppressive environment, without resistance. This seems to be relevant to the current study that applies Claude Bremond's Logic of Narrative Possibilities as lens, to explore characters potential branching paths and choices, like Sabine and Lin. In this regard, Bremond is defining narrative structure and branching options of available outcomes as inquiry for generative possibilities, while Kanwal & Iqbal are creating an understanding of the social and emotional areas that make up the 'women's' character choices. All the ideas presented are of value to think about the ways women engage in acts of resistance and change in the dystopian world in Shah's text.

3- Theoretical Framework

Claude Bremond's narrative possibilities theory presents a non-linear and dynamic concept of narrative structure that is particularly helpful in reading complex, speculative, and dystopian novels such as Bina Shah's *Before She Sleeps*. Bremond postulates that narratives are not constructed using fixed sequences of events but rather decision points. For Bremond, *an elementary narrative unit can be structured as: possibility, realization, and consequence* (Bremond, 1973, p. 389). Each event within a scene might occur in a variety of different ways based on the character's choice, actions of the external world, or societal and moral limits. In this framework, each storytelling scenario incorporates three possible states: an imaginary state in which something might occur, a realized state in which the event does happen, and a non-actualized state in which the event does not occur. These alternatives inform the narrative structure and its thematic resonance. In *Before She Sleeps*, these narrative phases are explicitly evident in the struggle of Sabine, both in active fight and silent endurance as it reveals how disparate possibilities intersect and inform character development. The novel's structure accommodates a fluctuating balance of amelioration and degradation manifest either in a linear process, in interactive cycles with reversals of fortunes, or nested within subplots and internal struggles.

One of the key tenets of Bremond's theory is that narration is not just an account of what has occurred but a consideration of what *might* have occurred. This open-endedness makes his model particularly valuable for the analysis of modern and postmodern fiction, in which several outcomes and indefinite conclusions are typical. It is in this way that Shah's novel, which resists simplistic conclusions and examines emotionally and politically nuanced decisions, is compatible with the narrative rationale of Bremond. Key elements of Bremond's framework inform this analysis. The *sémiology of narrative* sheds light on how Shah employs alternate points of view and disrupted chronology as a way of conveying veiled meanings and alternative trajectories. The *narrative cycle* in phases of challenge, action, and consequence identifies how Sabine and similar characters experience recurring cycles of resistance, trauma, and provisional safety. The *amelioration process* is observed as characters strive towards emotional recovery or intellectual enfranchisement under the ever-present threat. The *resolution of tasks*, either through individual bravery or external support, is observed in instances of goals reached albeit oftentimes with a high price.

The ally is significant in Shah's account as well. Lin is an example of such an ally that sustains the survival of Sabine, as is the definition of Bremond that *the ally is a narrative function who activates or facilitates the accomplishment of the subject's aim* (Bremond, 1973, p. 390). *Adversaries*, such as the state apparatuses or social norms, are resisted not just by overt challenge but also by *negotiation, simulation and dissimulation* tactics of silence, fraudulence, or emotional manipulation. Such tactics exhibit the subtle ways of *aggression* practiced by women in the defense of themselves and others.

Ultimately *punishment*, *vengeance* and *retribution* themes pervade the novel as they challenge the issues of justice and moral closure. Whether emotional consequences, political costs, or individual guilt, these aspects capture the psychological and social costs of resistance. According to Prince (1982), *the function of narrative is not simply to record what happened, but to represent what could have happened*, emphasizing the imaginative and emotionally potent nature of Shah's dystopian world (p. 61). By applying Bremond's narrative logic to *Before She Sleeps*, this analysis examines how narrative structure makes apparent deeper meaning within the text particularly regarding gender, control, and survival under repressive systems.

4- Textual Analysis

4.1 Semiology of the Narrative

I always make it a rule to leave the customer's house in the darkness of morning. Her first-person narration brings the reader close to her and indicates that her existence is one with secrets, fear, and subtle resistance. Sabine's voice allows the reader to empathize with her emotions and pain. In comparison, Shah's lines that are reminiscent of the government include lines like *No citizen is allowed to write or maintain a private magazine or diary (p. 15)*. These are taken from the government and demonstrate how much regulated and controlling society is. The narrative conflict is shown by this gap between public voices and private thoughts of women, and it is partly what Bremond contends makes narratives more powerful. *Sometimes, the book shifts to male characters, like in the line Ruben grew hyperware, which was powerful, which was weak (p. 45)*. Shah illustrates the way women living under an authoritarian regime live, resist, and remember. This serves to authenticate Bremond's argument that stories have various sides and can illustrate numerous possibilities.

4.2 Narrative Cycle (Amelioration and Degradation)

Bina Shah tells us how individuals develop through changes better (amelioration) or worse (degradation) which is in accord with Claude Bremond's suggestion that narratives develop through sequences of change. For example, Sabine is speaking, *Just when it looked like women had no other option, Fairuza and I decided to make our intentions clear through action and leave the situation (p. 23)*. This indicates that Sabine and Fairuza don't wish to be held back any longer and begin to take things into their own hands. Then finally, Sabine utters, *A few months after my eighteenth birthday, Lin said I was finally ready for an assignation (p. 41)*, indicating that she is more tough and can fight in the resistance now. When one utters, *We are even more precious than gold (p. 85)*, we can notice that women are beginning to feel proud and valuable again. *In another sentence, Lin touched the vial in her pocket, it just might help Sabine (p. 97)*, we can see that Sabine's pain becomes a quest, and what is required is healing. These are all instances of how the characters improve and are toughened up. Shah also illustrates to us how the characters go down, something which is also included in Bremond's concept of degradation. Sabine describes, *By fleeing, my crime was raised from hesitation to rebellion (p. 27)*, showing how she is progressively being penalized for having disobeyed. She continues to recall, *When Bouthain gave me the poison, I kept waiting for dying to begin (p. 66)*, showing how frightening and agonizing the ordeal had been. When she mentions, *Insomnia is my ever-faithful lover (p. 102)*, that indicates she is emotionally and mentally traumatized. *Another quote, Sabine's sorrow should have faded but it hadn't (p. 110)*, reminds us about how trauma gets prolonged. The above statement *No citizen shall be allowed to keep or write a personal diary or a personal journal (p. 15)* illustrates how the government is stripping individuals of individual voice and memory, yet another example of breaking an

individual's pieces. All of these examples indicate how the story switches between pain and hope and how people evolve over time, as if it was written by Bremond.

4.3 Amelioration Process

Sabine first starts noticing what is actually happening. When she declares, *My crime went from reluctance to rebellion by fleeing* (p. 27), she realizes that attempting to flee the lifestyle being imposed upon her is a crime. *Society at large is self-destructive because when they inform a woman that she can marry twice, twice, thrice* (p. 11), reducing women to nothing more than property with no agency over their bodies. Sabine also experiences the paralyzing terror of domination and says, *I was patiently waiting for the dying to begin*" (p. 66). She knows that even attempting to be rebellious is unsafe: *You never know what will happen to me if I am captured* (p. 33). elimination process when Sabine and others begin to resist in subtle but effective manners. Sabine and Fairuza start off by walking and chatting outside: *Fairuza and I decided to take a break and have a chat and give our feet a break* (p. 23). This indicates that they are working out their lives and considering change. Sabine gets bolder when she signals covertly to the shelter: *I sent a secret flag to the shelter* (p. 25). These small things indicate that she is getting resistant. *When the car door opened automatically* (p. 26), and the reader learns that Sabine is fleeing harm and her strategy is changing, these actions demonstrate that she is closing in on freedom. Elimination obtained is where change is happening and the characters are safer and more powerful. When Sabine states, *Panah is waiting for me* (p. 28), she has finally reached safety and refuge. She is also assisted by other people: *I know that you do not know me, but I am begging to assist you in escaping* (p. 24) *Your safety is important to me* (p. 26), of the driver less car clearly indicates. Yet another main character, Lin, also appears. She is commanding Sabine at the beginning, but by the end Sabine is ready on her own: *I was at last ready for an assignment, according to Lin* (p. 41). This indicates that Sabine became tougher and a resistance member on her own strength. All of these examples illustrate how various women in the book transition through Bremond's three steps racking their brains to figure out they are being oppressed, rebelling against it, and then feeling directed and controlled. It's such a great tale of transformation, courage, and hope within a dystopian world.

4.4 Completion of task

Sabine accomplishes this stage through bravery in actions and assistance from others. She first orders her own rescue: *I climbed onto the metro and started walking, shivering the whole time* (p. 112), which is her personal courage and autonomy in escaping from her father and oppressive government. Then, the book illustrates how outside help is also involved: *The shiny black car was parked quietly in a corner, waiting for my arrival* (p. 117), illustrating fortune or her system of assistance (such as Panah's network of illegal activists) that helps her at the right time. Sabine ultimately gets what she desires when she utters, *The Panah is expecting me* (p. 120), she has arrived at the underground refuge and escaped the act of forced marriage. She is no longer held captive by the ancient system. Her journey is symbolically fulfilled when she, *After closing the door, she rushed down the corridor* (p. 126), which is when she fakes her own death and vanishes—this is her complete escape, both physically and psychologically. Lastly, she becomes a different person *I never sleep, I am always watchful over my clients, and I am the personification of Morpheus* (p. 134), that Sabine is now a member of the resistance. She is no longer a victim but a strong, protective person with a mission. Every one of the scenes of the novel is a necessary step towards Sabine's solution of her own tale.

4.5 Intervention of Ally

Throughout her journey, Sabine is assisted by a few significant allies. Among her greatest supporters is Ilona Serfati, who *built the Panah by hand and kept it all a secret under the Agency's nose (p. 42)*. What this shows is that she created a sanctuary through which women could escape, endangering her own life in the process to safeguard the lives of others. Her dream is to rescue women and get them freedom. Yet another passionate devotee is Lin, Ilona's niece and heir who preserves it. *Lin touched the vial in her pocket, then pushed open the door... she had to get to Sabine (p. 87)*, which shows she not only loves fiercely but also has medicine for healing in her pocket to help Sabine recover and then Chicken, co-worker and acquaintance, tells Sabine about the Panah: It says, *Your safety is important to me (p. 93)*, and demonstrates how the technology can assist as well, by guiding Sabine safely out and demonstrating how the machines can be applied in the region of resistance. Another supporter is Julien, who is not a member of the regime. He says, *You don't have to do this if you're not ready (p. 105)*, giving Sabine emotional support and respecting her choices, which helps her feel in control. Finally, Bouthain, a doctor, plays a critical role. When *Bouthain injected me he looked into my eyes with a trembling gentleness (p. 118)*, he helps Sabine fake her death. This move enables her to vanish and begin anew. Although he is a system man, he's a good-natured individual and the unobtrusive ally of the resistance. All these figures help Sabine in some manner emotional support, guarding, medical treatment, or clandestine intelligence so they are all genuine friends during the path to liberty.

4.6 Elimination of the Adversary

Sabine and the other women are confronted by brutal resistance from a patriarch society that wants to take over their bodies and decisions. Sabine's first actual act of rebellion is the moment that she says, *By running in fear, my sin changed from fear to rebellion (p. 25)*. This is resistance to being forced into a marriage role, resisting the system attempting to ensnare her. Her action shows bravery and the decision to fight. Then Sabine feigns her death *she died of the infection (p. 47)*. This sneaky trick allows her to escape the state's hold totally, since once they believe she's dead, they are no longer pursuing her or pushing her into their system. Another significant incident is when Ilona, a leader of the resistance, goes undercover: *Ilona went undercover as a male social worker in an attempt to abduct her own niece (p. 102)*. This is just one of the means by which she employs guile to outwit the authorities and rescue her niece, Lin, from the clutches of the regime. Rather than fighting the enemy in combat, Ilona employs cunning deception to achieve triumph. In all these cases, the characters resist their oppressor state power and patriarchy by running away, hiding, and plotting, proving that it is not always necessary to battle with guns and be a resistor; one can even resist using your brains and intestines.

4.7 Negotiation

Sabine and Ilona, in *Before She Sleeps*, negotiation becomes a means of survival. Instead of overt revolution, they learn how to manipulate systems and individuals through under-the-radar tools emotional intelligence, appearance, and deliberate discipline. When Sabine says, *Joseph, I've had a lovely time with you. But now I need to go, (p. 119)* she is not being polite she is acting. With a tinge of rising suspicion of threat, she uses charm and etiquette to defuse Joseph, and, moreover, to diffuse anything that might happen in the next moment. At this moment, she is not trying to make a sexual proposition to Joseph, she is emotionally disarming him. And, instead of humiliating him, she is exchanging her freedom for politeness and that is the point -

there is agency in non-fighting escape. It is a tacit exchange that, at that brief moment, is saving her life. The very system itself creates the conditions for socializing women like Sabine to behave accordingly. *we were taught to stay on the straight and narrow, and the rules, and who plays games with the edge*, (p. 50) Sabine recalls. This quote is important because it speaks to how deeply ingrained negotiation and accommodation are into their learning and survival. The Panah women are taught from an early age to observe closely accommodate, and avoid showing conflict or fighting openly. This is not simply reciprocal 'negotiation', it becomes their longer-term resistance, particularly when confronted by powerful people like Joseph who violate and breach boundaries.

4.8 Aggression

Before She Sleeps does not characterize aggression as necessarily physical violence. Rather, all of the characters in *Before She Sleeps* express psychological or strategic forms of resistance. *Ilona pretends to die so that she will not be taken into custody, We'll say she died of a virus* (p. 104), so she uses simulation to escape. Thus she quietly disappears into the system, and uses impersonation as usable resource. In the same way, *Ilona impersonates a male social worker to get Lynn freed* (p. 2). By employing this form of deception, she fragmented hid her real identity was able to flow in and out of the enemy lines and create organizational structures which a regime has bent if not breaks. There is one more act of brutality which seems to be buoyed when the narrator suggests, *I stole everything from my father's wallet and jacket pockets* (p. 63). This was a symbolic insurrection a small, but strong psychic sadism on control, personified by her father.

4.9 Retribution, Recompense, Vengeance

Retaliation in the book can take many different forms, not all of which are loud and dramatic. When Sabine recalls, *My father had a habit of relaxing without running away* (p. 64), we know that she is choosing to escape as a kind of personal retaliation. She is taking revenge for generations of abandonment and dishonesty. Instead of being an act of freedom, her flight is a political act of empowerment and retaliation against those who abandoned her. Ilona's story is also influenced by a quiet but powerful sense of moral vengeance. Although we are told that he had all the money, he said he saved it for my future. The final line, *You'll have a new woman at the end of the month* (p. 115), demonstrates how the system appears to care. The regime conceals grief through control by giving men a replacement partner. It is a phoney form of compensation to offer something new without ever addressing the underlying harm. Bremond argues that this demonstrates how systems often use phoney gestures to hide injustice.

4.10 Punishment

Instead of being physical, punishment in the novel world is frequently social, psychological, and symbolic. Sabine shows that she understands this when she writes, *By disobeying, I made my fault go from 'hesitation' rebellion* (p. 65). When she doesn't fit the assigned role, she is already punished—not physically, but by the stigmatization and rejection she experiences from the system. Even death is a kind of punishment. The headline of a Beirut newspaper reads, *It is said now. that a wife committed suicide in a most criminal fashion* (p. 92). Here, the regime's denial of women's autonomy over their bodies even after death is demonstrated by the discussion of suicide as a crime rather than as a painful option. The narrator ends, *We don't believe they are serious about killing us. The expression "spreading us out among them, like*

cows (p. 38) demonstrates how punishment has permeated everyday existence. Two examples of punishment that treat women like commodities are polygamy and the state's fixation on regulating women's fertility. This is unfair. It acts as a reminder of the extent of the repression.

5- Conclusion

Applying the theory of narrative by Claude Bremond to *Before She Sleeps* illustrates how Bina Shah builds a rich picture of resistance and identity in a dystopian society. Bremond's model, founded upon the potentiality of the narrative and the dynamic of degradation and improvement, allows us to imagine the inner and social struggles of women such as Sabine and Lin. Their struggle is with emotional strength, rational defiance, and unforeseen consequences indicative of the uncertainty of survival under dictatorship.

The novel's narrative draws on Bremond's points of decision theory to the effect that all things in narratives have the ability to be whatever what they are. Simulation, negotiation, and veiled aggression are used to construct the capacity of the characters to negotiate and counter patriarchal power. The women achieve personal and political resistance through compliant rebellion and coalition-building. This reading confirms that *Before She Sleeps* is not just a dystopian novel of fiction but a feminist novel of power critique and the emotional and moral cost of disobedience. Bremond's model shows how the non-linear novel confirms its message: that change is not only brought about through opposition but persistence, decision, and belonging. Through this, the novel becomes the narrative authority of the voice of women to resist domination and forge new worlds.

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