



Foolish Love: Exploring the Theme of Love and Madness in "Love Not Times Fool"

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Abstract: Prof. Vikas Sharma's *Love's Not Time's Fool* is a bold and thought-provoking literary exploration of love's fragile essence in the chaotic rhythm of postmodern life. Penned during the COVID-19 pandemic a period marked by isolation, introspection, and emotional volatility the novel delves deep into the shifting topography of human desire, intimacy, and connection in a society increasingly veering towards transactional gratification and moral ambiguity. At the heart of the narrative stands Richa Pandit, a fiercely intelligent and emotionally layered protagonist whose journey through extramarital entanglements, casual liaisons, and moments of same-sex intimacy lays bare the inner dissonance between bodily fulfillment and emotional hunger. Through Richa's nuanced experiences and her emotionally fraught relationship with Abhilash, the novel excavates the psychological vacuum and existential loneliness that often masquerade as freedom in contemporary relationships. Yet, beneath this gritty portrayal of fleeting desires and relational dissonance, the novel champions the redemptive power of love a love not immune to folly, but enriched by it. The title itself, echoing Shakespeare's sonnet, serves as a lyrical contradiction: while time tests, erodes, and often mocks affection, true love, in its most foolish and unguarded form, dares to defy temporality. It is in this foolishness—this willingness to hope, to trust, and to feel despite the odds—that the novel finds its most profound wisdom.

Keywords: Contemporary Relationships, Physical Gratification, Moral Ambiguity, Foolish Love

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INTRODUCTION

Through poetic prose and unflinching realism, Sharma creates a mirror to the contemporary soul, capturing the tension between freedom and fidelity, pleasure and permanence. *Love's Not Time's Fool* is thus not merely a narrative of modern intimacy—it is a layered meditation on love's enduring madness, its moral disarray, and its inexplicable, irrational beauty. It asks: in a world that celebrates logic and instant gratification, is there still room for foolish, uncalculated love? And if so, might that be the only love worth holding on to?

Love is a complex and multifaceted emotion that has been a central theme in literature for centuries. Vikas Sharma's *"Love Not Times Fool"* is a poignant exploration of the human experience of love, delving into the intricate and often maddening nature of this emotion. This research paper will examine the theme of love and madness in *"Love Not Times Fool,"* analyzing how Sharma portrays the all-consuming and often irrational nature of love.

There is no doubt that *Love's Not Time's Fool* is, at its core, a poignant reflection on the folly of love itself. The characters that inhabit its pages are not paragons of romantic idealism; rather, they are deeply flawed, self-serving, and emotionally elusive. Love, in this narrative, is not a sacred bond but a mutable

concept—shaped, distorted, and repurposed according to personal desires, ambitions, and the relentless pursuit of self-gratification.

Each character engages with love not as an act of surrender or transcendence, but as a means to an end—be it emotional validation, physical intimacy, or the illusion of connection in an otherwise alienated world. Their affections are conditional, their loyalties fleeting, and their emotional investments transactional. Yet it is precisely in this moral and emotional disarray that the novel locates the essence of "foolish love"—a love unmoored from virtue or permanence, yet painfully real in its imperfection. This is not love adorned with romantic pretense, but love as it often exists in contemporary reality—conflicted, self-interested, and chaotically human. The novel does not romanticize this foolishness; instead, it lays it bare with an almost clinical honesty, compelling readers to confront the unsettling truth that love, for many, is no longer a timeless ideal but a fleeting indulgence shaped by personal need.

Prof. Sharma's narrative thus becomes a searing critique of postmodern intimacy, while paradoxically affirming that even in its most misguided and selfish form, love remains the one force that continues to haunt, disrupt, and define human experience. It is, perhaps, in this very foolishness—raw, unrefined, and unresolved—that love reveals its most authentic self.

The Madness of Love

In "Love Not Times Fool," Sharma masterfully captures the madness that can accompany love. The characters in the novel are often driven by their emotions, making decisions that are impulsive and irrational. This madness is not portrayed as a weakness, but rather as a fundamental aspect of the human experience of love. Through the characters' experiences, Sharma highlights the ways in which love can both elevate and destroy individuals. In this novel, Prof. Vikas Sharma masterfully evokes the delirium of love—the sweet, intoxicating madness that blurs reason and renders even the most rational hearts defenseless. His characters do not merely fall in love; they surrender to it, allowing desire, longing, and emotional chaos to govern their choices. This madness, however, is not condemned—it is celebrated as an essential, if volatile, aspect of the human condition.

Richa Pandit, the novel's incandescent heroine, is emblematic of this erotic and emotional unraveling. Her decisions are frequently impulsive, driven less by logic than by the fever of unfulfilled desire. She engages in extramarital affairs not out of rebellion, but from a deep, unarticulated ache for intimacy, meaning, and emotional recognition. Her liaisons—some fleeting, others dangerously consuming—are expressions of a soul both yearning for connection and terrified of it. Her same-sex encounter, tender and exploratory, becomes an emblem of love's shapelessness—how it transcends societal norms and dances on the edge of taboo.

Abhilash, too, is caught in love's undertow. Though initially more restrained, his feelings for Richa dismantle his composure. His emotional restraint erodes slowly, painfully, revealing a man both haunted and nourished by a love he cannot contain nor fully claim. His silences scream, his absences echo—and in them, Sharma paints the madness of repressed desire.

This madness is not portrayed as a flaw, but as love's true nature: capricious, consuming, and mercilessly beautiful. Through these characters, Sharma suggests that to love truly is to lose control—to risk the ruin of

self for the fleeting ecstasy of connection. In their emotional volatility, in the trembling between pleasure and pain, Love's Not Time's Fool renders love not as rational choice but as a seductive descent into madness, where the heart reigns, and the mind submits.

The All-Consuming Nature of Love

One of the most striking dimensions of Love's Not Time's Fool lies in its portrayal of love as an all-consuming force—a fever that seizes the soul and silences all else. Prof. Vikas Sharma does not depict love as a gentle undercurrent, but as a roaring tide that sweeps away logic, duty, and restraint. The characters in his novel do not merely experience love; they are devoured by it.

Richa Pandit, brilliant yet bruised by the weight of her own longing, moves through her relationships not as a strategist of the heart but as its prisoner. Her emotional life becomes a theater of excess—each encounter a performance where desire eclipses discretion. She sacrifices career ambitions, emotional stability, and even her own moral compass at the altar of elusive intimacy. Love, for her, is not a part of life—it is life, and all else becomes a blur.

Abhilash, on the other hand, is a quieter storm. His obsession is less visible but no less destructive. He is consumed not by presence, but by absence—by memories, silences, and the unbearable ache of what could have been. In Sharma's hands, even longing becomes its own form of madness—slow, corrosive, and relentless.

What makes Sharma's portrayal so compelling is the refusal to moralize. He does not seek to tame love's wildness or caution against its cost. Instead, he magnifies its destructive beauty, revealing how love, when allowed to dominate the self, becomes both an ecstasy and a tragedy. The novel thus joins the great literary tradition where love is not a virtue but a vulnerability—a beautiful affliction that renders its victims gloriously human.

In this madness, Sharma finds meaning. For what is love, if not the elegant ruin of rationality—the sublime disorder we willingly invite into our carefully arranged lives?

The Irrationality of Love

Irrationality, here, is not a flaw to be corrected but a truth to be confessed—a proof that the heart, once awakened, pays no heed to consequence or convention.

Richa Pandit is the novel's most vivid embodiment of this love-induced irrationality. Witty, intellectual, and fiercely independent, Richa nonetheless finds herself making decisions that defy logic and self-preservation. She engages in affairs not for pleasure alone, but as acts of rebellion against emotional emptiness. Her choices often lead her into emotional chaos, yet she continues, as if bewitched by her own hunger for intimacy. She knows the risks, senses the heartbreak, but still plunges ahead—as if ruin were a necessary toll for the ecstasy of feeling alive. Her actions, though reckless, are rendered with such emotional sincerity that they blur the line between madness and courage.

Abhilash, by contrast, is a study in suppressed irrationality. His love for Richa is quiet yet volcanic—a longing so deep it distorts his reality. He sabotages his own emotional clarity by clinging to shadows of

connection, by hoping against hope. In his restraint lies another form of irrationality: the unwillingness to let go. He chooses emotional paralysis over confrontation, silence over truth, as though protecting the illusion of love were more vital than possessing it. His madness is not in what he does, but in what he cannot bring himself to do.

Even the peripheral characters—those with fleeting arcs—mirror this romantic delirium. They enter relationships knowing they will break; they chase desire fully aware of its ephemerality. Sharma sketches them not as victims of poor judgment but as seekers of something sublime, something larger than their logic-bound lives can offer.

In this landscape, irrationality is not an aberration—it is the purest expression of love's spell. Sharma doesn't ask his characters to be wise; he asks them to be true. And truth, when born from the heart's wild core, is rarely rational—but always achingly real. *The Intersection of Love and Identity*

In "Love Not Times Fool," Sharma also explores the intersection of love and identity. The characters' experiences of love are deeply tied to their sense of self, and their emotions often shape their understanding of themselves and their place in the world. This intersection of love and identity is a powerful theme in the novel, highlighting the ways in which love can both shape and destroy our sense of self.

The Power Dynamics of Love

In *Love's Not Time's Fool*, Prof. Vikas Sharma unspools the silken thread of love only to reveal the knots of power wound tightly within it. Far from a sentimental fairytale, love in this novel is a battlefield of control and surrender, dominance and vulnerability. Sharma, with literary finesse and psychological insight, shows that love is never simply a union of souls—it is a negotiation of power, often subtle, often ruthless.

Richa Pandit, ever the radiant enigma at the heart of the novel, oscillates between being the wielder and the victim of romantic power. Her intellect and sensual charisma give her a commanding presence in her relationships, and yet, time and again, she finds herself disempowered—not by the men she entangles with, but by her own relentless yearning to be seen, to be felt deeply. Her power lies in attraction, in initiating desire; yet the moment emotion takes root, her control slips. She becomes vulnerable, even fragile, handing over the reins of her emotional well-being to partners who often fail to understand the tempest she hides behind her composed exterior.

Abhilash, in contrast, operates from a quieter axis of power. He is emotionally elusive, calculated in his silences, and thereby holds a different kind of dominance—the power of absence. His refusal to articulate love, to fully step into vulnerability, keeps Richa tethered in a state of longing. By withholding, he controls. Yet this, too, is a prison of sorts—his emotional austerity robs him of intimacy. He commands distance, but pays for it in loneliness.

What Sharma captures with remarkable wit is how power in love is rarely symmetrical. It shifts constantly, like shadows at dusk—at times cloaking one partner in control while exposing the other's helplessness. The characters, though often sharp and self-aware, are still pawns in the hands of their own desires. Even fleeting relationships in the novel carry this tension: one moment of emotional concession can spend an entire equation, one vulnerable confession can strip power away like a silk curtain falling.

There is also a socio-cultural undercurrent to this power dynamic. Sharma subtly critiques the gendered expectations that frame romantic behavior—how men can weaponized detachment while women are often penalized for emotional excess. Yet he refuses to paint victims and villains. Instead, he offers a mirror: love is not merely affection or attraction, but a continual performance of influence—sometimes gentle, sometimes brutal.

In *Love's Not Time's Fool*, love does not exist outside the realm of power—it is defined by it. Sharma's brilliance lies in showing us that even in our most tender declarations, we are often trying, quietly, to possess or be possessed. Love here is not just a matter of the heart—it's a matter of who holds the strings.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, *Love's Not Time's Fool* stands as a lyrical testament to love's dual identity—as balm and blight, ecstasy and erosion. Prof. Vikas Sharma, with poetic precision and psychological depth, offers a richly layered meditation on the madness that love so often births. This is not a love story wrapped in roses and rain; it is a tempest in silk sheets, a symphony composed in the key of contradiction.

Through his characters' lives—particularly the fiercely complicated Richa and the emotionally reticent Abhilash—Sharma charts the erratic orbits of love's influence. Love, here, is no tame sentiment; it consumes, it unravels, it seduces the self into territories where reason holds no dominion. The characters fall not into each other's arms, but into whirlpools of longing, memory, and beautifully calibrated chaos. Their decisions are riddled with irrationality—betrayals of better judgment made in the name of something deeper, darker, and more elemental than logic can grasp.

Yet this madness is never frivolous. It is through their very folly that the characters reveal their truths—their wounds, their desires, their desperate bids to be known. Love becomes not merely an emotion, but an existential force that distorts identity and recasts the soul in its molten image. And alongside this emotional intensity flows a potent current of power: who controls, who surrenders, and who dares to do both. Sharma paints love not just as a connection, but as a quiet war of dominance—one waged through glances, silences, vulnerability, and retreat.

What makes *Love's Not Time's Fool* endure beyond its pages is its refusal to offer neat resolutions. It captures love in its wildest authenticity—disordered, raw, and luminous in its imperfection. Sharma neither romanticizes nor condemns this love-madness; he simply presents it, naked and breathing, and invites us to look. And perhaps, in doing so, to recognize something of our own secret chaos.

Ultimately, the novel is not a guidebook to love—it is a mirror held up to the heart's most reckless instincts. And in that shimmering reflection, we find not just characters on a page, but the very essence of what it means to love foolishly, madly, truly.

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