

## The Concept of Love in “Forty Rules of Love” By Elif Shafak

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**Abstract:** *This article is devoted to one of the masterpieces of Elif Shafak called “Forty Rules of Love” and its course of events, the life of Maulana Rumi, the forty rules of his spiritual teacher Shams of Tabriz, his pure attitude towards life and the changed life and worldview of Ella Rubinstein expressed by Shams of Tabriz, as well as Maulana Rumi. Furthermore, this article emphasizes the essence of pure love for God.*

**Keywords:** *love, Shams, Ella, religion, spirituality, essence of love, God, magic, feeling, sympathy.*

There are such magnetic and unique works of art in the world of literature that anyone would prefer to derive pleasure by reading them, even they aspire to read slowly in order not to finish fast, thanks for their charming virtue and impressive course of events that readers are able to find themselves. [2,170].

One of them is ‘Forty Rules of Love’ considered prominent bestseller, enchanting book of Elif Shafak who is eminent with her novels in both American and Turkish literature. It is such a novel within a novel, ‘The Forty Rules of Love’ depicts two parallel stories that mirror each other through two various cultures, as well as, seven intervening centuries.

This marvelous novel ‘Forty Rules of Love’ is a bewitching blend of love, religion and spirituality, as ZARBAKHT Bilal said. This book is capable of opening a door to the entity of Ella Rubinstein, a woman gets accustomed to living in her monotonous lifestyle without derive or passion. She is such a lady that she expects nothing from others. In spite of the attitude towards of the people in the vicinity of her, she has a tender ability to give unconditional affection them. Ella strains to disregard emptiness in her life by means of immersing herself in cooking meals. Ella’s story went on at a steady pace until she was offered a work by Boston literary agency called “Sweet Blasphemy” which was written by A. Z. Zahara and transforms Ella’s soul entirely.

In the same line of thought, this masterfully written book is in reference to noteworthy scholar and poet Rumi who lived in the twelfth century and his spiritual teacher Shams of Tabriz. One of the brilliant things in terms of this novel is that readers have a peculiar opportunity to take through a stunning journey touching many lives. Through this journey they are engrossed in not only reading this book, but also living with its characters and surely, fall in love with Shams of Tabriz. Additionally, ‘Forty Rules of Love’ is such a splendid novel that every chapter begin with letter ‘B’. The reason of this goes back to the secret of Quran lies in Surah Al-Fatiha and its vital spirit is considered in the phrase “Bismillah hir Rehman nir Rahim” which means ‘In the name of Allah, the most Beneficent and Merciful’. [8, 25]

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Furthermore, it is such an astounding and additive novel urges any individuals to make a turning point in their lives and fill it with essence of love. While getting closer and closer with this book, readers find it a compulsive reading, since Shams of Tabriz endeavors to put Allah in his heart in all walks of life. Besides, he exerts effort to boost the awareness of people that Allah is everywhere with you only if you trust. The benignity, tenderness, amity, passion and faith are some drops in ocean which Shams have a craving for accustoming us. [1,138]

Moreover, as Elif Shafak declared in the prologue 'Every true love and friendship is a story of unexpected transformation' [4, 5]. Therefore, writer, afterwards, demonstrated amendment of a great love. As well as, 'Forty Rules of Love' clearly illustrates both spiritual and real love by means of its praiseworthy characters. In addition, sufism is not an ancient, bygone heritage. It is a living, breathing philosophy of life. It is applicable to the modern day. It teaches us to look within and transform ourselves, to diminish our egos [3, 500].

This striking masterpiece can give a hand us to find a real ourselves and inspires us to comprehend true, virtuous love. According to the forties rule of Shams, he exclaimed 'A life without love is no account. Don't ask yourself what kind of love you should seek, spiritual or material, divine or mundane, eastern or western... Divisions only lead to more decisions. Love has no labels, no definitions. It's what it is pure and simple. Love is the water of Life. And lover is a soul of fire! The universe turns differently when fire loves water'. [3,499] It is by far the most magnificent phrase in this novel and made a peerless impression on readers.

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