

BHARATI MUKHERJEE'S "WIFE" TRAGEDY OF UNFULFILLED DREAMS

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Abstract

The Earth is a place to live in for all the creatures. Human beings have controlled on many natural activities due to his advance of science and technology. Going from one place to another place has been made very easy. She has taken the theme of gender discrimination, cultural clash and identity crisis in her novels. Her novels deal with the issues of the dreams which shattered on an alien land. People go to a foreign land with so many colourful dreams in their minds but they do not think about the challenges of a foreign land where culture, language, eating habits etc. are totally different. Here is the study of Bharati Mukherjee's novel 'Wife' as a tragedy resulted by unfulfilled dreams. From the beginning Dimple, the protagonist of 'wife' appears as a person who lives in an imaginary world, beyond reality, she dreams of a perfect husband and perfect life but when her dreams remain unfulfilled, she murders her husband and thinks that no one will catch her for murder as she saw in most of the serials. So 'Wife' can be read as a tragedy resulted by unfulfilled dreams of an unbalanced personality.

Keywords: *fancy, diaspora, tragedy, destructive impulse, identity crisis, dissociated personality.*

Introduction

Here is an effort to Analyze the character named Dimple in the novel "Wife" by Bharati Mukherjee. Bharati Mukherjee is a well known novelist of recent decades. She depicts female psyche, cross-cultural elements and search for identity very well in her novels. In the novel "Wife" the protagonist Dimple is the wife of Amit, a young engineer, and this protagonist has to face many problems in her life. The aim of writing this paper is to study Dimple as an individual whose psychological demands and reactions to them governed by her experience of life and her unique individual psyche and how her unfulfilled dreams create a tragedy.

Dimple's Unfulfilled Dreams

The novel opens with Dimple's girlish fantasy about marriage. She is eager to get married and visions of her prince charming whose amorous advances and glances would drench her with supreme bliss. In Dimple's imagination there is no place for mundane responsibilities, struggle with day-to-day existence like water shortage, electricity failure and adjustment with in-laws. Her husband, Amit an upcoming young man who her parents

find suitable for her, fails to feed her fancy. Dimple finds the tedium of marriage a burden. She had not bargained to live in the dark and dingy apartment with her mother-in-law. Dimple cannot see any joy in her married home in Calcutta and longs to go to the U.S. In the U.S. fresh troubles start for her.

Amit tries to keep her happy by all possible means despite his own struggle to get a job. The reality of life here is that he cannot devote all his time to his wife as he has to remain out of house for long hours. This leads Dimple to feel that he does not care for her. She used to watch television for hours together. She passes her maximum time in watching the films and the television serials which have murder as a part of their content. Unable to cope with her psyche, one night as Amit comes home from his job, she stabs him on the neck with kitchen knife and after the horrid act she sits smug, secure in the knowledge that in the television serials the murders are never caught. This is her final act of Americanization. broken dreams

International Journal on Studies in English Language and Literature) imaginary world, beyond reality, she dreams of a perfect husband and perfect life but when her dreams

remain unfulfilled, she murders her husband and thinks that no one will catch her for murder as she saw in most of the serials. So 'Wife' can be read as a tragedy resulted by unfulfilled dreams of an unbalanced personality. of a person who lacks grace and dutifulness and who fails to grow out of juvenile fantasy.

In this novel we find several themes such as adjustment to a new society, job hunting, frustrations and the shattering of dreams. America appears to Indian as the land of Golden Fleece but once there, they encounter unimaginable difficulties, the dreams shattered. These difficulties and the struggle to find a job is for Amit to tackle since he is the bread winner, Dimple is free from all these worries and she should feel herself lucky, according to Amit. Then what is the Dimple's problem? It is Dimple's own tendency to fantasize, as Jasbir Jain observes "it is difficult to treat the novel as a study of cultural shock for even while in Calcutta, Dimple is an escapist and lost in her private world of fantasy". Dimple is a study of an abnormal woman. Her character has two pronounced traits: an apparent helplessness of a dependent person coupled with a desire of an aggressive personality to revolt and to master, the person who comes in contact with her. Anyone can find treads of complaining in her temperament. We see Dimple as a young woman who has an inordinate hurry to get married to her dream man. She appears superficial and fails to impress. All she demands from life is parties, glamour and love. Thus her approach to life is unreal. Dimple's parents were worried for her marriage; mother helping her with solving her beauty problems, father searching for an ideal match for her. But hidden from this world is a world of fantasy Dimple has created for herself.

Dimple's sole aim in life is marriage. She sets her total self to- this would be miraculous happening, liberating and so: "Discreet and virgin, she waited for real life to begin". The waiting period, while her parents are hunting for a suitable groom seems to remote her. It makes her nervous, sick and anxious. Her anxieties are also related to the inadequacies of her figure and complexion, as she wants desperately to fit into the slot of an eligible match. Like so many Bengali girls, Dimple Dasgupta has been brought up to believe that her romantic illusions will somehow be made a reality through liberation into wifedom

of an arranged marriage, and therefore she waits for a bridegroom to come and woo her. Her pre-marital waiting state disturbs her: Years of waiting have already made her nervous, unnaturally prone to colds, coughs and headaches. Wasted years-she was twenty-lay like a chill weight in her body, giving her eyes a watchful squirrel and her spine a slight curve (Wife) She dreams about herself to be the prettiest woman so she writes to Mrs. Problemwala to provide solutions for her physical problems. But this dream of her remains unfulfilled as she did not deserve to be the prettiest due to her average beauty. She lands airy dimensions to a very realistic thing like marriage. Even in imagining her husband, she pictures a man from different ads made complete by borrowing various qualities from a variety of advertisements put together. In marriage, she looks forward to a magical change of life like that of Cinderella, through the "s magic wand. Dimple also expects marriage to lead her to a new dimension of self-expression:" That was supposed to be the best part of getting married – being free and expressing yourself". Thus, she has laid down too great expectations from marriage, only to discover afterwards that it, instead of delivering her into a life of promises, makes things more difficult for her. In place of her fantasies of affluence and plenitude she faces the dire reality in the shape of indigence and scarcity:

Dimple wanted a different kind of life- an apartment in Chowringhee, her hair done by Chinese girls, trips to New Market for nylon saris-so she placed her faith in neurosurgeons and architects. This description reveals that the novel is a tragedy resulted by unfulfilled dreams of an unbalanced personality of a person who lacks grace and dutifulness and who fails to grow out of juvenile fantasy. In this novel we find several themes such as adjustment to a new society, job hunting, frustrations and the shattering of dreams. America appears to Indian as the land of Golden Fleece but once there, they encounter unimaginable difficulties, the dreams shattered. These difficulties and the struggle to find a job is for Amit to tackle since he is the bread winner, Dimple is free from all these worries and she should feel herself lucky, according to Amit. Then what is the Dimple's problem? It is Dimple's own tendency to fantasize, as Jabir Jain observes "it is

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All she demands from life is parties, glamour and love. Thus her approach to life is unreal. Dimple's parents were worried for her marriage; mother helping her with solving her beauty problems, father searching for an ideal match for her. But hidden from this world is a world of fantasy Dimple has created for herself. Dimple's sole aim in life is marriage. She sets her total self to- this would be miraculous happening, liberating and so: "Discreet and virgin, she waited for real life to begin". The waiting period, while her parents are hunting for a suitable groom seems to remote her. It makes her nervous, sick and anxious. Her anxieties are also related to the inadequacies of her figure and complexion, as she wants desperately to fit into the slot of an eligible match. Like so many Bengali girls, Dimple Dasgupta has been brought up to believe that her romantic illusions will somehow be made a reality through liberation into wifedom of an arranged marriage, and therefore she waits for a bridegroom to come and woo her. Her pre-marital waiting state disturbs her: Years of waiting have already made her nervous, unnaturally prone to colds, coughs and headaches.

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Conclusion

In marriage, she looks forward to a magical change of life like that of Cinderella, through the fairy's magic wand. Dimple also expects marriage to lead her to a new dimension of self-expression: "That was supposed to be the best part of getting married – being free and expressing yourself". Thus, she has laid down too great expectations from marriage, only to discover afterwards that it, instead of delivering her into a life of promises, makes things more difficult for her. In place of her fantasies of affluence and plenitude she faces the dire reality in the shape of indigence and scarcity: Dimple wanted a different kind of life- an apartment in Chowringhee, her hair done by Chinese girls, trips to New Market for nylon saris-so she placed her faith in neurosurgeons and architects.

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