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Literatures in English

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## βΗΑΡΑΤΗΙ MUKHERJEE'S WIFE: AN IMMIGRANT IN A CONTINENT OF IMMIGRANTS

 $^{
m LSHARMILA}$ 

Bharathi Mukherjee's 'Wife' is a novel on immigration and also a study of cultural shock and alienation.

of cultural shoeld and Indian born American novelist was born and in Calcutta. She moved to Britain in 1947 Bharaun Managaran Bharaun Bhar on 27 July 1940 in United States, She married Harvard clark Blaise, a wealthy family. In Canadian. She refused her identity as an Indian. Because her struggle Canadian. She retain an exile from Indian. Because her struggle with identity first as an exile from India, then an Indian expatriate in with identity more an immigrant in the United States led her to be an

Dimple is an escapist lost in her private world of fantasy. In the beginning, at home in Calcutta, Dimple is dreaming about marrying a heginning, at he neuro surgeon and her father is combing the matrimonial ads for an already afflicted with size of the second se engineer. She is twenty and already afflicted with signs of passive anger, The tension between her actual powerlessness and forms of freedom suggested to her, have made her sick. After an excruciatingly painful waiting, she is finally married to Amit kumar Basu, a consulting engineer who is ideal in that he has already applied for emigration.

Amit is an earnest young man, even a considerate one by the standards of Indian masculinity, but Dimple has lived so long in a fantasy world of advertising and advice columns, that she is emotionally incapable of understanding another human being and she cannot

Dimple's psychic defeat is implied in her name. The name 'Dimple' is quite scintillating and enticing but lexicographically it means 'any slight surface depression'. With this psychic defeat, She naturally reacts in a peevish way to all the things around her. She does not like her new name 'Nandhini' and the house she lives in. She does not even love Amit, her husband.

Dimple wants to break through the traditional taboos of a wife. She aspires for freedom and love in marriage. This aim brings her morbid longings, unreal imaginations, foul fantasies. Days roll on sapping her soul. In the meantime, she discovers that she is pregnant. It's more paranoiac. The height of her abnormality reaches when she skips her way to abortion.

Dimple justifies herself that she cannot afford to take any relics from her old life to America where she hopes to begin life afresh and become a more exciting person. But she is trapped between two cultures. and aspires to a third, imagined world. She has nothing to do with the

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problems of immigrants. Violence is her fundamental experience of Newspaners, Car radios and casual conversations and parlours. In Dimple's an announced announced to the conversation of Newspaners, Car radios and casual conversations announced to the conversation of Newspaners. problems of immigrants. Violence is no.

York. Newspapers, Car radios and casual conversations announce of New alleys and ice- cream parlours. In Dimple's belief, a second all Her frustration with the second and the conversation with the second and the second and the conversation with the second and York. Newspapers, Car radios and June York. Newspapers, Car radios and June York. Newspapers, Car radios and June York. In Dimple's belief, and ice-cream parlours. In Dimple's belief, a man at all. Her frustration with Amit is murders in alleys and ice- cream partial murders in alleys and ice- cream part without a job was not a man at any without a job was not a job wa

"Her own body seemed curiously alien to her, filled with hate, malice, an insane desire to hurt,

yet weightless, almost airborne". (117)

ghtless, almost airbonne. (Annit is isolated from her since he fails to nourish her fantasies, almost airbonne. (Annit is isolated from her since he fails to nourish her fantasies, her neurotic nice) Amit is isolated from her world of dreams and delusions, her neurotic pinings turns away from her world of dreams and delusions, her neurotic pinings turns away from her world of discussions and her eccentricities. Amit simply does not fit into her own world pinings and her eccentricities. Amit simply does not fit into her own world she infallible, intractable, god like, but with a limit of the she with a limit of the she world of the she wo and her eccentricities. Anni simply wanted Amit to be infallible, intractable, god like, but with a boyish wanted Amit's ways of life makes her dislike the wanted Amit to be intamore, much a boyish charm. Her dislike of Amit's ways of life makes her dislike the world of Amit, an outsider world charm. Her dislike of Annu 5 may around her. She is an alien to the world of Amit, an outsider to her husband. Despite this lack of communication between the husband and and hatred or rancor. On the other hand and husband. Despite this lack of community wife, there is no personal hatred or rancor. On the other hand, Amit has wife, there is no personal names of all love for Dimple. He has never thought of exploiting her but is always

In the heart of heart, Dimple likes Milt Glasser. Consequently, she turns much worse off than ever, morelonely, more cut off from Amit and from Indians. Even the apartment objectifies the psychic decay and degeneration. She hurts Amit with the kitchen knife on the plea of protecting herself. She cogitates upon the nine ways of dying. It is becoming the voice of madness, and leads to her decision to kill Amit. "She sneaked up on him and chose a spot, her favourite spot just under the hairline where the mole was getting larger and browner. She brought her right hand up and with the knife stabbed the magical circle once, twice, seven times"(213).

The murdering of Amit is an assertion of her American identity.

Dimple has been portrayed free and rebelling throughout the novel. She has no inhibition in expressing whatever she feels. On the contrary, it is Amit Basu, who is a victim in India as also in New York. His murder signifies how an innocent, duty conscious husband falls a prey to the neurotic madness framed by the western countries. At last all the fantasies in the continent of immigrants come to an end by the suicide of the immigrant, Dimple.

## **WORKS CITED**

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