

# Complexities and Difficulty of the immigrants in Anita Desai *Bye Black Bird*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

**B**ye Black Bird is Complexities and Difficulty of the immigrants due to which they have mix feeling of love and hate towards the country of their adoption. The success of the novel as a literary genre depends upon a range of factors like the skillful interweaving of plot and character, interesting shocks and surprises in the plot, the roundness and flatness of the characters and narrative techniques of the author himself and perhaps more importantly the theme. Here I discuss the issues of alienation, lost of identity and accommodation that the immigrants has to confront in an alien and yet familiar world in the novel *Bye-Bye Blackbird*. It proves Anita Desai as a famous and strongest writer of Indian Diaspora.

## II. ANITA DESAI

Anita Desai was born in 1935 in Delhi to a German mother and a Bengali father. She grew up speaking German at home and Bengali, Urdu, Hindi and English at school and in the city streets. She has said that she grew up surrounded by Western literature and music, not realizing until she was older that this was an anomaly in her world where she also learned the Eastern culture and customs. She married a businessman at twenty-one and raised several children before becoming known for her writing. Her first book, *Cry, the Peacock* was published in England in 1963, and her better known novels include *In Custody* (1984) and *Baumgartner's Bombay* (1988).

## III. BYE BLACK BIRD

Set in the 1960s, explores the lives of 3 characters - a recent immigrant refusing to fit in and looking at those who do with scorn, an immigrant trying to belong and loving every thing about the new place. And a 'native' who marries an immigrant. The language is flowery, as one can expect from Anita Desai. The sentences are chiseled and it makes for a good read.

*Bye, Bye Black Bird* revolves around Adit, Sarah and Dev. Adit is an Indian who lives in England. He reconciles to his stay in England even though he suffers humiliations ungrudgingly and he inwardly identifies himself with Indian. Apart from this he obviously longs for Indian friends, activities, food, dress, music and culture. Sarah in spite of being a women from so called advanced west is quiet meek and submissive. While, Adit and Dev has choice to opt for their natural conditions, their true circumstances—Sarah has no choice she surrenders to the decision of her husband. In seeking her

own self Adit is totally unaware of the loss of self that his decision implies for Sarah .once again Desai draws our attention to the annihilation of self that marriage involves for a female—a theme that she picks up in her novel. Dev takes his final decision not to return to India and not to lead the way of the masses there. He slowly and steadily adapts himself to the new environment. His friend Adit Sen, a young man from India lives in England with his English wife. After coming to England Adit worked as a teacher, and finally accepted a little job at Blue skies. He is happy with his job. He feels now a sense of cultural affinity. All characters thought that hatred for another culture is not alien to Indians. In fact, we are probably more used to it than any other country, thanks to the multitude of diverse ethnicities that we have. It is high time that they develop a tolerance to other cultures. Tolerance stems from understanding and being aware of 'the other'. This should happen at an educational level and we need our children to grow up not just understanding the differences, but also appreciating them. We need to consider educational systems which allow diversity, have a mixture of children from various backgrounds who can mingle and mix with each other.

The Diaspora of Indian community is also not exempted from being a victim of the sense of loneliness. Since Indian independence, UK has been a prime destination for migrant Indians. The earliest of such communities constituted either of "Anglophiles," whose purpose of migration has been to experience the pristine beauty of England, or of "Anglophobes," who migrate to take the proverbial "postcolonial revenge". In England both these types of migrant Indians are pressed together and marked as "the Others". This sense of otherness is sometimes due to blatant racism and sometimes it comes out from the individual's own inner needs. It is such a situation when both the Anglophobe and the Anglophile find themselves in the same boat that their distinctions diminish as their purposes dilute. Purposeless, they find themselves lonely.

He gets disturbed and angry when someone whispers the word "wog" behind his back. Obviously Dev has more reasons to be lonely and thus when he ventures into the city he feels, "like a Kafka stranger wandering through the dark labyrinth of a prison" (169). Dev's loneliness eventually stops haunting him and he decides to stay in England. Adit, in the interim, suffers from a crisis of identity. He starts longing for the land and the people he has left behind. He feels depressed of "Mrs. Roscommon-James' sniffs and barks and Dev's angry sarcasm" (176) as well as from the fact that Sarah "had shut him out, with a bang and a snap, from her childhood of one-eared

pandas and large jigsaw puzzles" (176). He finally decides to return to India with Sarah. What this proves is that the sense of loneliness is not a phenomenon of overpowering presence but rather of intermittent overpowering, guided by circumstances incidental and always in flux.

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