

# The Vulnerability of Women in Bharati Mukherjee's *Jasmine*

**R. Abirami, II M.A. English,**  
**Department of English and Comparative Literature,**  
**Madurai Kamaraj University,**  
**Madurai**

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## Abstract

This article brings out the vulnerability of women through Bharati Mukherjee's *JASMINE*. The novel serves to illustrate the generosity of strangers in culture, where woman are subject to male authority. It is a novel of survival, expediency, compromises, losses and adjustments involved in the process of acculturation to American life. As an immigrant Mukherjee's explore her experience as recounted in the story Jasmine who rebirth through the name for identity. She faced the society with emotional weakness. Jasmine destiny made her survival and finds strength in her femininity. She experiences the life of liberty with the mask of identity crisis.

**Keywords:** Survival-identity-culture-destiny-rebirth-adjustment-losses

Literature shows the worldly image with many different views. Literature is a Latin term. Literature most commonly refers to works of the creative imagination, including, poetry, drama, fiction, nonfiction and some instances. Literature represents the culture and tradition of a language or a people. Bharati Mukherjee was an Indian American writer and professor, she was born on July 27,1940 at Calcutta. She is one of the well-known feminist writer and novelist whose writings mainly focus on major issues of the women's. She published number of novels and short story collections. In her works she writes about the cultural changes and alienation in the immigrant experience. She gets National Book Critic Circle Award for Fiction.

In this novel Bharati Mukherjee present about a young Indian woman in the united states who, trying to adapt to the American way of life in order to be able to survive, changes identity several times. Bharati Mukherjee uses cinematic techniques of flash back and cross cutting to fuse Jasmine past and present. The author tries to show the darker side of immigration, especially an Indian woman through the character of Jasmine, she is the female protagonist of this novel, she faces lot of obstacles in her life and tries to adjust all the painful conditions. Bharati Mukherjee explores how female get sufferings and struggles in this society.

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Jasmine is a poor young ambitious woman who migrates from Hasnapur to U.S.A. The novel begins with an astrologer's prediction that Jyoti, who later becomes Jasmine, in her childhood she lives in her small village Hasnapur, she married Prakash Vih, he is an engineering student and a modern city man, and he loves to lead a modern life. After the marriage Prakash renames her wife as Jasmine and gradually molds her to become a new woman. At the time Prakash gets a chance for his higher study in American Institute of Technology. So, they were start dreaming about their life in America but their ill luck, Prakash was tragically killed by a religious extremist in a bomb blast before they can fulfill their dream. After her husband death the boat caption Half-Face seduced her, in his view she only as an object. So, she wants to kill herself but she did not do that, because she wants to fulfill her husband dream. So, she murdered Half Face and escaped from that place and she begins her journey into America.

In America, she meets Lillian Gordon a woman whose personal mission in life is to help Americanize. Lillian gives a new name as *Jazzy*, with her new nick name Jasmine slowly improves her confidence. Mrs. Gordon teaches Jasmine to how to behave the outside world and also change her costumes. She started wearing T Shirt, tight cords and running shoes, then also started following the American tradition.

Jasmine meets her husband's professor Vadhera, who agrees to get her a green card for three thousand dollars, at the time Lillian Gordon's daughter Kate Gordon arranged a job for Jasmine to take care a child for Wylie and Taylor Hayes. She is happy in her position and slowly falls in love with Taylor, he gives a new name to her as *Jase*, she leads her life with her new identity, in the company of Taylor and Duff she feels as a complete human being. She started loving her new life and she forgets to accomplish her strange mission for what she had come to America. At the time she saw a man called Sukhwinder who killed Prakash in the bomb blast. So, she moved away from this place, now she left alone.

Then she moved to Iowa and works under Bud Ripplemyer, a bank officer, he was a fifty years man. He divorced his wife and gives a new name to Jasmine as *Jane*, she serves Bud patiently, she makes him comfortable and takes over all his duties. In the meantime she gets pregnant, but they don't get married, now she started following the American family lifestyle with Bud she very much acts like a perfect wife. She sacrifices all her dreams and wishes Jasmine's every moment is a calculated step into her Americanization and with each development a vital change is marked in her personality. Even at the end of the novel she wants her identity to suppressed by someone, thus the novel Jasmine reveal feminist concern and cultural conflicts with the results of change and the effects of past on present.

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