

A Scrutiny on Survival in Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*

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Abstract

Monica Ali is a Bangladeshi born British Writer, She is a prolific writer, she has garnered colossal feats for her debut best selling novel *Brick Lane*. The novel *Brick Lane* received the Man Booker Prize in 2003. Monica Ali's other works include *Alentejo Blue*, *In The Kitchen* and *Untold Story*. The paper also deals with the contemporaries of Monica Ali, followed by the narration of her accolades in Literature. Further it deals with the scrutiny of the author's life and various works. The novel *Brick Lane*, radiates the woes of the character Nazneen, which she encountered to obtain adaptability and independence. It also delves into the oppression of an immigrant's life, and the way the character Nazneen toiled herself to make a survival in a marginalized region. It clearly vindicates the struggle and growing pains, which every immigrant is bound to endure. It also tells the way she surpassed the hurdles with her grit. The novel allows everyone to learn about the life of Immigrants in London through the character Nazneen. Nazneen's constant endeavors to survive played a significant role in this novel. She encountered various hurdles initially and she overcame it by defying the norms of the society. The main focus of the paper *A Scrutiny On Survival*, is to penetrate into a deep oppression of the character Nazneen. It further summarizes the justification of the title *A Scrutiny On Survival* with the closure of Nazneen's *debonair*.

Keywords: Monica Ali, Individuality, Adaptability, Constant endeavors, Survival.

The genre Fiction falls under Fantasy Literature, which wholly represents imagination. It mostly deals with the incidents or events which is far from the facts. The Fiction comprises Short Story, Novel and Novella. The term fiction is evolved from a Latin word called "fictio", which bears the meaning "The act of making, fashioning or molding". It can also be dissected into a parts such as Literary Fiction, Genre Fiction and Mainstream Fiction, it was even lauded as a Popular Fiction. Henry Fielding is the one who carries the laurels of being called as Father of Fiction in Literature, whose works includes *Joseph Andrews*(1742) and *Tom Jones* (1749). Fiction emerged in Literature during 19th Century and its sub genres includes Historical Fiction, Science Fiction, Realistic Fiction, Fantasy, Mystery, Romance, Horror, Thriller and etc.

Monica Ali is a Bangladeshi British Born Writer and Novelist. She marked her existence in this World on 20th October 1967 in Dhaka, East Pakistan. Her

cultural background is an amalgamation of Bangladesh and London. She obtained her School Education in Bolton, England. Later she graduated from Wadham College, where she majored in Philosophy, Politics and Economics. Her famous debut novel *Brick Lane*, has accumulated humongous laurels which made her eligible to receive the awards like Guardian First Book Award (2003), British Book Award Newcomer of the year (2003). She has constantly ramped up her feats by being selected as one of the first Best Young British Novelists. The novel *Brick Lane* has raised the bar both in the United Kingdom and United States as a result it was shortlisted for Man Booker Prize in 2003. Her other work includes, *Alentejo Blue* (2006), *In The Kitchen* (2009) and *Untold Story* (2011)

This paper mainly focuses on constant endeavors to make a living in a new country. The character Nazneen epitomizes an independent life despite a

tight leash that had been put on her. It justifies that an immigrant's inner potential can overshadow a stereotypical society. It also gives a glimpse on Nazneen's miserable life in the beginning and how she juggled to obtain independence, adaptability and a contented life. Nazneen will attain her independence after innumerable torments. This paper elucidates the common sufferings of an immigrant woman, who tries to fit in. This paper takes a deep observation on her life, to learn the life of immigrants. It delves into every single incident that happened in Nazneen's life.

The title *A Scrutiny On Survival* implies a struggle of Nazneen in a bizarre place to obtain independence. Monica Ali has clearly portrayed the fate of women in the Bangladeshi Community. Every woman is destined to face a certain sort of impediment, which Monica Ali has clearly illustrated in the novel *Brick Lane*. The character Nazneen is a central focus of the novel, since she battled with health issues in her mother's womb. The author has described the life of every girl in the Bangladeshi Community and the culture which they adhered to through the character Nazneen. Nazneen and her childhood life was barely celebrated in a male-centric society and she was highly overlooked in a patriarchal community.

The novel renders consent to visualize a life of a victimized eighteen-year-old girl like Nazneen, who was coerced to marry a forty-year-old man Chanu, this incident in this novel is considered to be a first mishap in Nazneen's life. The novel reached its central focus, when Nazneen moved to London as an immigrant with Chanu. Monica Ali has made no mistakes in portraying aspects of a dutiful wife as Nazneen arranged furniture to keep a house decluttered though she found it difficult to get along with the neighborhood and to make arrangements in a new ambience. As every immigrant fantasizes about a new environment, Nazneen also observed the life of the neighborhood to fit in.

Nazneen got along with everyone effortlessly despite struggling to enunciate English words except "Sorry" and "Thank you". The author has exemplified life of immigrants, when Nazneen could hardly communicate to others due to language barriers, "Don't worry about it, it's a common problem for Bengalis, Two consonants together causes difficulty" (Ali Monica, 37). At the same time, Monica Ali didn't antagonize the character Chanu as an uncouth person, because he took great care of Nazneen unlike her father. Nazneen started to pile up her desires when she laid her eyes upon Ice Skating in a television, which was later hindered by Chanu and by the kind of society where they tried to fit in.

As the novel progressed further, the author radiated an anguish born out of seclusion and the oppressed life of immigrants. Nazneen began to feel invisible though she was in the midst of a hectic crowd, she found others running around the clock, and the women vigorously doing their household chores. She felt invisible since she stammered in a non-native language. She also possessed a certain kind of vanity, the moment she navigated an accurate way to Bangladeshi restaurant.

As the novel penetrates deep, it can be seen that Nazneen was no longer outnumbered, though her husband had put leashed to all her desires initially. Her life seemed to much valued and flourished, when she gave birth to boy baby Raqib, but her ill fate failed her once again in life, Raqib died in five months, the author has splurged an ill fate of women in the novel, which Nazneen inherited from her mother Rupban. Nazneen's survival in London carried different phases, which allowed her to grow independently, here the author's notion can be comprehended in a better way, when Nazneen attained mirth in absence of seclusion, though she tend to revisit her childhood days in her village with her mother Rupban and sister Hasina.

A sudden shift in the life of Nazneen's life in the novel *Brick Lane* justifies the title *A Scrutiny On*

Survival. The author has firmly insinuated her convictions on life of immigrants through the character Nazneen, who initially stumbled to socialize with other people in community but later she attained her adaptability out of her experience and trials. Even Chanu failed to survive there though he used to unlike Nazneen who created her own environment to qualify herself to fit in. Nazneen became financially independent and paid off the debts to Mrs. Islam, who loved to have deep pockets. She no longer mourned for late son and she gave unconditional love towards her daughters Bibi and Shahana. Nazneen even refused to leave London when Chanu asked her to move to Bangladesh which once made her feel invisible and insecure.

The novel *Brick Lane*, apparently falls under the genre fiction which deals with imagination not with facts. It is a sequel of chapters focused on imagination. Monica Ali is an acclaimed writer and novelist, who have garnered several accolades in Literature and widely known as a famous young British writer. Through this paper, it can be clearly stated that, life of immigrants is little complicated to fit in with the new social and with non native speakers, they have to go through various phases in another land to fit in, which was clearly elucidated by Monica Ali through the character Nazneen, it clearly asserts that every

immigrant can find their own feet in non native land, despite of oppressions. Adaptability and individuality can be achieved through constant endeavors. The future scope of the study includes, intensity of acquiring knowledge through the character Chanu. In this novel *Brick Lane*, Chanu seemed to have mastered the works of Classical writers like Chaucer, Shakespeare, Jane Austen etc. His great affinity for English Literature and for books of ancient times can be discussed. This paper can be concluded with the life of an immigrant, Nazneen and her constant endeavors to survive.

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