

## The Quest for Identity in the Novels of Rohinton Mistry

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### Abstract

Being a social humanist, Rohinton Mistry Mistry, a Canadian, has seen the middle-class Parsi family's way of life in Bombay. The oppression and solace of interpersonal and familial ties are central themes of the book. The tale of a middle-class Parsi family going through a domestic crisis is told in the book, which is situated in Mumbai, the city where Mistry was born and raised. The consequences of state policies on private life are alluded to both now and in the past. This epic from Bombay spans three generations and laments the loss of the Parsi family. Said, Mistry wants to bring about harmony in society by comprehending the numerous issues that people face. The only allusion to Canada in Mistry's books is longing for the political and social chaos of India's postcolonial past.

**Keywords:** Loneliness, Identity, Struggle

Social humanist Rohinton Mistry. From his vantage point in Canada, Mistry has seen the life of a middle-class Parsi family in Bombay. The third book written

by Indian-born novelist Rohinton Mistry is titled Family Matters. McClelland and Stewart released the book for the first time in 2002. The story is about a middle-class Parsi family going through a home crisis and is situated in Mumbai, where Mistry was born and raised. Mistry uses one family to express various themes, including the problems facing India's Parsis and Zoroastrians of Persian ancestry and more general worries about corruption and communalism. Mistry uses a lot of dialogue while writing in straightforward language.

From his vantage point in Canada, Mistry has seen the life of a middle-class Parsi family in Bombay. The book's central themes are oppression and the consolation of personal and familial relationships. It raises questions about how public policies have affected private lives in the past and present. This Bombay epic laments the rejection of the Parsi family through a three-generational series of events. In his book Family Matters, Rohinton Mistry examines human fragility's emotional, financial, moral, and spiritual ramifications as we age. However, India is where it is precisely geographically and culturally situated. Family Matters demonstrates

universal problems with fairness, responsibility, and close family ties.

"Family Matters" is based on a regular man and his family and is relatively straightforward. The main character in this book is Nariman Vakeel. Parkinson's disease and the legacy of a dissatisfying marriage cast a pall over his advanced age. The predicament facing Nariman Vakeel is very typical in specific ways. Even though his Parkinson's condition is worsening, he leads an independent life in his apartment and lives with his two stepchildren until he falls and becomes bedridden. His stepchildren react differently to this situation, driven by their selfishness from a previous family catastrophe.

The novel, set in the middle of the 1990s, combines Nariman Vakeel's past and present as a result of his Parkinson's condition. The story then turns to the occurrence that results in the death of his wife and ex-lover at the same time, as well as the subsequent dissolution of the family. Nariman, the main character, gradually fades into quiet before passing away. As the story continues, his grandson Jehangir, age 9, and stepson Yezad, age 9, assume more and more of the voices and roles.

When Coomy and Jal Contractor's father passes away young, they are coerced into a new home situation against their wishes. Their mother wants to wed Nariman Vakeel, who is carrying them, so that she can have the stability of a stable family. His family pressures him to marry a Parsi widow with two kids named Jal and

Coomy. Due to pressure from his family, Nariman forgoes his relationship with Lucy Braganza, a non-Parsi, and reluctantly consents to his marriage to Yasmin Contractor. Roxana, his recently acquired stepdaughter, joins Nariman's family shortly after.

Coomy Contractor and Jal Contractor, the two stepchildren of Nariman, have painful childhood memories. Coomy is obstinate selfishness, and Jal is the other casualty of a similarly risky passivity. Due to old age and an injury, Nariman becomes immobile and dependent on his children. Differently, they respond to their father's shift in status from beneficent to unwelcome burden. Due to Nariman's awkward situation, Coomy pushes her to relocate into Roxana's entire Home. There, Roxana resides in a modest apartment in Pleasant Villa with her husband Yezad their two sons, Murad and Jehangir and of them. Read and Roxana, a young couple, and their two boys, Jehangir and Murad, share a modest apartment. The entrance of Roxana's father, Nariman Vakeel, completely alters family life as usual. When Nariman's health deteriorates, his stepchildren Coomy and Jal want to get rid of him. But Roxana decides to care for her father because she is Nariman's daughter.

In Family Matters, ethical dilemmas arise in almost every relationship and circumstance due to various worries. The Roxana family must pay the older man's additional daily expenses.

When the medication ran out, and Roxana went to purchase the next lot, she

discovered that what Coomy had given her as her father's pension did not cover even the cost of the pills. (FM, 187)

Maybe Coomy wants to get back at Nariman for how he treated her mother, so she makes him sick. For taking care of Nariman and letting go of her past, Coomy is the owner of a share of the pension. Therefore, corruption permeates every aspect of life, even in the YezadChenoy family. Papa is not a football, Roxana replies. I'm not going to act like them. In the end, Coomy, her half-sister, pays a terrible price for trying to stop her stepfather from coming home. When Coomy decides to destroy the plaster ceiling of her flat intentionally, her brother reacts angrily.

Family does not matter to you! You keep nursing your bitterness instead of nursing Pappa. I've begged you for thirty years to let it go, forgive, and look for peace. (FM, 193)

The portrayal of Roxana's caring for her father offers a striking example of the expenses associated with care. Most of the care recipient's assets were given to Roxana for her unselfish decision to care for her father under challenging circumstances and to Coomy for her self-preservation decision to forego providing care despite living in more comfortable settings. Difficulties and conflicts typically accompany an older adult's loss of independence.

Osteoporosis and Nariman's Parkinson's disease are related. He breaks

his leg while out on a walk, forcing him to take bed rest in the Chateau Felicity building under Coomy's direction. Eventually, Coomy decides to move Nariman and lodge him at Chenoy's apartment for recuperation after noticing the plaster on his leg. Characters from Family Matters are once more given a complete complement of diseases. Jal, Coomy's brother, struggles with a defective hearing aid and is partially deaf. Through Nariman's manner of life, the concepts of the movement against immobility, decay, and mortality are investigated.

Only in the mental life where the concept of confinement is present does Nariman come into being. He has trouble meeting even his most basic demands. Roxana and Yezad fight daily to protect their family from financial hazards. Coomy fights bitterness that she holds the elderly guy responsible for her mother's premature passing in vain. Coomy and Jal are reluctant to give the elderly guy any painful physical care. Coomy and Yezad won't even touch Nariman's bedpan because it smells so bad. Their drive to exert control over their surroundings plays a role in their repulsiveness. For two characters named Lucy and Yasmin, whose struggle for the power of Nariman pushes them to the brink, this urge is detrimental. They fall off the roof and perish.

The Felicity Chateau. Therefore, the dissolution of the family unit is associated with physical and psychological harm.

Social corruption, a defining feature of contemporary Bombay, is related to physical corruption and inevitable change. Characters are frequently morally corrupted for worthy causes and engage in deception. For instance, YezadChenoy plays the illicit lottery "Matka" with money from his family's budget, incurring losses. But he does it in the hopes of surviving the higher costs associated with the arrival of his Parkinson's father-in-law. Similar to him, Jehangir, his son, is under pressure to renege on his duties as a homework supervisor at school, where he collects payment for his classmates' errors to support his family.

The central conflict of the book is this moral uncertainty in motive. Family Matters frequently questions the unfavorable results of well-intentioned behavior. Many circumstances serve as a form of double construction to guide the reader to the book's conclusion. Both people die when Roxana innocently proposes that Coomy hire the inexperienced handyman Edul Munshi to fix the ceiling. The most challenging part is that the series of incidents seems to be the beginning of all the Chenoy family's following problems. That is why, even after getting married to Yasmin, Nariman could not end his relationship with Lucy Braganza.

After their wedding, Lucy follows him, obtains a job with a neighbor to be close by, and makes repeated suicide threats. Once more, Nariman observes her to the Chateau Felicity's roof and gives her advice not to leap. Even so, he makes an

effort to comfort his ex-girlfriend and worries for Lucy because of her troubled fixation. He asks himself at one point what it is about Lucy's eternal devotion.

This moral complexity adds a fresh perspective to Mistry's recurring preoccupation with goodness as it is conceived in Zoroastrianism. The essential tenets of the Zoroastrian faith are mentioned in each of Mistry's writings. Every action in Family Matters seems to pose a risk to oneself or others. Coomy mistreats Nariman out of concern for the upheaval of her well-planned existence. She is unsure of her capacity to control and worries that it will be a subconscious act of retaliation for how Nariman abused her mother.

Here, the goal is to demonstrate how these people fall short of the Zoroastrian religion and evaluate their moral behavior. In essence, Family Matters is concerned with these reasons and how the past and present are connected. The novel centers, as is customary, on the challenges of managing time and change while trying to make sense of the narrative.

The fundamental Zoroastrian concept that there is an ongoing conflict between good and evil within every man's soul is also supported by this narrative. Therefore, humans must use such tools to recall their roots. The pages of Family Matters are likewise troubled by dashed immigration hopes.

The immigration story used to have two parts: dream and reality. But over the years, the goal of prosperity, house, car, CD

player, computer, clean air, snow, lakes, mountains, abundance-had teen renounced since it was not going to come valid (FM, 240).

Nariman is a man who, at one point, leads the race in its quest for individuality and identity before passing away. As a result, Rohinton Mistry's earlier works gradually illustrate the hardship of Parsis in Family Matters.

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