

An analysis of hell- heaven by jhumpa lahiri essay



**Edu
Pony**

Henna Beauteous Jennifer Williams English 1301 Cultures Love, generations, cultures, and family are the main theme to talk about in shorts stories, and in the story of “ Hell-Heaven” by Jump Lair, that is not the exception.

However, it is an unusual and very enjoyable story where readers can identify themselves with it because the main characters are common people who have the same problems as many of us.

If I have to summarize the story in one sentence, I can say that it describes the experiences of people who come from other cultures to the USA, and it is nuanced with an impossible love to make it more interesting and real. Also, the author divided the different parts of it with four important events which mark the transition from one part to another.

For that reason, during the story, we find how a Bengali family still attached to their roots, and the different point of views of the life between people who were born here like OSHA, an undergraduate student who met the Ash’s family, Kaka, who is from the same country as Ash’s family, and Ash’s parent’s more specific her mother. First of all, the first important event is when OSHA and her mother met Kaka in the beginning of the story, and he became art of their family making a change in their routine lives, and gave us an idea on how shocking could be life in USA for international students.

For example, in Auk’s case “ In his first month he lost nearly twenty pounds. He had arrived in January, in the middle of a snowstorm, and at the end of a week he had packed his bags and gone to Logan, prepared to abandon the opportunity he’d worked toward all his life” (1). That reflects the sacrifices

that some people have to pass through in order to achieve their goals, such as leaving behind a family, friends, and traditions.

In editions, there are a lot of evidences about how conservative and rooted to her culture Ash's mother, Boudoir, is, but that is one of the things that is going to be a problem in the relation daughter-mother in the future of the story. On the other hand, while Kaka respects and sees Boudoir as an older brother' wife, she falls in love with him, but she never allows her feelings to be known because she knew that it was a completely impossible relation, so she enjoyed their time together and just lived to see him again.

They shared more things in common than more of the couples, so it rags to us how the relationship between Ash's parent's was. Little by little OSHA understood why he became so essential to her mother's happiness, and we can find out this when she thought like this " He did not turn a deaf ear to her nostalgia, like my father, or listen uncomprehending, like me" (3). However, all this things start to change when Kaka fell in love with an American girl and married her with a completely American wedding.

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Thus, this is the second event that makes a transition period of time in the story. At this point in the middle of the story, everything takes a turn to leave behind Boudoir and Auk's perspectives of life, and goes into Ash's point of view by knowing her background already is easy to understand her. When she met Deborah she said, " I fell in love with Deborah, the way young girls often fall in love with women who are not their mothers"(5).

Therefore, we can assume that she felt more identified with her than with her own mother because Deborah represents her beliefs, the things that she likes, and the most important thing she can talk to her in English which is the language that is easily for her to express herself. After Deborah and Kaka got aired, they started their own lives, and the relations between them and Ash's family was more sporadically than ever.

Also, when she turned thirteen year old and started middle school, the relationship with her mother got worse because her mother did not understand her and was trying to force her to be a traditional Bengali woman. As a result, OSHA starts keeping secrets from her, such as telling her that she was going to sleep in her friends' houses, but instead that she goes out to parties allowing boys to kiss her, or telling her that she does not know how women get pregnant, and the only reason for this was the differences of cultures.

Then some people can think how is possible that a mother and a daughter can have so different cultures, and the answer is very simple, our society makes us. Although we can be taught in our houses, we are more likely to follow the fashion than the traditions. Therefore, the event that ends this period of time was the Thanksgivings dinner in Deborah and Auk's house where she felt so out of place when she said, " I was furious with my mother for making a scene before we left the house and forcing me to wear a shallow kamikaze" (6).

This is just another evidence of how little smart was the behavior of her mother towards her. Finally, the last period of time of the story is in the

present, and the last event that marks the end is when Kaka got divorce from Deborah twenty three years after they met each other in order to go with another Bengali married woman, so the consequence was that two whole families were destroyed. On the other hand, the daughter and her mother made peace just until both got an agreement about to respect each other lives.

The author offers to this in the following sentences when OSHA said, “ She had accepted the fact that I was not only her daughter but a child of America as well” (8). In addition, we discovered how strong was the love that Boudoir felt for Kaka just in the last minute when she confesses that she was decided to die for him. Hence, the story makes a sudden end where it gives us the idea that same cultures are more likely to bond than different cultures. In conclusion, this short story gives us an example of how people’s lives can change and adapt to new things in a period of time depending the place, time and environment.

Also, people from the same culture have the ability to understand and accept change of people within their culture as they share common traditions and experiences that makes them unique from people of other cultures. As human beings born and raised in one certain place, we can also learn and adapt to new things that shape our points of view and makes us change our life style and traditions, but learning and adapting to these new things does not change our roots or makes us forget them, instead, it gives us the experiences and abilities to understand, analyze, and solve the problems that we face in a lifetime.