

Interpreter of maladies

[Literature](#), [Books](#)



Failure of Marriage Communication is one of the most important things to us keep connected to other people. If we fail to communicate with others, we will fail in many ways such as failure in romance. In the book Interpreter of Maladies with the title "Interpreter of Maladies" by Jhumpa Lahiri, the difficulty of communication becomes one of the problems. Mr. Kapasi feels lonely in his life and in his marriage because he lost his ability to communicate with his wife. However, Mrs. Das is a selfish woman that always hides behind her sunglasses most of the time.

She doesn't care about her family, her husband and her children. These two characters are drawn together because they both have troubled marriages. But if they still have the common sense to think about their own responsibility to their family, they shouldn't get closer and become interested each other. Mr. Kapasi believes that his life is a failure. He can't have a successful marriage in his life because his marriage is arranged by his parents. His wife can't forgive him because of the loss of their young son and also because Mr. Kapasi work for the doctor who failed to save their son's life.

His career is far away from what he dreamed might be happen. Because in his past, he got scholarship and diplomatic greatness so he hoped that he would be success in his career. But now, he only be a tour guide and an interpreter for a doctor. As a tour guide, he speaks in English to the Europeans and Americans about the sights of India. And as an interpreter, he helps people from another country to communicate with the doctor. The job was a sign of his failings. In his youth he'd been a devoted scholar of foreign languages, the owner of an impressive collection of dictionaries.

He had dreamed of being an interpreter of diplomats and dignitaries, resolving conflicts between people and nations, settling disputes of which he alone could understand both sides. He was a self-educated man. In a series of notebooks, in the evenings before his parents settled his marriage, he had listed the common etymologies of words, and at one point in his life he was confident that he could converse, if given the opportunity, in English, French, Russian, Portuguese, and Italian, not to mention Hindi, Bengali, Oriya, and Gujarati.

Now only a handful of European phrases remained in his memory, scattered words for things like saucers and chairs. English was the only non-Indian language he spoke fluently anymore. Mr. Kapasi knew it was not a remarkable talent. Sometimes he feared that his children knew better English than he did, just from watching television” (52). In his loveless life, he meet Mrs. Das that he thinks also has trouble in marriage. And he got interested with her, imagine what will he do if he live with her, an American woman. But at the end, he feels so disgust with Mrs Das because she cheated with her husband’s friend and had a child from it.

Mrs. Das is a very selfish and self-absorbed woman. She doesn’t see anyone else as they are but rather as a means to fulfill her own wishes. Her selfishness can be seen when she doesn’t share her food with her children and her husband, reluctantly takes her daughter to the bathroom, and refuses to paint her daughter’s fingernails. She feels misery in her life because of her cheated with her husband’s friend. She never talk to anyone else about it. Rather than to face her misery, she chooses to hide behind her

sunglasses and stays away from her family. Like it is mention on the book “ Mine too. Mommy, do mine too,” said the little girl. Leave me alone,” Mrs. Das said, blowing on her nail and turning her body slightly. “ You’re making me mess up. ” (48) and also “ Mrs. Das continued to polish her nails. She had still not removed her sunglasses” (49). The only one person that she talks about her misery is Mr. Kapasi. She hopes that Mr. Kapasi as an interpreter can help her to give some advices. But in fact, Mr. Kapasi can’t help her because it’s not part of his job. Mrs. Das gets angry and leaves the car after she knows that it’s useless to confide about her misery with Mr. Kapasi. The communication doesn’t run smoothly in this story.

There are many times communication fail to happen. Mr. Kapasi can’t communicate well with his wife because he has lost his ability for it. Mr. Kapasi also afraid to talk with his children because he fears that his English is not as good as his children. Mr. Das and Mrs. Das do not communicate, not because of the language trouble but because Mrs. Das is so selfish and Mr. Das always gets himself in the guidebook, like said in the book “ He glanced up from the paperback tour book, which said “ INDIA” in yellow letters and looked as if it had been published abroad” (44). The children do not listen to their parents, Mr. Das and Mrs. Das, nor to Mr.

Kapasi. This can be proved with the monkey incident when Bobby is trapped with the monkeys. The children have lost the parents figure because the bad behavior of Mr. Das and Mrs. Das. All of these failing communication lead to hurt feeling each person. The Kapasis have a failing marriage. The Dases are hostile to each other. “ They were all like siblings, Mr. Kapasi thought as they

passed a row of date trees. Mr. And Mrs. Das behaved like an older brother and sister, not parents. It seemed that they were in charge of the children only for the day; it was hard to believe they were regularly responsible for anything other than themselves” (49).

Another problem beside the failing communication in this story is the forbidden romance between Mr. Kapasi and Mrs. Das. They both have the same loneliness in their marriage. Mr. Kapasi thinks that Mrs. Das could be a perfect companion to him in his loneliness. He puts an effort to attract Mrs. Das; he ignores many differences between him and Mrs. Das. He sees many details of Mrs. Das such as her legs. He ignores the other which is the bad behavior of Mrs. Das like dismisses her children’s desire and her selfishness with the snack. He observed her.

She wore a red-and-white checkered skin that stopped above her knees, slip-on shoes with a square wooden heel, and a close-fitting blouse styled like a man’s undershirt. The blouse was decorated at chest-level with a woman, with small hands like paws, her frosty pink fingernails painted to match her lips, and was slightly plump in her figure. Her hair, shorn only a little longer than her husband’s, was parted far to one side. She was wearing large dark brown sunglasses with a pinkish tint to them, and carried a big straw bag, almost as big as her torso, shaped like a bowl, with a water bottle poking out of it.

She walked slowly, carrying some puffed rice tossed with peanuts and chili peppers in a large packet made from newspapers (46). Mrs. Das wants to be a woman that can be a place to tell of Mr. Kapasi. She also wants Mr. Kapasi

to help her solve her misery. Mrs. Das sees him as a good father and helper and ignores the signs that indicates he may not like to do that. For example, Mrs. Das doesn't notice that Mr. Kapasi uncomfortable with her confession and push him to help her solve it that he can't give it to her. Responsibility and love are the keys of successful marriage.

Because when people have decided to get married means that they already promise to live with their couple and take care the family forever. When the couple already have it in their own heart and mind, infidelity will never happen. Mrs. Das should realize that she has a husband and three children that need to take care of. She has responsibility as a mother to serve her husband and gives advice to the children. If Mrs. Das could do all of it, she will definitely have a successful marriage. Works Cited Lahiri, Jhumpa.

Interpreter of Maladies. New York : Houghton Mifflin Company. 1999. Print.