

# Comparative on the books "jumping over fire" by nahid rachlin and essays examples...

[Countries](#), [Vietnam](#)



**Introduction:**

The gangster we are all looking for was authored by a Vietnam's -American author Diem Thuy in 2003. The novel is a fragmented sequence of events that were undertaken by a nameless character in Vietnam and the United States is concerned about the immigration and family dynamics, war as well as liberation. Hence, immigration happens to be the focal point of the book. This is in relation to the effects that it causes to the female protagonist's lives and daily encounters. The narrator and her father went to Singapore through the south china U. S navy ship (Lê, 2003 p. 46). They stayed in a Singapore refugee camp where they were later adopted by a sponsor who eventually took them to his house to live with them and his family. Stayed while jumping over the fire is a novel that was authored by Nahid Rachlin, an Iranian-American female author. The novel is a portrait of an Iranian-American family that is caught up in the midst of turmoil of the Islamic revolution, the hostage crisis, cultural tension, and exile in America. The main protagonist Nora and her family are complex and very real . For instance; Nora's attraction to her adopted younger brother, Jahan is developed in the context to all limitations she feels as a young girl in Iran. Both of these novels portray the hardships that immigrants face in any foreign country they go to. For instance in the gangster we are looking for, after the Vietnamese family lost their house in Vietnam, they moved to US in search of a new home and workplace (Lê, 2003 p. 54). They resided in California on an old navy house which later tore down just like in Vietnam. In the novel " jumping over the fire", the family faced hostage crisis in America simply because they were refugees or migrants from Iran. There were also

cultural tensions because Nora's culture clashed with the American culture in several ways. " When it is dark enough, you can see the stars". The quote clearly highlights the clarity that the author places on the context based on the family circumstances.

Nora and her step sibling, Jahan, are faced with so many hardships in the in America. This leads to their separation yet they had been so close, and a profound sibling bond had grown between them (Rachlin, 2006 p. 67). Due to the ruthless escapades they experience in America under the Anti-Iranian hostility they had to part ways though painful to bear. They had grown up together, played and did mischief together, for example, there was a time when Johan opened a drawer using a wire before they had migrated from their home. They were so enamoured of each other, but Johan really had to go as he had no bit of resemblance with the Americans.

Each of them had to explore America independently in order to fake new relationships to be secure from the hostile and maltreatment that glared at them in America. They faced highest level of discrimination, and it required immense courage to walk through that path and emerge a conqueror. Jahan who was a romantic artist embarks on a mission to fight the ruthless Iraq through joining the army. Nora, on the other hand, is determined to camouflage her identity in America as it is depicted that she is determined to join the women welfare organisation in America. She portrays a trait of plight of women (Rachlin, 2006 p. 69). In US Nora had acquired the freedom that she had been denied for long and was yearning for. She was determined to utilise the available opportunity and the freedom in US regardless of the fact that she was an immigrant. Nora was somehow lucky since she was half

American could somehow assimilate in America, unlike her step sibling. On the other hand in the book, " The gangster we are all looking for," the narrator, her loving father and four uncles whom she strongly states that are related by water and not blood travelled by US Navy ship across the South China. They always resided in Singapore a refugee camp due to their displacement from their homes. They were lucky enough to be acquainted with Mr. Russell who was a retired navy officer. The officer granted them subsidise before he faced his demise. Fortunate enough he had shared his prospects for the future with his dear wife and thus the wife embarked on the initial of accomplishing her deceased husband final wish of flying birds that in this context was symbolic. By the flying birds, he referred to providing support and aid to the immigrants. Her whole heartedly welcomed them in her residence and offered them his son's Melvin room. However, Melvin was not pleased by his mother's decision. " I feel like I've inherited a boatload of people" he remarked. The environment seemed hostile for the narrator as she depicted by walking with fear towards Melvin's room, besides breaking into a cry. This was a vivid indication that being immigrants on that land were not comfortable. Later Melvin grew fond of them and hired the narrator's father and her four uncles to work together as home painters and maintenance of the houses (Rachlin, 2006 p. 73). In America, the narrator appraises Mrs. Russell, and they had a good relationship as they could understand each other well. She describes Mrs. Russell as kind hearted woman. She started adopting the new American life.

It is well illustrated in both the books that both the protagonist ladies were courageous and determined to survive. Nora took advantage of her quality to

merge with the Americans as she was a half cast while the narrator welcomed the warm welcome from Mrs. Russell and created a good relationship with her.

Nora is illustrated as a young lady with a strong will to conquer the issues at hand of the hostility and brutality. " After I ran away, I phoned my parents only a couple of times, to let them know I was all right. The last call was from the airport, to tell them that I was moving to the East Coast to go to school. My father wasn't home. My mother said, 'The East Coast? But it's so cold and far away.' She urged me to remain in San Diego. When I said I couldn't, she sighed. 'I don't understand you,' she said" (Lê, 50). This shows the strong love and bond that attached the mother to her daughter. She is determined to uphold the circumstances she is faced with to become a better lady and fight for the rights of the ones who are discriminated as well as exiled from their home. She has a strong character as she is aware of her mixed culture yet she can camouflage to fit in the society of America. She depicts a picture of an iron lady who is ready to vie for just at whatever cost. Being a half cast has made her open minded and embrace as well as value the diverse culture of different people.

The narrator in the novel " The Gangster We Are All looking for" loathed the American cultures as she deemed herself as the only Vietnamese in her school. She felt uncomfortable cladding as the rest of the American students thus her life was not as pleasant as she had wished. She further attests to having felt lonely in the school as it was difficult for her to socialise with the American fellow course mates. Unlike Nora in the novel " Jumping over the Fire" she had grown up in a heterogenic culture and thus it was easy for her

to adapt. The brothers of the narrator, on the other hand, were beginning to adapt to the American's culture (Lê, 2003 p. 60). They had started smoking and placing bets on games such as a football match. The narrator despite her conservative trait was a very curious girl.

In Mel's room that they were acquitted, there was a butterfly trapped in the glass. Melvin had warned them against touching or interfering with anything in the house, but that fell into deaf ears on the side of the narrator. The narrator and her four uncles did not quite comprehend Melvin's dialect and thus always relied on the narrator's father for interpretation. The narrator had the urge to set free the trapped butterfly as she loathed captivity.

Unable to do that due to Melvin's warning that the immigrants were not authorised to touch anything in the house, she would secretly play with the glass sculptures in the room. The narrator always opened the cabinets for the animals to access aeration through ensuring that the animals acquired fresh air. In this aspect, her quench for freedom proportionally matches that of Nora from the book " Jumping over the Fire." The duo depicts the importance of freedom and how necessary it is in one's life.

The narrators urge for justice and freedom is portrayed by her determination to set the caged animals free. She felt that their rights were being violated in resemblance to their situation in America (Lê, 2003 p. 73). One day she had decided to break the order for the sake of justice, but, unfortunately, her father and the four uncles intervened just in time hindering her from accomplishing her burning desire.

It is well depicted in the two novels that the two protagonist ladies have some similarity as well as differences. The two ladies are bended to achieve

freedom at whatever cost and it is well illustrated of how they carry on their mission relentlessly. However, Nora from the novel jumping over the fire is acquitted with diverse cultures and thus can assimilate in America during The Narrator from the novel " The Gangster we are looking for" is conservative of her Vietnamese culture and finds it hard to adapt in America.

### **Works cited**

Lê, Thi D. T. *The Gangster We Are All Looking for*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003. Print.

Rachlin, Nahid. *Jumping Over Fire*. San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2006. Print.