The Crow Eaters By BAPSI SIDHWA



Bapsi sidhwa as a novelist

- Born in August 11,1938.
- ▶ Born to zoroastrian parents ,belong to Parsi community ,a distinctive minority.
- A polio victim at the age of 12, that's why She was educated at home till the age of 15 by an Anglo Indian lady.
- She was graduated from kinnard college lahore.
- She was an active Social worker with concerns for the woman around her.
- She was a part of women'sdelegation to Iran and turkey in 1970.
- She started her writing career in 1970, when She was on her honeymoon way and there met with a story of a young girl who ran away from home and later killed by her husband in Hindukash mountains.
- After her way to home she wrote her first novel, namely Pakistani Bride.
- Although Pakistani Bride was written first but published after crow eaters.

About Crow Eaters

- ▶ The novel Crow Eaters is about the Parsi community.
- Parsis are naturally humorous and fun loving.
- ▶ Picture of Lahore and cultural mein of Parsis are Shown.

Characters of crow eaters

Fareedon

He is main character of the novel. His nickname is freddy. He is businessman in Lahore. He belongs to parsi community.

Putli

She is wife of freddy and presented as a feministic figure in the novel.

Jerbano

She is mother of putli and proves the titular significance of the novel.

Soli

Elder son of fareedon who died later on.

Continued characters

Yazdi

Son of fareedon, a saint like figure.he breaks parsi traditions and married to an Anglo Indian girl.

Billy

Younger son of fareedon. He has having a black complexion and flat nose.

he is the most active child of his children. He fills the gap of soli and fareedon.

Tanya

The wife of Behram. Their relationship invites discussion on gender roles in society.

Yasmin

She is Freddy's daughter and shows generation gap through feministic aspect.

Aspects of Parsi culture

Tower of silence

In this process parsi people put their dead bodies in the tower and the birds torment their bodies. It is called a charity from the side of dead bodies.

Salty water

When someone wants to get married, He/she put salt in the water and when the elder members of the family drink that water they assume, someone wants to get married. It is custom in Parsi culture.

Burning fire

Burning fire is A sacred symbol of God.

Superstitious

People are superstitious and believe in Fortune tellers.

Children are obedient

Children are obedient to their parents and parents try to accommodate them.

Women are subservient

Women are considered subservient to men.

Continued

Marriages

For marriage ceremony all the family members of boy side come to the girls house.dowery is given to the bride and gifts or money envelopes are given by friends and relatives.they don't marry out of parsi community.

Seed Plantation

Newly wedd couple is supposed to seed a plant for their growth.

Honeymoon

Couple go to honeymoon to spend some days with each other.

Girls upbringing

Girls are brought up as a sacred entity and they are told to keep a distance with males except their brothers and father.

Charity

Parsis have a concept of charity and brotherhood.

Humour and title significance

Jerbano

- Jerbano justifies title significance through her character.
- ▶ She speaks like crows and Pokes her nose in every matter. She spreads humour through her character .
- She doesn't want to come to Lahore because she was afraid to leave her parsi culture.
- In Lahore there is no tower of silence and she thinks what would happen to her dead body.
- She is actor and tease everyone by saying she isn't well.
- ► She eats too much and and fareedon don't like her habit to eat so badly, her illmannered behavior and freedy's annoying mood creates humour in novel .
- ► When they go to England there she teases marrie and takes plunge into every matter.

Billy's humour

- Younger son of Freddy is another humorous character in the novel .
- ► He is miser and criticizes those who spend lavishly.
- When yasmin forget her ring in bathroom and Billy finds it, creates humour in novel.
- Jerbano considers him enemy because he is barrier for her.
- ► He plays an absurd role on his marriage ceremony when he dresses up in blue shirt because Tanya's favorite color is blue.
- After his marriage to Tanya he started looking abnormal, he became strict by nature and wanted to see his wife and children obedient to him.
- ► He was miserly in sense that he didn't give money to Tanya for food, she eats carrots because they were cheap.
- ► His sense of possession was so extreme. He wished that he could be a Muslim because he wanted to dress burqa to Tanya .

Feministic Perspective of novel

- ▶ In the novel crow eaters 1st and 2nd wave of feminism are present.
- In first wave feminism involves patriarchal and consent hegemony in females. They cannot resist and they should must remain step back to their husbands. Putli is the depiction of that Ist approach of feminism. She likes to remain subservient to her husband.
- In patriarchal society, women are considered a cause to every mishap and putli in the crow eaters is the depiction of same submissive woman.
- She doesn't want herself to surpass her husband.
- ► A shift in perspective
- Shift can be seen in Yasmin and Tanya's Characters, yasmin doesn't like to step back to her husband rather she likes to take step with him.she is advance and like to make her mother too.
- ► Tanya's character is obedient to her husband but sometimes she too doesn't tolerate.
- In 2nd wave generation gap can be seen like young generation yazdi, yasmin and Tanya they are not like precious ones.
- ► They are more advance and fashionable.

Plot of the novel chapter wise summary

- Zarathusti calender of great men and women, including the names of ancient parsis who migrated to India.
- The sweetest thing in the world is your need, said Faredoon.
- Hundred and twenty thousand Parsis booted out of Persia- 1300 years ago.
- Ahura Mazda: the deep spiritual kaw which governs the universe, the path of Asha

Continued chp #01

- Faredoon along with Jerbanoo ,Putli and infant Hutoxi arrived Lahore.
- Jerbanoo's scolding- shows disgust of Jerbanoo for the city of Lahore.
- oath of Freddy ,never to leave Lahore as long as he lived.
- Few families of Parsis in Lahore: the Bankwallas, the chaiwallas, the Toddywallas, The Bottiwallas
- Their names are different from their jobs.
- There are no beggars in Lahore due to the charitable nature of Parsis.

- Character sketch of Faredoon: manly bearing, soft spoken manner, slender nose, hazel eyes
- living style: giving small alms every friday, wearing mathabanas by putli & jerbanoo, and holy thread circling round thier waists
- Contentment of Putli: house work, mending her seven children
- Jerbanoo: A thorn in Freddy's life.
- All the time sighing, muttering and quarrelling
- She took a makeious delight in needling him
- She complained, pretending of having headache, snored, wept and raved for the sole purpose of irritating him.

- Fredoon decided to consult a mystic, which shows the influence of parsi culture in Lahore.
- Meeting with mystic (Fakir): dingy corridors of the building, long beared, arms decorated with silver bracelets, chest bristed with an assortment of colourful beads
- Fakir called Faredoon "come in you murdrer", And asked him to bring a coil of jerbanoo's hair and snip the coil by yourself
- ► He went home and asked Jerbanoo "hello", "mother" and Jerbanoo blinked at the accustomed and vehement greeting.

Freddy's unsuccessful attepmt of cutting Jerbanoo's hair

She woke up and slaped Freddy.

However he remained successful in frighting her.

PutLi stopped tyrannies of her mother and took over the charge of home.

Jerbanoo found another point to bother Freddy, she would now often initiated the topic of death

she showed odd behaviour and appropriated the largest portion of food.

- She extended her sway to her store, whenever Freddy was away, riding over the salesman's scruples.
- She acquired high quantities of food: chocolates, biscuits, perfume and wines. These were used by her friends in leisure time
- Freddy is doing a lot of work for his store along with Harikal, Crishan Chand, & Salesman.

- He had depressing feeling that his wife has garged up with her mother.
- Jerbanoo was really ailing. She had layers of fat on her kidneys, Liver, gall blader and joints were affected.
- An immediate need on an English doctor.
- She shout so loud that irritated Freddy and he called her "donkey".
- Freddy's stars were in wrong position. HIs daily customers dwindled preferring the newly opened canteen.
- The contract to retain wine by a club was lost.
- He considered that this bad luck is associated with his mother in law.

- Tower Of silence: the idea that in Lahore there is no tower of silence was troubling Jerbanoo.
- She recalled the death of her husband and said thet she didn't want to be burried like Muslims.
- She compared vultures with angels.
- She siad that her husband had faith that our zarathust faith is based upon charity. To put the dead Body in tower is an act of charity to the vultures.

- In autumn ,jerbanoo caught a servant by smoking a biri . It was a shameful act .
- Faredoon's attempt to harmonize the family by an outing over the Ravi Bridge into the countriside.
- Jerbanoo thinks of the hungry vultures despite if the fact that parsis are Living in Lahore.
- Freddy said ," water water everywhere, but not a drop to drink, and she replied " vultures vultures everywhere but not a body to share.
- Freddy's attraction for book: 1) famous Englisgh proverbs 2) Avesta, 3) translation of the HOly Quran

- ▶ 4) complete works of Shakespeare 5) Ds Kapital and 6) books representing the Sikh, Jain and Budhist faiths.
- Beliw the shelf was a prayer table, on which the Holy lamp burnt, there was a picture of Virgin Mary.
- Mr Dinshaw Adenwala visited Lahore in december and changed the course of Fredoon's distinct.
- ► There was a week of festivity for all parsis in lahore. There was a good news if insurance policy for Freddy , which made him pleasant.

- Clouds of despair for Freddy
- No progress, debt, his property and possessions were auctioned.
- ▶ A plan in his mind to shot two birds with one stone.

- ▶ His plan was going to be executed on 15 january, 1901
- His growing concern for Jerbanoo all of a sudden, her love for the outsiders and emptying his store, all this was the part of his plan

- Freddy has to postpond his plan ,because of Putli's confinment to a single room.
- Explanation of impure & unholy condition in the culture of parsi families.
- He had to set a new date, sunday 22 march 1901.

- ► The family except Jerbanoo went to Toddywallas for a game of cards.
- Freddy left his family in Toddywallas and slipped from gathering to execute his plan.
- ► He successfully conducted his plan and went again to Toddywallas to play cards.
- It was all to gain insurance money.

- Jerbanoo was alone in a firing house.
- She was dreaming of thr buffalo galloping towards her. She opened her eyes due to smoke and smell.
- She thought that the idiot servant boy had left something on the fire.
- She went into every room to find the fire then she went out to a balcony ,overhanging and screamed.

- Arrival of Harilal and breaking the news of fire to Freddy at Toddwallas.
- Putli also accompanied them ,sitting in the kap of Mr Bottiwallas.
- There was a heavy traffic near their house due to heavy fire.
- There was a situation like drama on the balocony, because Jerbanoo was ready to come down with the fireman.

- Irish fireman got irritated by Jerbanoo's behaviour and called her a "bloody woman".
- Putli was crying due excessive concern for her mother.
- Woman from Toddywallas also arrived.
- Appearance of Fakir to whom Freddy once cosulted, he said: "god be with you my son".
- Freddy talked about his loss, children and family.
- In .such genuine manner to compell money lender to give him insurance to cover up his loss.

- Putli is crying for mother who is still on the balcony. After sometime Jerbanoo was rescued by a net and a basket.
- Mr Toddywalla took the jungkewallas to his spacious home. Two rooms were emptied quickly.
- Chicken curries and soup were served.

- Mr Adenwalla arrived from karachi to investigate the fire incident. He demanded the proof of how the fire started.
- ► The infuriated Mr Toddywalla, who highlighted
- ► That the company of Mr Toddywalla collapsed if they divided to withdraw their patronage.
- Arrival of two new families in Lahore: coopers and pay master.
- Mr Adenwalla was not willing to give assurance until and unless he is given proof
- Mr Gibbons & policeman arrived.
- ► Three days later ,Mr Adenwalla received a letter from Punjab police , ensuring that all the investigation proved that the fire was natural, because the house was full of inflameable stuff.
- It also ensured the good character of Freddy. Freddy recevd a sizeable cheque.

- After this incident of fire ,Jerbanoo never created an trouble for Faredoon.
- Putli was contented by her work and Life, produced seven children, three sons and four daughters.
- Behram Billy was an ugly child.
- Marriage of Hutoxi and Rubi.
- Instructions of Mrs Freddy to her daughters.

• Freddy tells his listeners about the fire incident (1901)

Opening of the store in Amritsar, Peshawar and Delhi.

"For Freddy, if anything, looked handsomer than in his youth. He would grow into a gracious and kindly looking old man and no one would know how diabolically wity, unscrupulous, and false he really was."

Chapter #18-19

- Blackish water in the pitcher
- Cultural implications-whoever puts salt in water is desirous of getting married.
- Suspense for Freddy and Putli
- Freddy shares his story 'That is how I got married'
- Asks Soli once again but he refuses.
- Jerbanoo is also suspected; a humorous response from her.

- Faredoon and Soli went for a walk.
- Freddy inquired him about the story so that he can Soli's views about marriage.
- Freddy discovered that it is not Soli who is putting salt in the water.
- Freddy, Putli and Jerbanoo sitting to find out who is it?
- Freddy asks Jerbanoo, "Did you put salt in the water?"
- ▶ She was extremely angry calling him absolutely shameless man.
- Putli advised him to go to work.
- Freddy cleared that he is done with this now Putli has has find out herself he is washing his hands of the whole affair.

- Freddy's private office in store.
- His business matters related to stores in Peshawar, Amritsar, and Delhi.
- Visit of Sadar Sunder Singh Sahib, a police officer, asking Freddy a favour to get his son admitted in St. Anthony.
- Freddy assured him that his son will be admitted.
- Visit of Jimmy Paymaster asking Freddy to do him a favour in thaana as he was caught in a brothel raid
- Freddy said it would be done.
- Arrival of Mr. Allen,

- Arrangements about his one night stay in lahore
- Allah Ditta was summoned to arrange a visit to dancing girls bazaar. "At your service sir." he bowed obediently.

- Freddy busy sorting out a heap of work in uninterrupted afternoon.
- Arrival of Yazdi at 5' O clock.
- Yazdi informed his father about his intentions to get married. "I want to get married Papa."
- Freddy explained him that it is too early for you to decide these things and asked him who's that lucky girl.
- Yazdi told she's not a Pasri rather an Anglo American girl named Rosy Watson.
- Freddy out of utter astonishment slapped Yazdi on his face.
- Yazdi left in tears, Freddy sank in chair.
- It was for the first time he slapped any of his children.
- Putli and her failing work.
- Activities of servants.
- Freddy coming home and telling Putli what happened.
- Putli was taken aback.

- Putli told Faredoon he has no right to slap her son rather he should have shown him the right path.
- Yazdi was a gentle boy having courtesy and was favourite of his teachers.
- Rosy was his class fellow, she has no friends.
- Rosy Watson's mysterious nature attracted Yazdi
- ► Absence of Rosy for four days, when she came back there were dark circles beneath her eyes, her stepmother even her father thrashed her.
- Yazdi assured to take her out of this situation and will marry her
- Yazdi talked to Freddy again.
- He pointed out that you don't love that girl, you pity her. you cannot maary all those you pity.
- Freddy told him about the inborn spark a child inherets from his parents
- Yazdi will spoil that family saprk if he marries Rosy.
- Freddy clearly said I'll no permit you marry that girl.
- Yazdi was firm in his stance I'll be ashamed to even think of such rubbish.

- Arrival of Prince Kamrmaruddin
- Visit to Hira Mandi.
- Freddy explained to Mr. Allen why this place is named as Hira Mandi.
- Entrance of Nilofer.
- Mr. Toddywalla and Freddy were not interested in girls but Mr. Allen was captivated by the beauty of the girl.
- ▶ Nilofer told Mr. Allen that she's Anglo American and her real name is Rosy.
- Freddy was shocked He asked Rosy?Rosy what?
- She answered Rosy Watson.
- Freddy was filled with anger, fear and surprise.
- At 5'0 they left that place.
- Freddy said to Putli that Yazdi is not going to school.
- ▶ He blaimed Putli that it is her fault that Yazdi has fallen in trap of a prostitute.
- Putli was surprised.
- Freddy transported Yazdi to a new school.. St.Antony.

- Billy (Behram Junglewala)
- His bath
- His holy thread tied around the waist, his prayers, Shikasta Shikasta sehtam (I shall conquer evil)
- His strange physical features
- Billy experimenting toothpaste of Freddy
- He slipped an emerald ring into his pocket.
- Yazdi and Billy going to college.
- Yazdi meeting with Rosy in recess time.
- ► He assured Rosy that he'll marry her no matter tm what happens.

- Rosy said Tell your father to bugger himself man!
- Yazdi wept all his way back to St. Anthony.
- Billy spending time examining that precious ring that was of Yasmin.
- Katy inquired Billy about her money that she left on dresser a minute ago.
- Billy lectured her on her silly manners, they started to quarell.
- Putli sent Yasmin to check what's the matter with them.
- Billy escapes by deceiving them.
- Yasmin follows him upstairs and demands her ring.
- Billy compelled Yasmin to apologise and promise that she will improve her

- Freddy the undisputed head of his community.
- He was a philanthropist, leader, and a shrewd business.
- Visit of Polly Sodawalla to seek help for his brother Mr Adi Sodawalla who was caught in illegal smuggling of opium.
- Freddy put all his efforts, money to get that man back for the sake of his community.
- After two months, Mr Adi Sodawalla came back as free man.
- Visit of Mr Katrak asking him favour to do something for his son Bobby who rammed his Rolls-Royce on a blind beggar.
- Freddy took 50000 from him and his son was clear.
- Freddy received two letters from Yazdi revealing his poetic expression about his intense love.
- He went upstairs and told Yazdi who his beloved actually was
- Yazdi went out at dark to confirm.
- Yazdi locked himself in room for three days
- After this he was changed
- His excessive generosity and humanity.
- Freddy was disturbed on Jerbanoo advice he sent Yazdi to Karchi.

Chapter #26-27

- •Freddy meets Brahmin-a fortune teller
- •Talks about Janam Patri
- •Tells the future of Freddy and the calamity of the death of his eldest son at the age of 21
- •Freddy is full of horror
- Concerned for Soli
- •Receives a letter from Mr. Katrak, who is desirous of marrying his son Bobby with Yasmin.
- •Another letter from Yazdi's guardian-telling that he is doing well.

Continued chp #26-27

- •Soli-ill with typhoid
- •Visit to Brahmin again-to find out Janam Patri suggesting cure
- •Brahmin tells that Soli will dies after three days but he will be born once again after some years in their family.
- •Soli's death and burial

"and that is how the starts saw fit to deal with Soli"

Chapter #28-29

- •Yazdi-when he comes at the funeral of his brother: acutely heightened sensitivity
- •Billy in limelight-intelligent and clever than Soli
- •Yasmin gets married and settles in Karachi
- •Yasmin informs the family about Yazdi who is a college drop-out and spends all his money on beggars.
- •He returns and demands his share from his father's wealth.
- Argument between Freddy and Yazdi

Continued chp #28-29

- •Freddy puts a large sum of Yazdi's share in a Trust.
- •He is allowed to draw only a small amount from bank every month.
- •He leaves and family is left bereaved.
- •"Freddy gave up any hope for the recovery of his son's insanity-for it is insane to look beneath the surface of India: It is insane to look beyond the narrow confines of one's destined sphere".

- •Visit of Freddy and Putli to Government House
- •Putli's uneasiness
- •i. The way she has to walk ahead of her husband
- •ii. The dress she carries.

Yasfour years:

Putli sees changes-Generation gap- and advises her

She says: Anyways it's stupid to min visits the family after walk behind your husband like an animal on a leash-Oh Mother! Hasn't Papa been able to modernise you yet?"

Yasmin visits Lahore-Jerbanoo and Putli wish to journey to Bombay to find a bride for Billy.

- •Character sketch of Behram Junglewalla (Billy)
- •His Marriage
- •Sidhwa's humour
- •The exchange of letters between the aspiring families
- Invitation to visit Bombay
- •Jerbanoo, Putli and Billy pay a visit to the Khan Bahadur's family in Bombay
- •Billy's inferiority complex after reaching Bombay.

- •All about the meeting of two families
- •Roshan and Tanya:sisters
- •Billy's preference: Tanya
- •First Impressions

- •Billy is madly in love with Tanya
- •Purchases valuable dresses in Blue for her
- •Declares and vows to marry Tanya instead of Roshan
- •Putli, helpless, dispatches a letter to Mrs. Khan stating with all humility their apologies for Roshan and proposing Tanya as her daughter-in-law.

- •Tanya's family agrees for Billy and her engagement
- •Engagement ceremony in parsi culture
- •Bombay sight seeing by Billy and Tanya
- •Encounter with Yazdi
- •Billy sad to see his miserable condition
- •Requests him to visit the family who is in Bombay those days

- •Billy's family arrives Bombay
- •Stays in Easymoney mansion
- •Enamored by the elegance of mansion
- •Description of garden through Hutoxi's wonderstruck eyes.
- •Mada-sara ceremony described
- •Reception of Freddy at station

- •Mr. Easymoney shares his expeditions and adventures with Freddy
- •Tells him how he lost his eye
- •Debate about the fate/condition of Indians

Chapter #37-39

- •All about the extravagant marriage ceremony
- •5000 guests
- •The couple leaves for one month honeymoon in Simla
- •Exchange of love between Tanya and Billy

- •Their return to Lahore
- •Freddy suprises them by giving a new house as gift
- •Aspect of Indian culture revealed: belief in evil eye
- •Tanya manages the house well
- •Both compromise on matters of liking and disliking

- •Billy acquired a largr circle of friends, many of whome were invited to illy's business ambitions.
- •Billy was hurt to see Tanya getting extraordinary attention.
- •He avoided looking at his friend's wives, never addressing themin the presence of their husbands.
- Billy advised tanya fir many times to not to look straight into the eyes of people.
- anya was still childless. It caused great anxiety for all Junglewallas.
- Jerbanoo was ready to find a fault in Tanya. Billy had a hard time pacifying his wife after the visit of Jerbanoo.
- ► They fought in english when Tim used senseless words for Jerbanoo. Billy blamed her that she still wet her bed, Tim began to cry and Billy apologizes for his wording.

Continued

- ► Tanya was expecting, everyone was happy. Putli framed the house with pictures of chubby-cheeked english babies.
- Billy was scepticle abour the appearance of upcoming baby.
- Putki hanged puctures of baby buy, but Tanya produced a girl.
- Tanya's shoping fir baby and tormented reaction of jerbanoo: " couldn't Putli knit?"
- Tanya went to Freddy and explained him everything. Freddy seethed her.
- Freddy told Jerbanoo and Putli about his plan of going London to give lectures, and his plan to take both Puti and Jerbanoo with him.
- Putli was wirried about children behind.

- Putli and Jerbanoo had a lot of fanticies, because England was a land of crowns, but dusturbed to see quite different site of pucture.
- Grubby Englishmen, sales girls, clerks businessmen.
- Mr Charles P Allen invited them to stay with them.
- Mrs. Allen had changed greatly due to excessive household duties.. Mr Allen had no servants except one maid
- Freddu and Putli went for lectures & Jerbanoo spent her day at house tormented Mary and poking her nose into her every matter.
- Mary tried to accomodate ,but Jerbanoo was not ready to give in.
- At last Mary's patience wore thin after 2 months. They talked to Freddy in a humble manner and Jerbanoo was confined to a room upstairs.
- Then she was said to cook for all. Mary was ready to hand ove her kitchen to than annoying lady. Barbara peter and their families also joined.

Continued

- Freddy went to the dining room and tried to eat cutlets. Jerbanoo all the complained of Freddy to everyone.
- Jerbanoo again started teasing them by bathing at night on the attic & spilling water.
- They had deposite from Mr Charles house to oxford street hotel.
- Jerbanoo was happy at the change of scene from her balcony on the third floor

- There was no private bathroom in the hotel and no tap. Jerbanoo managed to bring water from the corridor downstairs to the room upstairs with a jar which seemed to be handless.
- It was because she was used to bath twice a day.
- Freddy was ambarassed to his mother in kaw doing such shameful act
- She bathed in the balcony. There was everywhere.
- An Englishman came and warns her, She mishaved with him.
- He aporoached Freddy and they had to leave England and came back to Lahore

- Tanya was again pregnant. She had a hard time with Billy.
- She stubborn to eat pomegranates and Bilky opted for radishes.
- Billy, caring for inborn child, agreed to bring pomegranates, but he tried his best to bring as cheap as possible
- Freddy felt Tanya's trouble and apologized her, because she was from a healthy family.
- Tanya produced a baby biy of fair complexion.
- Freddy realised that it is the rebirth of soli and prophecy of Janam Patri become true.
- Then came the last phase of Freddy's life.
- Billy used people obliged to his father and helped them discharge their obligations

- Bilky started governing house with complete authority.
- He established rules and tyrannies, which began with the sunrise.
- There was the hue of his business audience, who called him "sethji"
- ► He directed his commandments to Tanya that she should not spend money. Tanya and her children are supossed only to obey and love Billy.
- ► Tanya herself was obedient, because she had a romantic soul.

Thank you