

The Treatment of Women: A Study of Bapsi Sidhwa's *The Bride*

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Overview

Even though practically all of the scriptures employ lovely language to describe the grandeur of women. Although it has little to do with the realities of daily life, it has been said that "the gods reside where a woman is revered". The lady has always been one of lust's easy prey to seduce.¹

Even Bapsi Sidhwa speculates about the harrowing state of women, regardless of their ethnic backgrounds. Man's vultures always pounce on the woman to make a nest and use her as leverage. Women are easy victims for males to manipulate under the guise of ideal love because, despite their inherent intelligence, they are incapable of seeing the opposite of what is happening in a man's diabolical mind.²

Despite the advancement of science and technology worldwide, the woman's voice is still silenced in the developing world. Thoughtfully, we may discuss the rights and empowerment of women, but the reality is entirely different. In the novel "Pakistani Bride," Bapsi Sidhwa has effectively revealed the true nature of patriarchal society, much like Tasleema Nasreen. However, Sidhwa's portrayal of Zaitoon revealed that many things have not changed. The brutal, inhumane, and animalistic behavior of man has always been, is still being, and will continue for years to come, according to Bapsi Sidhwa, who claims that women have always been the silent, passive bearer of this behavior. The events represented by Bapsi Sidhwa in *Pakistan Bride* are still happening today precisely as they did decades ago. The towering mountains along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border reflect this beautifully.³

Newlywed youngsters are afflicted and tortured in a crazed manner by the so-called civilized and spiritual man, which reflects their true faces. Even Sidhwa had to flee to India to unwind and take some peace. What her life would have been like if she had not (woman Zaitoon). She bravely describes the brutal repressions suffered by a woman who fled to the uncharted highlands like a doe to escape the so-called civilized moors.

When the poor helpless lady is brutally raped even as she falls unconscious and goes without nourishment for several days, man's destructive and savage side is revealed. Even though she left her "spouse" for a life of freedom, the man's wild paws tore her personality and physical structure apart without giving him the slightest idea that she, too, is at least a human being. The anguish of the poor girl seems to have no end as, at this point, death appears to be her only escape from this heinous wilderness of panic attacks and brain death. Shakespeare's views on love appear appropriate given that he claims that while it is a matter of life and death for a woman, it is a child's game for a man to satisfy his passion. Since the beginning, society has been to blame and punish the woman for the horrific crime the man committed. The victimized and innocent woman continues to be held to the standard of a whore. At the same time, man has always been celebrated as the conquering hero. The suffering of women who have consistently been beaten below the belt for offenses they have never committed is depicted in depth by Bapsi Sidhwa. Regardless of a woman's social, economic, or educational standing, the *Pakistani Bride* represents the cruel behavior of the generations-old tribal patriarchy.

The social canvas of the civilized society, where women are pioneers in all facets of life and leave their male counterparts in the dust, is painted by Bapsi Sidhwa like a painter's brush.⁴

It makes us think of Thomas Gray's narration in which he describes a country churchyard in the evening and points to the graves, saying that the individuals buried there would have been great heroes had they been given a chance to participate in various social walks. The same had also applied to those young ladies in the farthest reaches of the echoing valleys. They would have set new historical records with the God-given talents they had concealed within them. Yet alas! To prevent even their heartbreaking sobs from traveling with the amusing windstorms, the gates were shut and carefully secured from the outside. The way Bapsi Sidhwa portrays it. Sidhwa herself remained in the high mountains, after all. For her, going through social ordeals in which newlywed women's blossoming faces became prey to the social wolves of the human race was typical. In order for the outside world of civilized people to understand the deep suffering of those brides who once had their hearts set on hearing the wedding bells and blooming up with their Lilly-like faces into the red roses, but that could never have happened in their lives, it gave her enough material to write down such faces. They were not fortunate enough to have the tearful eyes to worry them with the droplets of the rolling torrents of tears of their so-called loved ones who once embraced and kissed them with falsified palms; instead, they had been chased like does to save their hinds and necks from the scorching clutches of the hungry tigers. However, it was destined for them in different orders. According to Bapsi Sidhwa, such afflictions are typical for women to endure, and they are also infinitesimally real and unimaginable.⁵

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Ethics approval and consent to participate

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