



## The Study of Personality Development in Chitra Banerjee

### Divakaruni's Oleander Girl

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#### Abstract

The analysis of Oleander Girl by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, an emerging and powerful voice, is the main emphasis of this essay. Living outside expands Indian women's perspectives, while being an Indian provides this writer some shared cultural characteristics. Despite being influenced by her Indian upbringing, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni has overcome conventional limitations. Divakaruni's writing mostly deals with the immigrant women's desire for identity, freedom and independence. This essay aims to evaluate Korobi's examination of the self in Oleander Girl. Korobi, the main character, travels from India to America in search of her own father and, eventually, herself.

**Keywords:** Personality development, Freedom, Identity, Journey, Self- Discovery.

#### Introduction

One of the most well-known writers from the Diaspora, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, first appeared in the world of literature in the 1990s. She has sixteen books to her credit. The protagonist of Oleander Girl is an 18-year-old girl named Korobi. The book chronicles Korobi's difficult life. The challenges faced by the protagonist of the book Oleander Girl were addressed. How she battles all her life, including her quest to locate her father in the United States. In "Oleander Girl," Divakaruni illustrates the clash between Indian and American lifestyles. She portrays Korobi's quest for her true identity. Additionally, the narrative addresses the riots in India involving Hindus and Muslims. "Oleander Girl" explores the racial tensions present in both America and India during the early 21st century. As noted, there exists a bias against Muslims in America following the terrorist attacks of 2011, which also affects the Indian community. In the book, Divakaruni examines class and policy concerns in both contemporary India and an immigrant America. She also illustrates the problems of two



families, which greatly enhance the novel's appeal. The novelist portrays the Bose and Roy families. Divakaruni depicts a number of social, political, and well-known themes.

### **Self – Development of Koroby**

Oleander Girl, written by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and published on March 19, 2013, centres on Korobi Roy. Divakaruni, a talented storyteller, leads us on a voyage through love, treachery, family secrets, and ultimately the quest to discover the true identity of the novel's protagonist. Oleander Girl concentrates around the plight of victimization and the quest for the lost self by the protagonist, Korobi, an eighteen years old orphan who is taken good care by her grandparents, severe and rigors Bimal Roy, soft and intelligent Sarojini. She grows up in a hostel far from home as an orphan, living in seclusion and seclusion. We discover that she was raised by wealthy and devoted grandparents who sent her to a pricey boarding school in the hills, own an ancient Bentley, and reside in a magnificent mansion in a north Kolkata area, so her parents' absence is merely an emotional deficiency. Her grandparents are caring foster parents who raise her. 26 Tarak Prasad, Korobi's grandpa, Bimal Prasad Roy, a well-known lawyer from respectable family. Roy held Indian customs and values in high regard. He treated anyone who strayed from his values with extreme severity. In some way, he persuaded them—or rather, emotionally coerced them into accepting and acting in accordance with his own desires. She is occasionally impatient due to her grandfather's autocratic nature, but she obeys his arbitrary demands out of love and respect for him. When playing Korobi's grandfather, who was tough on the outside but kind on the inside, Divakaruni was somewhat influenced by her own grandfather. Korobi loved her grandfather as much as Divakaruni did. Korobi, who gets her name from the oleander flower that her mother cherished, frequently has a lot of questions and ideas concerning her background, her mother and father, her current relationship with her grandparents, and their shocking silence regarding the circumstances of both of her parents' deaths. Since she was a young child, Korobi has yearned for her parents' love, which she has never experienced. Her grandparents had only told her that her father, a lawyer, had passed away in a vehicle accident three months prior to her mother's death, and that her mother, Anu Roy, had died during childbirth. Despite her desire to learn more about her parents, Korobi was unable to do so because doing so would upset her grandparents. She frequently gets no response when she asks Bimal and Sarojini. The book opens with Korobi,



an orphan, waking up on the day of her engagement, distressed by a troubling dream or vision of her deceased mother.

Like any other female character in Divakaruni's writings, Korobi has demonstrated self-consciousness. Despite being her grandparents' adorable darling, she thinks about her mother, her identity, and the name her mother gave her. The Oleander, Korobi's namesake, is a beautiful but poisonous plant, and it is learned that Korobi's mother gave her the name because she wanted her daughter to be able to protect herself from predators.

Rajat Bose and Korobi Roy are engaged in Roy's family's ancient temple, and a lavish hotel party is planned for the couple. Rajat Bose, a member of a wealthy Bengali family, is engaged to Korobi. He was deeply in love with Korobi, and having her in his life transformed him into a responsible man who was interested in family business. As her engagement party is in full swing at a downtown hotel and she learns that her strict disciplinarian barrister grandfather, Bimal Prasad Roy, has suffered a heart attack, the ominous clouds begin to close in on her. Her grandfather Bimal passes away on the day of her engagement after suffering a severe heart attack. Korobi thought her grandfather wanted to tell her something before his death in the hospital. He dies in a state of shock and sadness.

Korobi was persuaded to go off on a quest to discover the truth when the thread broke free from the yarn spool, revealing the web of lies her grandparents had spun around her. The quest motif has been established, and Korobi's journey is instantly afflicted by difficulties, exactly like that of any traditional protagonist. On the day of her engagement, Korobi discovers a heartbreaking secret about herself and her parents. Korobi, a little orphan raised by her loving grandparents in Kolkata, learns a secret about herself and her family. Her discovery upends her identity and forces her to leave her safe life in Kolkata and embark on a quest.

Later, Korobi was told about her mother and father by Sarojini, her submissive grandmother. She is absolved of the pledge she made to her spouse following his passing. She opens up to her about how her mother, Anu, a bright young woman, disobeyed her father's plan to marry her when she finished college. Before getting married, she requested him to allow her to study in the United States. Anu, who was intelligent, was also awarded a scholarship for her education, and Bimal Roy was forced to accept. He wanted to control the life of his daughter and to a certain extent he could make her do what he wanted. Anu fell in love with an



American man since fate had other plans for her. All hell broke loose for Bimal Roy. He became so enraged that he abruptly cut off all communication with her. The truth about Korobi's father is revealed by her grandma.

Anu's father, Bimal Roy, did not approve of her desire to wed the man who shared her deep affection. Anu had to return in the hopes of gaining her father's approval, but at that point, she was already pregnant Korobi. However, when Anu became pregnant and wanted to see her parents, her loving father showed up and let her go. But when the delivery date neared she wanted to travel back to America to the father of her baby. She made every effort to persuade her inflexible, traditional father, but it was all in vain. After a heated fight, she fell off the stairs and began to bleed. She passed away in the hospital while giving birth to Korobi in this manner. Anu passed away, but Korobi was born. Bimal Roy and Sarojini were devastated to lose their only loving child in front of their eyes, and the only thing that gave them hope for survival was the newborn Korobi, whom they would never lose and who was the only one who could bind Anu to them.

He was unwilling to let go of Korobi. Bimal Roy informed her father that both the mother and the child passed away when he travelled to India to look for his child. For the first year, Korobi and her grandmother were relocated to their local ancestral house. In the meantime, Bimal Roy had arranged a death certificate to prevent more issues and had handled numerous other matters for which he had spent a substantial sum of money. He went to the village once a month and spent much of that time holding Korobi. He loved her the most since he could see Anu's reflection in her. However, this devotion cannot make up for the harsh truth that led to Anu's demise. Korobi doesn't look. Bimal Roy took a commitment from Sarojini in their temple not to expose these facts to anyone not even to Korobi as she develops or to leave him for good which again demonstrates patriarchal mentality and strong desire of cultural and traditional grip in Bimal Prasad Roy's mind.

Korobi understands that starting a new life with Rajat will be challenging and foolish until she discovers who her broken self really is. Anger, grief, disappointment, and disgust weighed heavily on her heart. Even if she wished likewise she could not burst on her grandmother for her folly, as she was the one who ventured to breach the stillness of so many years and voice the unspoken things that were prohibited to come to light. The United States, where Anu had



studied for a few years, is located across the ocean and holds the key to Korobi's identity. Sarojini advises her to forget everything and start over, but her intelligence rejects her suggestion. Just as the princess's yearning for life is wrecked by the harsh reality of the outside world, her hunt for her father shatters many of her illusions about herself.

Korobi, the main character, travels from India to America in an attempt to discover who she is. Due to cultural differences, the majority of diaspora characters struggle with identity in another country. The startling revelation that Korobi's father is not Indian raises an identification challenge in this case. Korobi, in part because to her desire to discover who she really is and to meet the guy who her mother adored, she set out to travel to America. With only her father's name, "Rob," she embarks on the adventure. lived in Berkley and had an old mother's picture. She was assigned to live with Mitras, a Bose employee. in the United States. Like every other immigrant, Korobi has her own challenges. Her time spent with him was not quite cosy. In addition, he was rude to Korobi. Seema, his wife, provided a lot of encouragement and explains to Korobi how post-9/11 America has affected businesses with Muslim names. As a result, her identity raises an enquiry. Her identity gets blurred due to her mother's migration, cultural as well as geographical. After finding a fancy but never written letter from her mother to her father, Korobi embarks on a mission to discover her own father and, eventually, herself.

Mitra tends to be very elusive. Korobi later found out that he had cheated on his job and was unfaithful. He accused Korobi of making his wife Seema resemble herself after spying on her. First, from Mitra, who appears to be watching her. He does not even co-operate to give her with a cell phone. But at Desai's office, she meets Vic, a young man who works as a part-time assistant and is his nephew. Vic offers her all of his support. Based on his research, Desai shortlists three people. Rob Davis, a writer in the Santacruz club; Rob Evanston, an architect; and Rob Mariner, a San Francisco estate attorney. She is disappointed to learn that none of the three are connected to her after meeting them. In fact, one of them believes that she is out there for money, while another attempts to physically harm her. When Korobi gets a call from Meera Anand, a woman who was Anu Roy's roommate, she is nearly devastated and disappointed. She calls her after recognising the picture from a newspaper. Korobi learns about her African-American father, Robin Lacey, through her.



Despite his high level of education, literacy, and social standing, her grandfather did not approve of him. Lacey is initially sceptical of Korobi, but after meeting him, he is persuaded. Korobi finds it odd that her parents never got married because it goes against Indian values. Her father explains the significance of her name to her: Because the oleander was beautiful—but also tough.

Korobi pledges to go back to India and wed Rajat. It has been observed that Korobi feels enlightened and quickly adapts to American culture. She is seen to adapt, assimilate, and embrace the American way of life, when necessary, yet she still walks with the memories of Indian family values and vows. Her quest to locate her father forces her to let go of all the unwelcome burdens associated with her fully Indian identity. Her capacity to improve her standing inside her family and at home is what makes her attitude neither western nor modern. She demonstrates that she is the only one with the authority over her body and identity while maintaining the same awareness of her independence and self. It is evident how difficult it is for Korobi to accept the new information about who she is, and it opens the door to a new facet of life. She had been devastated by the terrible truth, but she also had the courage to confront her wounded self and discover who she really was. In the course of action of her search for identification in the new nation the truth she meets is hard for her to believe. She is stronger as an individual when she returns to India; she understands what is proper for her and is able to withstand temptations.

### **Conclusion**

Oleander Girl is a prime illustration of diasporic consciousness, particularly in the areas of empowerment and identity. Because of her quest for identity, the main character Korobi develops into a strong, mature young woman who can reconcile two realities. In addition to achieving prosperity and independence, Korobi also finds a network of support and his family. Unlike a mother, she is not weak. She thrives as an Indian woman, an Indo-American woman, and a part of her new community.

### **Reference**

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