

Read and do the tasks :



Nazneen and Chanu, a young Bangladeshi couple living in Tower Hamlets, London, are invited to Dr. Azad's home.

5 **T**heir teenage girl walked in, clad in a miniskirt, and stood in the middle of the room. She spoke in English. Nazneen caught the words "pub" and "money". Her mother waved towards Dr. Azad. The girl chewed gum. Her hair was discoloured. She repeated her request. The doctor's wife fetched her handbag.

10 The girl took the money, tucked it into her blouse pocket. "*Salaam aleikhum*," she said, and went out to the pub.

Let's go, thought Nazneen. She tried to signal with her eyes to Chanu, but he smiled vaguely back at her. "This is the tragedy of our lives. To be an immigrant is to live out a tragedy."

15 "I beg your pardon?" said Mrs Azad. "What is the tragedy?"

"I'm talking about the clash between Western values and our own. I'm talking about the struggle to assimilate and the need to preserve one's identity and heritage. I'm talking about children who don't know what their identity is." [...]

20 "Why do you make it so complicated?" said the doctor's wife. "Assimilation this, alienation that! Let me tell you a few simple facts. Fact: we live in a Western society. Fact: our children will act more and more like Westerners. Fact: that's no bad thing. My daughter is free to come and go. Do I wish I had enjoyed myself like her when I was young? Yes!"

25 Nazneen averted her eyes.

Mrs. Azad continued, "Listen, when I'm in Bangladesh I put on a sari and cover my head and all that. But here I go out to work. I work with white girls and I'm just one of them. If I want to come home and eat curry, that's my business."

Monica Ali, *Brick Lane* (2003)

1. Where does the scene take place ?

2. Focus on characters : how many ? Who ? How are they related ?

3. Explain the topic of their discussion and give their point of view :

4. What's the difference between Mrs Azad's situation and her daughter's ?