

The People Jhumpa Lahiri Little Likes

John Cussen¹

This paper makes the claim that despite the culture-page and scholar classes' favorable reception of just about everything she offers, Bengali-American writer Jhumpa Lahiri thinks meanly of them and of their progressive mindsets. Telling in the second's regard are her counter-normative usages of their favored tropes--of, for example, the madwoman-in-the-attic trope. Telling in the first's regard are the literary academics who appear in her fictions. Nine for nine, they are shallow, feckless, and bullying sorts. Yes, literary academics--they are the people Jhumpa Lahiri little likes. In its later pages, the paper also observes that for much of her career writer Lahiri has been in the throes of a crisis of literary faith. An early symptom of this crisis is discernible in that plot strand of her second book, *The Namesake*, wherein the protagonist Gogol does everything in his power to dispossess himself of his literary name. Another symptom of the crisis is the sparsity of literary allusions that mark her fourth and latest fiction's pages (as opposed to the great number that marked her earlier works). And, lastly, toward the end of the latest fiction, *Whereabouts*, when the writing-prof protagonist begins her journey out of the city that has been her lifelong residence, that's Lahiri wishing she could do the same vis á vis her literary faith. [Article copies available for a fee from The Transformative Studies Institute. E-mail address: journal@transformativestudies.org Website: <http://www.transformativestudies.org> ©2023 by The Transformative Studies Institute. All rights reserved.]

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