



## Depiction of Obstacles and Challenges in Inter-State Marriages in Chetan Bhagat's Novel: 2 States

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### ABSTRACT

Chetan Bhagat is viewed one of the finest writers in the sight of youth across the world. All his novels have remained best sellers and are widely appreciated by the younger generation. His major focus in on the problems of the youth alone and that attracts them immensely to love his writings as they hope some sort of solution in his writings and of course Chetan never lets them down with his writings. His fourth novel '2 States: The story of my marriage' deals with the cultural differences and how the two protagonists face various hurdles and defiance in getting acceptance from their respective parents for their wedding and eventually the love that gains victory against all odds.

**KEYWORDS** : -obstacles, culture, caste, hurdles, love

Chetan Bhagat, the successful author in the sight of youth, has authored eight bestselling novels so far. Though Bhagat is not a critically acclaimed writer when compared to other best authors in Indian English Literature, he has gained huge fan following from young readers as all his novels address in a most straightforward way. His fourth novel '2 States' is about two protagonists namely – Krish, a Punjabi boy from Delhi and Ananya, a beautiful Tamil girl from Chennai – who undergo numerous hardships and challenges in convincing and getting acceptance for their marriage. It goes without saying that in India the mindset and mentality of the elders is so typical that they are adamant in accepting inter-caste marriages as they strongly hold the age-old orthodox and impractical beliefs. It is the natural tendency of the older people who have extreme views on caste, culture and religion. Because of this, the youth must undergo and suffer a lot. The fourth novel of Bhagat portrays how the cultural differences create in the matrimonial alliances. The duo Krish Malhotra and Ananya Swaminathan meet each other in IIM Ahmedabad where the latter was quarrelling with mess staff in a bold manner. Krish falls in love with Ananya in the very first sight as she is very attractive. But Ananya in the beginning just considers him a best friend and both start meeting very frequently and this friendship eventually turns into love. Since Ananya is weak in Economics subject, Krish helps her to understand the subject in a better way in his hostel room. Astoundingly, they start staying in the same room by keeping aside the customs and cultural taboos of Indian society. Though Ananya was born in Brahmin family, she least bothers about customs and smokes cigarettes, drinks beer, eats chicken and believes in the complete freedom of the fair sex. Both protagonists complete their education as time passes by speedily and resolve to marry in future after having secured some decent jobs in reputed companies that to in a same city to the maximum extent possible. Coincidentally, Krish has been placed in Citibank and Ananya in HLL. Krish proposes Ananya in an unusual and surprising way when she is having her final interview. He runs to the HLL room in a moronic way and declares, "Ananya Swaminathan, I, Krish Malhotra, am deeply in love with you and want to be with you always. Apart from when we go to office, of course. Will you marry me?" (2 states: pp.38). For a moment, everyone is shocked including Ananya but she can't deny the proposal. It is the origin for their hardships as both of them are from different states, cultures, customs and religions and they wait for the fitting time to getting their families familiar with each other and they find their convocation ceremony is the apt one. Krish phones and invites his mom but disappoints to know the fact that his father is not willing to attend as he hasn't got healthy relationship. The very first snag on the way to Krish is his mom enquires when she is introduced to Ananya's parents – "They are Madrasi? My mother asked, shocked. 'shsh, Tamilian.'" I said. 'Tamilian?' (ibid, pp.46). Krish tries his level best to create good impression in the minds of his love's parents. He starts his conversation with Ananya's mother by

stating – 'Your daughter is such a star. You must be so proud.' (2 states, pp.47). Talking in such way Krish immerses himself and requests Ananya's parents to have a city visit by sharing a car. He even forgets to go on to the stage during convocation when his turn comes. This irritates his mother and reminds him – "Don't you have to go on stage, Krish? Your turn is coming." 'wait,' I said and bent to touch her feet. 'There god, you remembered. I thought you were going to touch Ananya's mother's feet," she said (2 states, 47). Krish's mother says it loud enough for Ananya's mother to hear. They exchange cold glances that can be set to the backdrop of AK-47 bullets being fired. Krish requests his mother to keep herself under control. During their visit of Sabarmati Ashram the parents of the duo make rude comments against each other. When everyone sits for lunch Ananya drops the news and reveals the love affair for which she receives the response in negative and the dream of Ananya and Krish to get married shatters.

Soon after the threshold of the duo's hardship in convocation, they go back to their home cities. Krish's mother instructs him to take up a job in Delhi alone but on the contrary Ananya's insists him over the phone to come to Chennai at the earliest. After having gone through lot of tension and turmoil he gets post in Chennai, the news that is not digested by Krish's mother. Later, the Punjabi guy lands in Chennai and gets frustrated with new people and new surroundings. Taking care of his new job at Citi Bank on one hand, Krish wishes to set right the problem and waits eagerly to win the hearts of Ananya's parents for the wedding. In the process, Krish visits Ananya's home and comes to know that the parents of Ananya are planning her marriage but feels happy that Ananya is not ready to marry anybody except him alone. The next day at Marina Beach Ananya suggests him to take IIT tuition for her brother with which he can have regular access to her home. Krish visits Brilliant Tutorials and buys the IIT exam guides. He revises Chemistry materials for four hours by taking all the risk. In one of the occasion, Krish expresses, his anguish with Ananya about stupid biases and discrimination by saying – 'National anthem, National currency, National teams – still we won't marry our children outside our state. How ca this intolerance be good for our country?' (2 States, 102). Ananya instructs Krish to spend as much time with her father as possible. Though Krish office hours usually begin at 7.30, he does not want to miss the lift offer from his would-be father-in-law. While travelling by the car, Krish opens his office bag and takes out his research reports to read and opportunely this is noticed by the old man who is driving car and expresses his inability to write a report and submit a business plan for his General Manger in the form of Power Point Presentation. Finding a way to bond with his uncle, Krish offers help instantly but is declined for once. Ananya tells Krish to keep on trying and the latter succeeds a chance to help her father in preparing a top-notch presentation by spending almost a week time, which is also highly appreciated by the boss of Ananya's father.

Apart from doing all this, Krish also buys two CDs on Carnatic Music to win the favour of Ananya's mother, who has been learning Carnatic music for a long time. He helps his aunty, Radha to present herself at a concert which is being organized by his Citi Bank. Radha sings a few popular songs pleasingly for which she is applauded by everyone, including the legendary singer S.P.Balasubramaniam. Later a dinner party is arranged by Krish at the Raintree restaurant for Ananya's family. Soon after the completion of dinner, Krish realizes that the right moment is near. He takes out the four little red boxes and keeps them on the table. Each of the box contains a gold ring. Krish stands up from his chair and kneels on the floor and makes an emotional appeal which is indeed a heart touching one – "I, Krish Malhotra, would like to propose to all of you. Will all of you marry me?" (2 States, 217). The humble proposal of Krish touches the hearts of all the members of Ananya's family and everyone nods heads in positive. The duo – Krish and Ananya know well about a few more battles to win in Delhi which is named by them as 'Operation Delhi'. Krish gets transfer to Delhi and Ananya convinces her boss to send her to Delhi for a week stating that even HLL manager must possess North India exposure. While travelling by air in the flight, Krish explains the plan to Ananya. He asks her not to disagree with his mother and win her heart as early as possible. Ananya struggles a lot while she is asked to prepare dinner but is caught red handed that she is terrible at cooking. She is commented by Krish's mother and that hurts Ananya. During a marriage ceremony of Krish's cousin, Minti, Ananya impresses everybody especially, Krish's mother by resolving the problem with all her intelligence, confidence and fluent English.

Later, Krish arranges a meeting of two families in Goa, for fixing the auspicious day for the wedding. For no reason, Krish's mother considers Ananya's mother as an arrogant woman. But, she buys a Sari and gives it to Ananya's mother. Krish's mother does feel contented with the parents of Ananya and remarks them rude as they have made their son-in-law pick up luggage. In addition to this, Ananya's members of family are given sea-view room and they have also not brought anything as a present for Krish's mom. In Punjabi terms, Ananya's parents have committed a cognizable offence. These things bring out the differences again. Krish's mother talks to the parents of Ananya in an insulting manner and even points out that they have almost trapped her son. Ananya decides then and there to break up with Krish. At this very juncture, Krish's father, who has been viewed as an enemy in the sight of Krish comes to his only son's rescue and does what is urgently needed. Without giving slightest hint to his son, Krish, his father goes to Chennai and spends almost seven hours with Ananya's parents and assures them that the daughter-in-law will be treated as a daughter and apologies for any past misgivings and thus sets right the problem. He remembers Krish that he had let him down in the past for a few times.

The ending of the novel is really interesting that both the families are united, the duo wins the heart of everyone and they get married to each other. The two protagonists undergo uncountable hardships in convincing and getting green signal for their wedlock until the end. The last line of the novel is indeed much appreciable. The twins that are born to the couple of Krish and Ananya will belong to a state called India.

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